L A U C H L I N M A C L E A N

AND HIS CONNEXION WITH

EAST INDIA COMPANY POLITICS

1773 - 1778

A Thesis submitted for the Degree
of Bachelor of Letters

by

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

As every writer of a thesis or academic work is indebted in one way or another to many people for the sources and, quite frequently, the shape and inspiration for his dissertation, the manner of expressing his gratitude to those concerned has been rendered by custom, the limits of language and the restraints of British formality to a recognised formula. Indeed, the formula is so well recognised that it seems to defeat its purpose, and the gratitude expressed often appears to be no more than an imposed exercise in manners, dispassionate and infinitely cold. The present writer, although constrained to follow custom, must therefore insist that he records his thanks with both sincerity and humility, and that all the defects in this thesis are attributable to him alone.

Above all others he is in the immeasureable debt of his Supervisor, Dr.Lucy Stuart Sutherland, C.B.E., The Principal of Lady Margaret Hall. But for her unfailing kindness, constant interest and painstaking guidance and criticism, this thesis would never have been started, let alone acompleted. Throughout its compilation Dr.Sutherland has always gone beyond the highest standards of supervision in order to throw light, either by discussion or written commentary, on innumerable matters concerned with the background or detail of the period. Móran taing a Dotair Liusaidh nic-Alasdair.

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In quoting from original documents the writer has followed the broad principles laid down by the late Sir Lewis Namier. When quoting from 18th century documents written in English, punctuation, capitalisation and contractions for common words have been rendered in modern form, but spelling generally and contractions for titles and proper nouns have not been altered. When quoting from 18th century documents written in Gaelic, an exact transcription has been given in every case, and the accompanying translations have been rendered as literal, and therefore rather clumsy, interpretations, to ensure that the margin of error has been kept to the minimum possible. In spelling Indian place-names the versions recorded in Volume XIV (The Index) of The Imperial Gazetteer of India, by Sir William Wilson Hunter, 2nd Edition, London, 1887, have been used; but the spellingsof Indian titles have been rendered according to the fashion of the 18th century; e.g., Nabob, Vizier and Rajah for the modern and more correct Nawab, Wazir and Raja.

Dates before September 1752 occur infrequently, but where they do it has been found suitable to give the actual day and month according to the Old Style calendar, and the year according to the New Style calendar. Thus: the 1st January 1728 O.S. is not rendered as 12th January 1729 N.S., but as 1st January 1729.

Throughout this thesis square brackets have been used conventionally. That is they encompass letters or words which were omitted or illegible in the originals, or they supplement information.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

List of Abbreviations: References from manuscript sources and printed sources are cited in the thesis and the Select Bibliography by short titles. All references from printed sources have a short title which is underlined.

A.P.C./C.S.,(1745-1766)	Acts of the Privy Council of England: Colonial Series (1745-1766), ed: J.Munro & Sir A.Fitzroy, London, 1911.
A.R.	Annual Register, published since 1758.
B.M.Add.MSS.	Additional Manuscripts kept in the Dept.of MSS., The British Museum, Gt.Russell St., London, W.C.1.
Bod.	Manuscripts kept in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.
B.P. & P.	Bengal: Past & Present, the Journal of the Calcutta Historical Society, published since 1907.
Burke (Bohn)	The Works of the Rt.Hon.Edmund Burke, ed:H.Bohn, Vol.4, (Reports on Administration of Justice in India: Charge against Warren Hastings), Lond., 1890
Burke Corres.	The Correspondence of Edmund Burke, Vol.1, 1744-68, ed:T.W.Copeland, Cambridge 1958; Vol.2, 1768-74, ed:L.S.Sutherland, Cambridge 1960; Vol.3, 1774-78, ed:G.H.Guttridge, Cambridge 1961.
Cal.H.O.Papers,(1766-1769)	Calendar of Home Office Papers in the Reign of George III (1766-1769), ed:J.Redington, Lond., 1879
Camb.Hist.India	Cambridge History of India, Vol.5, Camb., 1929.
Campbell	Miscellaneous Works of Hugh Boyd, L.D.Campbell, 2 Vols., London, 1800.
Cavendish Debates	Sir Henry Cavendish's Debates of the House of Commons during the 13th Parliament of Great Britain May 1768 to June 1774 (The Unreported Parliament), ed:J.Wright, 2 Vols., London, 1841/42.
Davies	Warren Hastings, A.M.Davies, London, 1935.
Dilke	The Papers of a Critic, C.W.Dilke, ed:Sir C.W. Dilke, 2 Vols., London, 1875.
Dodwell	Warren Hastings' Letters to Sir John Macpherson, ed:H.H.Dodwell, London, 1927.
Feiling	Warren Hastings, Sir K.G.Feiling, London, 1954.
Fortescue	Correspondence of King George III, ed:Hon.Sir J.W. Fortescue, 6 Vols., London, 1927.
Gleig	Memoirs of the Life of the Rt.Hon.Warren Hastings, G.R.Gleig, 3 Vols., London, 1841.
G.M.	Gentleman's Magazine.
G.R.O./P.P.R.	Wills & Administrations kept at Principal Probate Registry, General Register Office, Somerset House, The Strand, London, W.C.2.
H.M.C.	Reports of the Historical Manuscripts Commission
H.M.C./Palk MSS.	The Palk Manuscripts, printed and published by the Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1922.
Hodson Collection	Collection of Originals and Abstracts of the late Major V.C.P.Hodson, 10th Bengal Lancers (Hodson's Horse), bequeathed to the National Army Museum, (Indian Section), R.M.A. Sandhurst.

I.O.L.	Collections kept at the India Office Library, Commonwealth Relations Office, King Charles St., London, S.W.1.
I.O.L./H.M.S.	The Home Miscellaneous Series of Papers kept at the India Office Library.
I.O.L./Orme	Papers of Robert Orme kept at the India Office Library
J.C.T.P.,(1759-1763)	Journal of the Commissioners for Trade & Plantations, (1759-1763), London, 1935.
J.C.T.P.,(1764-1767)	Journal of the Commissioners for Trade & Plantations, (1764-1767), London, 1936.
Lansdowne MSS.	Correspondence of the 1st Marquess of Lansdowne. From Transcriptions kept by Dr.L.S.Sutherland, C.B.E.
Love	Vestiges of Old Madras, 1640-1800, H.Davison Love, 3 Vols., London, 1913.
Maclean	Reward is Secondary: The Life of a Political Adventurer and an Inquiry into the Mystery of 'Junius', J.N.M.Maclean London, 1963.
N.L.S.	Manuscripts kept at the National Library of Scotland, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, 1.
N.& Q.	Notes & Queries.
P.A.	Public Advertiser.
Parl.Hist.	The Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803, ed:W.Cobbett, Vol.16, London, 1813; Vol.19, London, 1814.
P.G.	Pennsylvania Gazette.
Present Disputes	An Impartial View of the Origin and Progress of the Present Disputes in the East India Company, relative to Mahomed Ally Khan, Nabob of Arcot, and Tuljagee, Raja of Tanjore; To which are annexed Observations on Mahomed Ally Khan's Letter to the Court of Directors, (Lauchlin Macleane), Printed for J.Balfour, Edinburgh, and T.Cadell, London, 1777.
Prior	The Life of Oliver Goldsmith, M.B., J.Forster, Lond., 1855
P.R.O.	Manuscripts kept at the Public Record Office, Chancery Lane, London, W.C.2.
Roberts	History of British India, P.E.Roberts, London, 1952.
Samuels	The Early Life, Correspondence & Writings of the Rt.Hon. Edmund Burke, LL.D., ed:A.P.I.Samuels & A.W.Samuels,
S.O.A.S./Macpherson	The Papers of James Macpherson and John Macpherson kept by Professor C.H.Philips at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, W.C.1.
S.R.O.	Manuscripts kept at the Scottish Record Office, Register House, Edinburgh, 2.
Sutherland	The East India Company in Eighteenth-Century Politics, L.S.Sutherland, Oxford, 1952.
Tompkins Diary	The Tompkins Diary, commenced by John Tompkins, snr., continued by his son John Tompkins, jnr., and completed by his grandson John Cole Tompkins, ed:G.W.Eustace, in Vol.71 of the Sussex Archaeological Society's Collections, Cambridge, 1930.
Weitzman	Warren Hastings and Philip Francis, S.Weitzman, Manchester, 1929.

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(1) MANUSCRIPT SOURCES:

British Museum

Papers of Warren Hastings:
Add.MSS.29117, and 29125 - 29149.
Papers of Sir Elijah Impey:
Add.MSS.16259 - 16261.
Correspondence of George III and John Robinson:
Add.MSS.37833.
Correspondence of John Wilkes:
Add.MSS.30868 - 30871.
Correspondence of Henry Bouquet:
Add.MSS.21643 - 21644.
Papers of Henry Fox, Lord Holland (Holland House):
Add.MSS.51434.

Bodleian Library

Papers of George Vansittart (on loan):
Dep.b.97 - Dep.b.103.
Papers of Laurence Sulivan:
MS.Eng.Hist.b.190, and c.269 - c.271.
The Nabob of Arcot's Debts:
MS.Eng.Hist.b.178.

India Office Library

(a) Records:
Court Books 80 - 86.
Bengal Public Consultations: 1773-1778.
Madras Public Consultations: 1773-1778.
Home Miscellaneous Series - 110, 118, 286, 358
Military Records - 203.
(b) Manuscripts:
Papers of Robert Orme: (O.V. - Orme Various)
O.V.43(32B), O.V.202(33F), and O.V.222(34E).
Papers of Philip Francis:
MSS.EUR.D.18, E.13-E.23, and F.5.
(c) Microfilms:
Cleveland (Ohio) Public Library MSS:
Microfilm Wf.091,92 - L645L (Roll 19) - The Mission of Sir John Lindsay to the Carnatic.
Microfilm Wg.091,92 - H2791T (Roll 6) - Misc. Indian Documents, incl.Hastings Papers.

Exeter Public Library

Commercial MSS. of Robert Palk:
Unpublished and largely unclassified as yet.

National Library of Scotland

Minto MSS. - M.14.
Mure of Caldwell MSS. - MSS.4945.
Stuart-Stevenson MSS. - MSS.5387.
Charters - No.3906.

Public Record Office

Chancery Proceedings: C.12/1305/30
Colonial Office Papers: C.O.101, 166, and 324.
Home Office Papers (Domestic Series): SP-37/7.
Treasury Papers: T/49/3.

Scottish Record Office

Papers of John Graham (Kinross House Papers):
MSS.2065, and MSS.2128/1 - MSS.2128/10.
and MSS.2129/1 - MSS.2129/2.

School of Oriental and African Studies

Papers of James Macpherson (in London):
MSS.4/1 - MSS.4/28
Papers of John Macpherson (in Madras):
MSS.39/1 - MSS.39/13
Other Macpherson Papers consulted:
MSS.82/1, MSS.167/12 and MSS.175/26.
(Note: Letters are referred to by their bundle numbers, and their item numbers within bundles; e.g. 39/12 indicates Bundle 39/Letter No.12.).

(2) PRINTED SOURCES: (where applicable sources are given by their short titles)

(A) Contemporary or Near-Contemporary Sources:

(i) Documentary:

A.P.C./C.S.,(1745-1766)
Burke (Bohn)
Burke Corres., i, ii, and iii.
Cal.H.O.Papers,(1766-1769)
Cavendish Debates
Dodwell
Fortescue
H.M.C. (in particular documents printed from the Abergavenny MSS.)
H.M.C./Palk MSS.
J.C.T.P.,(1759-1763) and J.C.T.P.,(1764-1767)
Parl.Hist.
Tompkins Diary
and:documents quoted in Gleig, Love and Weitzman.
also:Barwell Papers printed in B.P. & P., vol.ii et seq.
also:5th and 6th Reports from the Committee of Secrecy appointed to enquire into the Causes of the War in the Carnatic and of the Condition of the British Possessions in those Parts, 1781/82.

(ii) Periodicals, Pamphlets and Contemporary Narrative Sources.

A.R.
G.M.
P.A. - in 1776 and 1777 the Public Advertiser was the only newspaper printing East India Company reports; the rest, if they contained reports, were reprinting verbatim items from the P.A. (see P.A., 13 Feb.1777 - "Your paper is now become the only channel for East India occurrences" - Letter of "Pondicherry"). Other newspapers consulted for general items were the Gazetteer & New Daily Advertiser and the London Gazette, and the P.G.
Pamphlets: Present Disputes [Lauchlin Macleane].
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(all the above pamphlets were published in 1777).
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History of Hindostan, Alexander Dow, London, 1770
Memoirs of Mrs.Anne Bailey (Mrs.James Eastick nee Anne Bailey), London, 1771.
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N. & Q.
Prior
Roberts
Samuels
Sutherland
and:
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CHAPTER 1 - The Rise and Fall of Lauchlin Macleane: 1728/29 - 1773.

"Many are called, but Macs are chosen,"[1] wrote Colonel Thomas Pearse to his friend Warren Hastings in 1781. The application of these remarks was specific, but the resentment underlying them was directed against all Scottish and Irish careerists setting out to make or better their fortunes in India. Pearse's attitude was not unusual. He was merely one of the first of many Englishmen to voice his feelings on the subject, and the tendency to which he drew attention was not a new one. During the following century, however, the proportion of Scots and Irish holding high positions in the military and civil services of India gradually increased, until the official lists began to read like pages torn at random from the street directories of Edinburgh and Dublin. The false conclusions that could be drawn from this state of affairs would be acceptable only to the most warped of modern nationalists.

Although it is true that no one people can claim a monopoly of any vice or virtue, it is equally true that some peoples, as a result of special pressures or circumstances, have developed certain abilities and qualities to a greater extent than others. The obvious cases are minorities who have been defeated or persecuted. To compete with their victors or oppressors they must exercise their special talents and skills to the full. And such was the necessity of ambitious Scotsmen and Irishmen in the 18th century. To over-simplify the issue: the Englishman's natural distrust of alien people had been reinforced in the case of the Scots, especially the Highlanders, by their involvement in the Jacobite risings, and in the case of the native Irish by their attachment to the Roman Catholic faith.

As Scotland and Ireland were poor and ravaged countries with no importance in Europe either as political or economic entities, the prospects for the Gael

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1. Feiling, p.292.

who stayed at home were bleak. To succeed he had to uproot himself completely and offer his services abroad. These services were based on the special skills that had been developed as a consequence of centuries of tribal vendetta, namely, military prowess and a capacity for intrigue.

By the time George III ascended the British throne in 1760 there were Scottish and Irish mercenaries serving with outstanding success in armies all over the world.[1] Freed from the dog-eat-dog existence of internecine war, they flourished as never before. The energies they had once dissipated in killing each other were now employed for profit and promotion in the destruction of impersonal enemies. This martial outlet satisfied the majority. The others preferred to use their capacity for intrigue, and by devious routes they began to push their way into political circles.

The anti-Scottish feeling in 18th century England can be illustrated from many fields of national life, and though it rose from time to time to a crescendo (as in the campaign against Lord Bute[2] and his Administration) it was continuous, and proved a definite though not insuperable obstacle to the highest political honours. India, however, where there were no governmental traditions, and where the lack of English aristocratic blood or connexion was no bar to fame or fortune, provided one of the best arenas for talented Scots and Irish.

Their influx into India had started at the beginning of the 18th century as a trickle. By the second decade of George III's reign this had become a steady stream, which was given further impetus by the willingness of men who had established themselves in East India Company circles at home to nominate their

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1. The Main Stream of Jacobitism, G.Hilton Jones, Cambridge (Mass.), 1954, pp. 244-246, based on the conclusions given by the author in his Oxford D.Phil. thesis (1950). See also, Almanach de Gotha, 1913 edn.
2. John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute (1713-1792).

kinsmen or fellow countrymen for vacant posts in India. The English had never been averse to the practice of nepotism, but it was the Scots and Irish who brought it to a fine art, and by the middle of the 19th century they held a strong and sometimes a dominant position in every service in India.[1]

Pearse's remark was elicited by consideration of the careers of two prominent 'Macs' - George Macartney[2] and John Macpherson.[3] It might equally well be applied to the subject of this thesis, Lauchlin Macleane, the friend and colleague of the second of them, and an early worker in the field of the first. All three were well-educated, hard-working, resourceful, shrewd, ruthless, corrupt, courageous and extremely able men, with a flair for inspiring confidence quickly, and a genius for using other people to their own advantage. All three were obliged to strive that much harder than their English contemporaries of equal calibre, and all three made some mark on their times, although Macartney and Macpherson could be counted on the whole successful, and Macleane died a failure. Macpherson alone chose India as the place to make a career. He was unknown when he went out in 1767, but he eventually rose to be Governor General and a baronet. Macartney did not go out to India until 1781, which was after Macleane's death, and he arrived as Governor of Madras with an Irish peerage already to his credit. Macleane first set foot in India after the spectacular failure of a career in the backstairs of politics and finance, in an attempt to repair his shattered fortunes and those of the friends and patrons who had suffered with him.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine Macleane's career in India and its

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1. Hodson Collection: Estimates and Lists for all Services, 1758-1857.
2. George Macartney (1737-1806), only son of George Macartney of Lissanoure in Co.Antrim, a landowner of Scottish extraction. Tall, handsome and diplomatic, he had served as Envoy Extraordinary at St.Petersburg and Chief Secretary of Ireland before becoming Governor of Grenada in 1775. Created Baron Macartney in 1776. His wife, Jane, was the 2nd daughter of Lord Bute.
3. John Macpherson (1745-1821), younger son of The Rev. Dr. John Macpherson of Sleat, Isle of Skye. Very tall (6ft.3in.) and handsome, he had a facile tongue and a great gift for languages. He went out to Madras as the nominal purser of the ship commanded by his maternal uncle, Alexander Macleod.

political significance. His earlier career has already been studied in detail[1]; it is dealt with here only in so far as it is necessary for the understanding of the period of his life which began when he sailed for India in June 1773, and ended when he was lost at sea in the winter of 1777/78 on his return from a lightning voyage, which he had undertaken with the intention of bringing to fruition his Indian ambitions. What it is necessary to know of his earlier career is what manner of man he was; who were the friends and connexions who affected his East India career, and how he became concerned in East India affairs.

Lauchlin Macleane was born Laughlin McLean[2] at either Rasharkin or Ballymoney in the Ulster County of Antrim at some time between 30th May 1728 and 29th May 1729[3], the eldest son of Irish born parents. His father, John McLean[4], the Vicar of Billy near Bushmills, was the heir of a Highland Scottish father and an English mother. His mother, Elizabeth Matthews, was the daughter of a Welsh father and a Lowland Scottish mother. Lauchlin called himself an Irishman, but thought of himself as an expatriate Scotsman, giving preference to his predominantly Scottish extraction, and ignoring his English and Welsh ancestry. All his immediate ancestors were ministers of religion, but they were not as respectable as their calling might suggest. To gain patronage, power and preferment few of them had hesitated either to change from one denomination to another, or resort to corrupt practices. Lauchlin's grandfather, Prebendary John McLean of Rasharkin[5], had joined the Established Church after being 'outed'

1. See my Reward is Secondary: The Life of a Political Adventurer and an Inquiry into the Mystery of 'Junius', London, 1963;(hereafter called Maclean).
2. During his lifetime he used four different spellings of his names. They were Laughlin McLean (1728/29-1746); Lauchlin McLeane (1746-1752); Lauchlin MacLeane (1752-1764) and Lauchlin Macleane (1764-1777/78). Throughout this thesis he will be called Lauchlin Macleane, the version by which he was best known.
3. Trinity College, Dublin, Records: Matriculation and Entrance Registers, and Senior Lecturers' Registers.
4. John McLean (1699-1766), a man of herculean strength.
5. John McLean (1652-1729), was born John Maclean, the second son of John Maclean, 2nd Laird of Grishipol in the Island of Coll.

as a renegade Presbyterian minister during the 1688 revolution.[1] Lauchlin Macleane's father maintained the Established Church tradition, but his attitude to life and religion was closer to that of a militant Presbyterian.

Lauchlin Macleane was an extremely ugly person, and probably had a hare-lip, which might have been the cause of his greatest affliction, a stutter. This was remarked upon by some of his contemporaries in their writings, as well as by Macleane himself in his letters and the openings of several of his speeches. In spite of his impediment he was a man of considerable charm. No portrait of him has been found, but it is known from descriptions that he was a dark, perhaps swarthy, very tall and powerfully built figure, and that he usually wore a wide brimmed hat slouched over his eyes and a long cloak, which he wrapped round his great frame.[2] The total effect was slightly sinister. He began his formal education at John Dennison's school near Belfast, and from there he went in 1746 to Trinity College, Dublin, as a pensioner. He was in his eighteenth year when he entered, which was somewhat older than the average age for junior freshmen. Among his contemporaries were Edmund Burke[3] and Oliver Goldsmith[4], with whom he was on the most friendly terms. At the end of his second year he won the Classics Premium for senior freshmen, and then, instead of completing the course for a general arts degree, elected to take the longer course for medical students.

In the summer of 1752 he graduated B.A. and then went to Edinburgh University to study for a M.D.[5] With him went Oliver Goldsmith, who became the medical adviser to the beautiful Duchess of Hamilton[6], a position he surrendered to

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1. P.A., 3 October 1771, letter of H[enry] M[acleane].
2. For descriptions and comments on his affliction, see Maclean, passim.
3. Edmund Burke (1729-1797). See Samuels, and Burke Corres., i, ii, and iii.
4. Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774). See Prior.
5. A List of the Graduates in Medicine of the University of Edinburgh: 1705-1866, published for the University, 1866/67.
6. Elizabeth Gunning (1734-1790), the second of three celebrated Irish sisters. She married firstly, in 1752, James Hamilton, 6th Duke of Hamilton & 3rd Duke of Brandon (1724-1758), and by him had one daughter and two sons, who each in turn succeeded to their father's titles. She married secondly, in 1759, John Campbell, 5th Duke of Argyll (1723-1806), and by him had further issue, two daughters and two sons, who each in turn succeeded to their father's titles.

Macleane when he went to the Continent.[1] The Duchess suffered from mild attacks of erysipelas, a disfiguring disease of the skin, which Macleane made his special interest and pursued as the subject for his thesis. Under the patronage of the grateful Duke, he threw off his financial dependence on his father, and in 1755 graduated M.D.[2] In the Duke's entourage was Andrew Stuart,[3] a lawyer, one of the many life-long friends made by Lauchlin Macleane during his stay in Edinburgh.[4] Others included his fellow medical student John Stuart, a member of a Scottish family long settled in England; Hector Maclean of Torloisk,[5] a lawyer and Highland laird, and the latter's younger brother Allan Maclean,[6] an army officer; all of significance in his career. It was also during his stay in Edinburgh, in 1755, that Lauchlin Macleane married Elizabeth Hewitt, whose father, Dr.John Hewitt, a former physician to the Russian royal family, had died a few years earlier leaving her a small legacy.[7]

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1. Prior, i, pp.155-156.
2. Dissertatio Medica Inauguralis de Erysipelate, thesis presented for M.D. on 6th August 1755. Copy in Univ. of Edinburgh Library.
3. Andrew Stuart (1724-1801), second son of Alexander Stuart, Laird of Torrance. He fought as an officer in the Jacobite army at Culloden, and escaped after the defeat. In 1747 he became a Writer to the Signet, and subsequently accepted the duties of 'tutor' or guardian to the children of James, 6th Duke of Hamilton, a post he retained after the Duke's death, and one which finally involved him in the great Douglas Cause as the advocate for the Hamilton interest.
4. John Stuart (1733-1799), younger son of Henry Stuart of Denford, Northants, and kinsman of Sir Simeon Stuart, 3rd Baronet, and M.P. for Hampshire. He enrolled at Edinburgh having gained his first degree in medicine at Leyden Univ.
5. Hector Maclean (1720-1765), 6th Laird of Torloisk in Mull. A rabid Jacobite who fought in the Maclean Battalion at Culloden. Afterwards a Writer to the Signet and the advocate and attorney of all the leading Macleans.
6. Allan Maclean (1725-1797), third son of Donald Maclean, 5th Laird of Torloisk and younger brother of Hector above. He was an extremely able soldier. After serving with the Maclean Battalion at Culloden, he escaped to Holland and joined the Scottish Brigade in the army of the States General. Returned to Britain in 1750 and obtained a commission in the British army, eventually rising to the rank of Brigadier General. He raised two full regiments for the British army from the Hebrides, and attempted to raise a third for the East India Company's army. From 1763 to 1772, when he was on half-pay, he was Lauchlin Macleane's most devoted henchman. In 1775-1776 he commanded the British forces in Quebec, and by forcing the American revolutionary forces to retire saved Canada for the British crown. He has never received the attention he deserves.
7. Register of the Marriages of the City of Edinburgh: 1751-1800, ed. Sir F.J. Grant, Edinburgh, 1922, pp.344 and 497; and S.R.O., Com.Edin.Test., Will of J.Hewitt, St.Petersburg, 15 Jan 1747.

In the summer of 1756 Lauchlin Macleane travelled to London with a letter of introduction from his attorney, Hector Maclean, to Archibald Maclaine,[1] a merchant in Cheapside, who provided him with a loan of £140.[2] With this small sum and his wife's legacy he immediately set out for Philadelphia. The Seven Years War with France had broken out a year earlier, and several of his Edinburgh friends, among them his wife's kinsman, Dr.William Hewitt,[3] and Allan Maclean, had preceded him to America as members of units sent out to reinforce the colonial army.

Lauchlin Macleane set himself up as a general medical practitioner, and for the first time in his life (he was in his twenty-eighth year) began to earn money. He was soon joined by his friend John Stuart, who became his partner, and between them they established a thriving practice, with many of the leading Philadelphian merchants as their patients. Macleane, however, brought the partnership temporarily to an end by giving way to an impulse. In mid-1757 he grabbed a Mrs. Osborn in the street and forcibly kissed her. Her outraged husband took proceedings against Macleane, who was fined £25 and ordered to remain within the city limits until it was paid.[4] As he was either unwilling or unable to pay the fine he absconded to Charleston, where his friend Allan Maclean was stationed with the newly raised 1st Battalion of the 60th or Royal American Regiment of Foot, commanded by Lt.Colonel Henry Bouquet.[5] On the

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1. Archibald Maclaine (d.1764), was born in Greenock, the younger son of the Rev.Alexander Maclaine, the Presbyterian minister of Monaghan, and first cousin of James Maclean (1724-1750), 'The Gentleman Highwayman'. He was a burgess of Edinburgh and a general merchant of Cheapside and Lime Street, London. After his death his business was carried on by his son Thomas Ashurst Maclaine.
2. See P.R.O., Chancery Proceedings: C.12/1305/30.
3. William Hewitt (1719-1781), was the younger brother of James Hewitt, 1st Viscount Lifford. He was the surgeon of the 28th or Bragg's Regiment at Quebec, and attended General James Wolfe when he was mortally wounded. In 1766, with the help of Macleane's influence, he was appointed Commissioner for the Sale of Ceded Lands in the West Indies.
4. N. & Q., (1st Series), viii, p.619; and Vale's Pennsylvania Law Digest, xliv, 1939.
5. Henry Bouquet (1719-1765), born at Rolle in Switzerland.

probable recommendation of Allan Maclean, Bouquet appointed Lauchlin Macleane his regimental surgeon. Soon afterwards the Royal American Regiment was moved to Philadelphia, where Brigadier General John Forbes[1] was preparing an expedition against the French stronghold at Fort Duquesne on the western frontier of Pennsylvania.

When the expedition set out in July 1758, Macleane was in the vanguard with his regiment.[2] Six months later, after one of the most arduous campaigns undertaken in America during the war, he stood beside Bouquet in the ruins of Fort Duquesne, which Forbes renamed Pittsburgh. The two men had become good friends, and Bouquet was willing to seek preferment for Macleane, through the medium of Forbes, from Sir Jeffery Amherst,[3] the supreme commander in America. Forbes, unfortunately, was too ill to act, and he died in the spring of 1759 without making any provision for Macleane's future.

In February 1759, just before Forbes's death, Macleane returned to Philadelphia. By this date a friend had paid his fine, and the plaintiff Osborn had so disgraced himself by seducing a young girl that the court refused to proceed further against Macleane on the charge of absconding. For a short while he went back to general medical practice with John Stuart, who had also been away on active service. Their patients, the Philadelphian merchants, were, however, much more interested in Macleane's influence with the army quartermasters in the forts along the new road to Pittsburgh, than in his skill as a doctor, and they were willing to pay high commissions for his

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1. John Forbes (1710-1759), the son of Colonel John Forbes of Pittencrieff by his wife Elizabeth, daughter of James Graham of Edinburgh (see later), and cousin of Duncan Forbes of Culloden, the famous Lord President of the Scottish Court of Session. He graduated in medicine before joining the army.
2. For Macleane's dealings with Bouquet and the part he played in the 1758 Fort Duquesne Expedition see: B.M.Add.MSS.21643, ff.82, 182, 86, 243-244, and B.M. Add.MSS.21644, ff.5-6, 28, 32, 169.
3. Sir Jeffery Amherst (1717-1797), later (1788) 1st Baron Amherst, and (1796) Field Marshal. At the time of the Seven Years War he was a Major General.

recommendations. John Stuart was just as keen on this change of profession, and before he and Macleane returned to the army for another tour of service they had founded a thriving business as middlemen.

When the final assault against the French in North America was launched in 1760, Stuart was appointed a surgeon at a base hospital, and Macleane went north to Montreal as the surgeon of the 1st (Agnew's) Battalion of Grenadiers, an élite unit composed of men from the grenadier companies of several foot regiments.[1] Returning once again to Philadelphia after the victory they found that there were new opportunities for cementing their business relations with the merchants, and they abandoned the medical profession once and for all. Through his wife's kinsman, Dr.William Hewitt, the surgeon of the 28th Foot, Macleane had been introduced to Major Isaac Barré[2] of the same regiment, who had been sent to Philadelphia to recover from the wounds he had received during the Battle of Quebec; and Barré, in his turn, had brought Macleane to the notice of Major-General Robert Monckton.[3] Monckton was the commander-designate of an expeditionary force that in 1761 was being fitted out for the invasion of the West Indian islands governed by the French. Macleane's business associates were anxious to receive the contracts for supplying this force, and he was soon in a position to recommend them. When Monckton announced his appointments it was Macleane he named as the Commissary of Provisions and Supplies for the West Indian Expedition.[4] His reward was the commission he drew from each of the suppliers, a normal perquisite of his office, and one which was given and received quite openly.

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1. Captain John Knox's Historical Journal of the Campaigns in North America for the years 1757-1760, ed: Sir A.G.Doughty, Toronto, 1914, ii, p.463, and iii, p. 530; and P.G., 10 July 1760, an announcement by Lauchlin Macleane and John Stuart stating that John Sayer was acting on their behalf for the period of their absence from Philadelphia.
2. Isaac Barré (1726-1802), born in Dublin of French Huguenot parents.
3. Robert Monckton (1726-1782), second son of John Monckton, 1st Viscount Galway.
4. P.A., 3 October 1771, letter of H[enry] M[acleane].

On 19th November 1761 Macleane set sail with Monckton's invasion fleet. The primary target, Martinique, was conquered in early February 1762, and in the same month Monckton appointed Macleane the Receiver-General and Collector-General of Martinique and its Dependencies.[1] The 'Dependencies' part of the title had no significance until the other French possessions in the Lesser Antilles were captured later in the year. The most important of these acquisitions were the sugar-producing islands of Grenada and Dominica, and the prizes to gained in them quickly attracted Macleane's attention. He was prepared to gamble that they would not be returned to the French at the end of the war, and on this assumption he conceived a plan for buying up large estates cheaply. Quite simply, he offered the dispossessed French owners the chance of selling immediately at his evaluation, or of waiting until the end of the war and risking the consequences.

The salary and perquisites from his office as Receiver and Collector were considerable, and he was still receiving commissions from the Philadelphia merchants,[2] but they were insufficient for the scheme he had in mind. From later accounts it is clear that most he had at his disposal in cash at this juncture was £3000. He needed credit and wealthy partners. Dr.William Hewitt, who was in Martinique, was the petitioner for a claim lodged with the Privy Council worth about £20,000, and he was willing to act as Macleane's guarantor.[3] As a means of paying off this sum Macleane came to an arrangement with his old friend Archibald Maclaine, the London merchant, whereby in exchange for a loan of £17,000 Archibald Maclaine would receive a generous interest and the exclusive right to sell all the sugar produced on the planatations bought by Lauchlin Macleane and his associates.[4] Having achieved this goal, Lauchlin Macleane

1. P.R.O., C.O.166/2, List of Civil Officers, dated 3 May 1762.
2. ibid., L.Macleane to W.Rufane (The Governor of Martinique), 16 June 1762.
3. A.P.C./C.S., (1745-1766), pp.534-536.
4. P.R.O., Chancery Proceedings: C.12/1305/30.

approached the Philadelphian merchants and asked them to put up similar sums of money. They declined to participate themselves, but as soon as Monckton agreed to become one of Macleane's partners, they recommended the scheme to some of their business contacts in London, five of whom readily gave their support.

Macleane, Stuart, Monckton and the five London speculators formed a syndicate with a capital of £80,000, each man's holding being worth £10,000. Macleane and Stuart, the managing partners, split the capital and used half to buy a group of plantations in Grenada, and half for another group in Dominica. These represented the deals in which Macleane had a personal stake. A further £120,000 was provided by principals, among them the London banker Sir George Colebrooke[2], an important connexion for the future, for whom Macleane purchased property in Grenada worth £50,000.[3] On these agency transactions Macleane received a percentage of the purchase price as a commission. By the time the Treaty of Paris was ratified in 1763 he had negotiated deals totalling £200,000, but the risk he had taken was justified. Grenada and Dominica were not handed back to the French. This was the end of his apprenticeship as a large scale operator on credit. He had made mistakes, the most serious being his negligence in not legalising some of his own and his principals' land titles at the actual time of purchase, but the overall picture was one of success.

Macleane left Martinique, which was handed back to the French at the end of the war, when it was evacuated in July 1763. His appointment still held good in the 'Dependencies', but it had served his purpose, and as soon as he had won the goodwill of the temporary Governors of Grenada and Dominica he sailed for Europe. Arriving in London in November 1763 he immediately settled some of his

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1. I.O.L./Orme: O.V.202(33F), ff.50, 59-60, 62-63, 66-67, 85, 95.
2. Sir George Colebrooke (1729-1809), 2nd Baronet of Gatton, Surrey, and the senior partner in the family banking houses of Colebrooke, Lessingham & Binns of London, and Colebrooke & Co. of St.Mary's, Dublin.
3. I.O.L./Orme: O.V.202(33F), f.94; and H.M.C., Palk MSS, 1922, p.243, L.Sulivan to R.Palk, 15 September 1774, in which Colebrooke's holding is confirmed.

property rights at a meeting with the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations.[1] Next he visited Dublin to discuss the future with his brothers. His second brother, Matthews Macleane,[2] had been ordained after leaving Trinity College, Dublin, and was a curate in County Louth; his youngest and third brother, Henry Macleane,[3] had just left Trinity College and was unemployed. Both were convinced by Lauchlin Macleane that they should work for him, and they all travelled back to London. With the probable backing of Monckton, Matthews Macleane was appointed Chaplain to the Forces in Dominica, and, with an assistant named John Weir[4] to act as his 'front', was immediately sent to the West Indies to supervise the day-to-day running of the syndicate's estates.[5] Henry remained in London.

In April 1764 Lauchlin Macleane went to Paris with John Stuart, who had arrived in England from Philadelphia a short while before.[6] Their intention was was to settle the claims of some of the dispossessed French planters, who were beginning to regret their dealings with the syndicate. Instead of attending to this business, however, they rented a house in the Rue de l'Échelle and invited Allan Maclean, who had been retired from the army on half-pay, to join them. All three had suffered either from wounds or exposure during the American campaigns, and they allowed themselves the luxury of complete relaxation There were some of their friends in the city to help them pass the time. Isaac Barré, now a M.P., was there. So were Andrew Stuart, soon to become famous as the advocate for the Hamilton family in the Douglas Cause, and his younger

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1. J.C.T.P.,(1759-1763), p.411; and P.R.O., C.O.101/1, G.Scott to the Comms. of Trade and Plantations, 30 July 1763.
2. Matthews Macleane (c.1735-1774), ordained 1761, licensed the same year as Curate of Dromiskin, Co.Louth. He married Charlotte Campbell, but had no issue.
3. Henry Macleane (1740-1774), was never married. In December 1765 he was described as "Lieutenant", but he was probably never on active service.
4. John Weir (b.c.1738), a native of Northumberland. He served as an Ensign on General Edward Braddock's ill-fated 1755 Fort Duquesne Expedition, and as the Commissary of Stores under Wolfe at Quebec. After the Battle of Quebec he was transferred to the army in Germany, where he also served as Commissary of Stores
5. G.M.,xxxiv, 1764, p.199.
6. Parl.Hist., xvi, p.782.

brother Colonel James Stuart[1], who was destined to play a part in Lauchlin Macleane's future.

This period of idleness lasted until John Stuart recovered from an illness at the end of 1764.[2] Then Macleane, who had made the acquaintance of Stephen Fox[3] as the result of a visit from an extraordinary doctor named Samuel Musgrave[4], began to take an increasing interest in politics. In 1765 John Stuart returned to London and found lodgings in Holles Street, close to the home of Edmund Burke, and from here he relayed news of political trends to Macleane in Paris. At the end of the same year Macleane was given the chance to prove himself.

John Wilkes[5], who had fled to Paris to escape imprisonment for alleged seditious libel, was becoming an embarrassment to Edmund Burke's employer, Lord Rockingham[6], the Prime Minister, who had supported Wilkes's cause when he was in opposition. Wilkes had hinted that unless certain conditions were met he might return to London and stir up trouble for the Administration. Circumstances were not, in fact, in favour of Wilkes, but Rockingham preferred to take no chances. He instructed one of his supporters, William Fitzherbert[7], to keep Wilkes in Paris with vague promises of money and action, and Fitzherbert, probably on Burke's advice, passed on this chore to Macleane. Macleane carried out his task ably and at some considerable expense to himself. In March 1766, however, he obtained what might have been a reward when Rockingham

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1. James Stuart (c.1728-1795), a professional soldier who had served throughout the Seven Years War; on half-pay from 1763 to 1775.
2. Parl.Hist., xvi, p.782.
3. Stephen Fox (1745-1774), later 2nd Baron Holland, elder brother of Charles James Fox, and M.P. for Salisbury.
4. Samuel Musgrave (1732-1780). For Macleane's involvement with Musgrave and the latter's sensational accusations against illustrious persons whom he said had taken bribes to settle the peace of 1763 see Parl.Hist., xvi, pp.763-785.
5. John Wilkes (1727-1797). For his career see Wilkes and Liberty, G.Rudé, Oxford, 1962; and The Life of John Wilkes, H.W.Bleackley, London, 1917.
6. Charles Watson-Wentworth, 2nd Marquess of Rockingham (1730-1782).
7. William Fitzherbert (c.1712-1772), one of Edmund Burke's patrons and M.P. for Derby. He committed suicide.

appointed him Lieutenant Governor of St.Vincent.[1] It was a post in which he could have furthered the interests of his land syndicate, but he never went to the West Indies to take up his duties. Instead, like many others at this time, he became involved in speculation in East India Company stock. It was the beginning of his long and disreputable association with the affairs of the Company.

As a result of a dispute over the terms of the Treaty of Paris, the East India Company had been divided by a ruthless struggle for power between Lord Clive[2] and Laurence Sulivan[3], both with first-hand knowledge of India, and both leaders of powerful followings among the Company Proprietors (as the shareholders were called). Clive had gained the upper hand in this conflict, and in late 1764 had gone back to India to take over the diwani[4] of Bengal, which gave the Company the control of the province's finances. In April 1766 official dispatches from Clive were received in London which caused the stock to rise. Speculative dealings in India stock became the chief subject of interest on the London, Paris and Amsterdam bourses, with many of the speculators operating on all three exchanges.

Some of the richer speculators (among them Clive himself acting through his attorneys) actually took physical delivery of large blocks of stock, in the hope of selling at a profit. Others, whose stock holdings were negligible, preferred either to buy or sell for future delivery, or, more commonly, to deal in 'differences'.[5] Among the speculators in the second category were a

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.30869, ff.25-26, L.Macleane to J.Wilkes, u.d. (but internal evidence proves it was written on 11 March 1766). See also P.R.O., C.O.324/41, pp.238-239 and C.O.324/51, p.271; and List of Commissions, Instructions and Additional Instructions issued to Royal Governors and Others, ed. C.M.Andrews, Washington, 1913, p.513.
2. Robert Clive, 1st Baron Clive of Plassey (1725-1774)
3. Laurence Sulivan (c.1713-1786), his parentage is still not known. He was a native of Ireland, probably born in Co.Cork, and M.P. for Taunton in Somerset.
4. Sutherland, pp.136-138.
5. ibid., p.141.

particularly large and influential group of people whose capital, it would seem, was provided by two men: Isaac Panchaud,[1] the Swiss associate of Thomas Foley[2] in a Parisian banking house; and Lord Verney,[3] the rich and rather reckless patron of William Burke,[4] Edmund's friend and kinsman. Panchaud and Verney were soon joined by other individuals and syndicates, one of which was controlled by Macleane, who also accepted much of the responsibility for managing the ventures of the whole consortium.[5]

From the speculators' point of view there were two factors which could affect the rise or fall of the stock. The first was an increase in the dividend, which the Directors of the Company, at this stage, were determined not to give.[6] The second was the state of Clive's health. Rumours had reached England that a native insurrection had taken place in Bengal, and that Clive was too ill to deal with this situation. If the rumours were true the stock would certainly fall, as confidence in the stock rested to a great extent on the ability of British arms to maintain order in Bengal. The result of these rumours was to prompt the speculators to underwrite their ventures by heavily insuring Clive's life. But Macleane went further than most by organising a line of communications which would ensure that he and Panchaud in Amsterdam, and Foley in Paris, would be among the first in those places to receive accurate news of Clive and Bengal.

Macleane's own syndicate was formed by himself, his partner John Stuart and a new acquaintance named Robert Orme,[7] the close friend of Clive, whose Indian

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1. Isaac Panchaud (1726-1789).
2. Thomas Foley (1716-1777).
3. Ralph Verney, 2nd Earl Verney (c.1712-1791).
4. William Burke (1728-1798). His relationship with Edmund Burke has not yet been proved conclusively, but the evidence may be among the transcripts of the Prerogative Wills of Ireland, which survived the Irish 'Troubles' of 1922.
5. Sutherland, p.143.
6. ibid., p.144.
7. Robert Orme (1728-1801), was born in India and served the Company in Madras. From the early 1760's his eyesight, which was never good, gradually deteriorated until he was all but blind.

campaigns he had chronicled. Orme not only helped Stuart to manage the affairs of the consortium in London, but was also relied upon as the gatherer of intelligence. On 1st July 1766 he obtained from Lady Clive (who was in London) early news of her husband's well-being and assurances that all was in order in Bengal.[1] He immediately dispatched Lauchlin Macleane's henchman, Allan Maclean, to the Continent with the report. On all three exchanges, London, Paris and Amsterdam, the members of the consortium bought or ordered heavily before the price of the stock rocketed upwards. On settlement day in early August, Lauchlin Macleane and his associates counted their individual profits in thousands of pounds.[2]

This triumph coincided with the fall of Rockingham's Administration, which was replaced by one formed by Lord Chatham.[3] The office of Secretary of State for the Southern Department in the new government was given to Lord Shelburne,[4] a friend of Sulivan's and the patron of Barré, one or both of whom brought Macleane to his notice. Shelburne was impressed by Macleane, and offered him the post of Principal Under Secretary of State with special responsibility for American Affairs.[5] Macleane accepted, gave up his house in Paris and moved to London. But before he took up his new duties he terminated his association with Wilkes, who had become a great drain on his time and money, and resigned his Lieutenant Governorship of St.Vincent.[6][7]

On 12th October 1766 he took charge of his office in Whitehall. His new

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1. I.O.L./Orme: O.V.222(34E), ff.139-140, R.Orme to I.Panchaud, 1 July 1766.
2. B.M.Add.MSS.30869, f.66, L.Macleane to J.Wilkes, 12 August 1766.
3. William Pitt, 1st Earl of Chatham (1708-1778).
4. William Petty-Fitzmaurice, 2nd Earl of Shelburne (1737-1805), later (1784) 1st Marquess of Lansdowne.
5. Cal.H.O.Papers, (1766-1769), p.290; and Under-Secretaries of State: 1755-1775 (unpublished M.A. thesis by Mr.Leslie Scott, Manchester Univ.)
6. B.M.Add.MSS.30869, f.77, L.[Macleane] to Heaton Wilkes, 25 October 1766. Heaton Wilkes was the elder brother of John Wilkes.
7. A.R., 2 December 1766: "Ulysses Fitzmaurice, Lt.Governor of St.Vincent in the room of Lauchlin Macleane, Esq." Ulysses Fitzmaurice was the illegitimate son of John Petty-Fitzmaurice, 1st Earl of Shelburne (see Lansdowne MSS.). He owned a large sugar estate in Dominica called Bowood Park, see P.A., 17 April 1776.

position increased his interest in East India affairs. It is true that Shelburne extracted a promise from him not to speculate in India stock while he was Under Secretary, but this, seemingly, was a mere matter of form.[1] There is some evidence that he increased rather than diminished his speculative interests (largely through nominees), and he was certainly brought into the centre of East India politics, where his patron Lord Shelburne had for some time been concerning himself.

The stage was set in early 1767 for one of the great battles in the Company's history. Broadly speaking, the conflict was concerned with the British government's threat to investigate the Company's affairs, and its intention to claim a share of the Company's territorial revenues.[2] Apart from those who were either for or against such intervention, there was a group whose members were ready to acknowledge the government's financial claims, but rejected any interference with the Company's patronage, trade and charter rights. In addition to this purely political issue there was the attitude of the stock speculators, who resented any move that would curtail their activities and who were determined to use their £500 voting qualifications at Company elections to further their own ends. The main goal was to raise the dividend to 10%, higher if possible. The method they intended to employ was the notorious 'splitting' operation, whereby large blocks of shares owned by wealthy Proprietors were broken down into £500 units, registered in the names of compliant nominees, kept until the day of the election and then, having been used by the nominees to vote for the rightful owners' candidates, transferred back to the wealthy Proprietors. The method helped, above all else, to disguise the actual support enjoyed by each of the aspiring candidates.

Macleane, already deeply involved in India stock, agreed to manage the

1. Sutherland, p.207.
2. ibid., pp.138-176.

splitting campaign of a powerful consortium of Proprietors, drawn not only from those he had been associated with before, but also from others who were prepared to follow his lead.[1] To these were added new henchmen, among them a Scottish adventurer named John Stewart,[2] who were willing to act as nominees. The aim was to support Laurence Sulivan and push the dividend up to 10%. At the General Court of Proprietors on 6th May 1767 Sulivan's group, largely it would seem as a result of the support given by Macleane's consortium, won a sweeping victory, and the dividend was declared at 12½%.[3]

The Administration, alarmed at this instance of irresponsibility on the part of the Company, in view of their own interest in its financial stability, introduced a Dividend Bill which prohibited the Company from raising its dividend within the following year without Parliamentary consent. Macleane's triumph had enhanced his reputation, upon which he was soon to base the greatest gamble of his life, but the Company had lost the first major round in its fight against government interference. The days of the Company as a fully autonomous body were now numbered. The Dividend Bill was the thin edge of a dangerous wedge, the broad end of which was to emerge as the Regulating Act of 1773.[4]

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1. One of those for whom Macleane acted was Henry Fox, 1st Baron Holland (1705-1774), see B.M.Add.MSS.51434 (The Holland House Papers, which have not yet been given folio numbers), two letters: L.Macleane to Lord Holland, 27 September 1766, and Lord Holland to L.Macleane, 6 October 1766. In the first Macleane complains of the lack of co-operation on the part of Lord Holland's man of business, John Powell. In the second Holland insists that he gave Macleane 100 votes to raise the dividend, and for no other purpose.
2. John Stewart (d.1778), a well-travelled adventurer who had probably seen service in the army as a Captain in North America during the Seven Years War before living in the West Indies. In 1765 he was in the King's Bench Prison for a debt he owed a certain James Russell. Under the aegis of Macleane both he and his brother Thomas Stewart were found employment in the Secretary of State's Office, and, on the strength of his linguistic ability, he was sent by Shelburne on a secret mission to France and Corsica in 1768. He was the son of James Stewart, an attorney of the Exchequer in Edinburgh, whose testament dative (see S.R.O., Com.Edin.Test., vol.122, pt.1, 29 April 1772) gives all the kinsmen of John Stewart. He married, on 11 December 1777, Johanna Maria, daughter of William Murray, a planter of Jamaica, but had no issue by her. The family of Cortlandt-Macgregor, who still claim descent from John Stewart, are in fact descended from his sister Isobel, who married Captain Macartney, R.N. His only surviving (and illeg.) son was John Maclean Stewart (1768-1816), Major, 21 B.N.I.
3. Sutherland, pp.171-172.
4. ibid., p.172.

During 1767 Shelburne's name was in no way connected with the ventures of his subordinate, but it is likely that Macleane acted for his superior on the Continental stock exchanges under the cover of nominees, among them Shelburne's cousin Sir John Hort.[1] But the need for discretion on this score was not to last much longer. Chatham, sick with gout and nerves, was allowing the reins of government to slip into the hands of the Duke of Grafton,[2] who had supported the policies of Shelburne but now veered towards those of the Duke of Bedford.[3] The views of Shelburne and Bedford on Colonial, especially American, affairs were diametrically opposed, and Bedford used his influence with Grafton to take the control of Colonial affairs away from Shelburne's Southern Department.[4] In January 1768 a new Colonial Department was created under one of Bedford's adherents, and Macleane, whose task as Principal Under Secretary was almost entirely concerned with American affairs, found himself redundant and out of office. His ten years' run of unbroken good luck had ended. His dismissal was no fault of his own, and he could have done nothing to forestall it. He was, however, far from ruined. He still had his East India stock gains, he had large holdings in the West Indies land syndicate, he had obtained a grant in the Canadian Island of St. John (now Prince Edward Island),[5] and he was on the point of being elected as a Member of Parliament for the borough of Arundel in Sussex, a seat returning two members.

Sir George Colebrooke, the borough proprietor, for whom Macleane had bought lands in Grenada five years earlier, accepted his former agent as his fellow

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1. Sir John Hort (1735-1807), 1st Baronet of Castle Strange, Middlesex. For his stock dealings see Sutherland, p.208.
2. Augustus Henry Fitzroy, 3rd Duke of Grafton (1735-1811).
3. John Russell, 4th Duke of Bedford (1710-1771).
4. For the background of this situation see The Chatham Administration: 1766-1768 John Brooke, London, 1956; and Shelburne and Reform, John Norris, London, 1963.
5. J.C.T.P., (1764-1767), pp.402 and 413. The brothers Lauchlin and Henry Macleane were granted 21,000 acres in Grenville Parish, a sub-division of Queen's County, St.John Island, on 23 July 1767. After the East India stock crash in 1769 the whole of this territory was conveyed (without charge) to Lauchlin Macleane's henchman, Allan Maclean.

member, and they were elected without opposition on 16th March 1768.[1] This alliance must have puzzled many East India politicians, because Colebrooke, an aspirant for the leadership of the Company and a follower of Clive, was the major rival of Sulivan, one of whose active supporters was Macleane. But through Colebrooke's man of business Jack Stewart,[2] a wine merchant and a cousin of the adventurer John Stewart, Macleane hoped to bring the rivals together. Orme had already been estranged from Clive and was now in the Sulivan camp, and through the biggest operation he ever organised Macleane intended to bring many more. His plan - 'The Great Scheme' as Orme called it - was to raise one great fund of £100,000 stock, with the help of all his former associates and others besides. Twenty-three people, including Shelburne, Sulivan, Monckton, Verney, Panchaud, William Burke,[3] Richard Burke and Henry Vansittart,[4] formed a coalition of subscribers who pledged themselves to return the stock after the next election at a price of 280, whether or not the stock then stood at this figure.[5] As the stock had never approached that quotation before, 'The Great Scheme' amounted to a great gamble.

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1. Parl.Hist., xvi, p.446; Tompkins Diary, p.15; and for a comment see The Diary of Sylas Neville: 1767-1788, ed. B.Cozens-Hardy, Oxford, 1950, p.43, where Neville, in his entry for 22 September 1768, states: "Arundel is a dead disagreable town. The Corporation of this corrupt & servile Borough has refused [sic] Maclaine [sic], an infamous clerk of Ld.Shelburne's, to represent it in Parliament." The editor probably misread the original MS., and transcribed 'refused' for 'returned'. On p.349 the editor wrongly identifies 'Maclaine' as 'Col.Allan Maclean', who was never a M.P., and did not achieve a colonelcy until May 1772.
2. John Stewart (1723-1781), known as 'Jack' Stewart by his friends (and used as a description here to distinguish him from his kinsman John Stewart, see above, p.18, n.2); see also N.L.S., MSS 4945 (Mure of Caldwell Papers), f.98v Andrew Stuart to Baron William Mure, 28 March 1771. He was the son and partner of Archibald Stewart, wine merchant of York Buildings, Buckingham Street, The Strand, London, the latter having been tried and acquitted in Edinburgh on the charge of being a rebel in the Jacobite rising of 1745. He acted as the jackal, or man of business, to Sir George Colebrooke, and succeeded Lauchlin Macleane as M.P. for Arundel.
3. Richard Burke (1733-1794), the younger brother of Edmund Burke.
4. Henry Vansittart (1732-1770?), a former Governor of Bengal.
5. Sutherland, p.188. India stock was quoted in units of £100; '280', therefore, meant that £280 had to be paid for £100 stock, and that £1,400 had to be paid for £500 stock, the minimum (and only) holding which carried a vote. If a Proprietor held £500,000 stock, only £500 counted towards voting rights.

The purpose was achieved. At the election on 5th April 1769 Sulivan was made a Director, and Colebrooke realised his ambition by becoming Chairman of the Company.[1] Sulivan's position was still not strong enough to control the Court of Directors, but now that he was sitting with Colebrooke the prospects of bridging the gap between the two seemed much brighter. The jubilation of Sulivan's followers was, however, short-lived. Without warning they were all faced with financial ruin. The boom in India stock, which had been in progress almost continually since 1766, was halted by the alarming rumour from India that Haidar Ali, the turbulent ruler of Mysore, was preparing to attack Madras, and that the French fleet was massing at Mauritius. The war with Haidar Ali ended in peace on his terms and the French threat came to nothing, but before this good news reached England the damage had been done. Confidence in the stock dissolved, and the price plunged to 223.[2]

On settlement day, 18th July 1769, the subscribers to Macleane's 'Great Scheme', who had promised their brokers to settle at 280 come what may, faced a joint debt of £57,000; and this figure represented only their losses as participants in the scheme. Many of them had also speculated on their own account as well.[3] Macleane's liabilities alone were reckoned at £90,000. He had both made and lost a great fortune in East India stock speculation. But his debts were so extensive, and his connexions so far reaching, that he was not allowed to go under. Men as various as Lord Shelburne (whom he owed £30,000, lent under very ambiguous circumstances), Laurence Sulivan and Sir George Colebrooke were deeply concerned in the re-establishment of his future. Both his connexions and the circumstances of the time made India the only field in which this could be done, and Macleane himself, though beset with all the

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1. Sutherland, p.190.
2. Dilke, ii, p.338.
3. Sutherland, p.192; and Maclean, p.503,(n.880).

difficulties and distresses of large-scale and spectacular financial failure, co-operated vigorously in saving himself.

An immediate attempt to obtain a post for him as a member of a Commission of Supervisors which was being sent out to India failed.[1] It was just as well, because the three men[2] that went lost their lives at sea. When no other prospects were presented he sold his fine house in St.Marylebone, abandoned his wife, and went to live in less pretentious surroundings in Lambeth with a wealthy widow named Penelope Agnew.[3] His (and John Stuart's) estates in the West Indies were mortgaged and placed under the care of a trust headed by Robert Orme.[4] The next three years were devoted to retrenchment and renaissance by Macleane and his friends. Their strength, such as it was, rested on their loyalty to each other. His adherents included not only his youngest brother Henry Macleane (his second brother Matthews Macleane had returned from Dominica and had settled again in Ireland as a parish priest), his henchman Allan Maclean and his partner John Stuart, but also Andrew Stuart, the lawyer whose initial success in the Douglas Cause in the Scottish courts had been reversed by a decision of the House of Lords, the latter's brother James Stuart, and the cousins Jack Stewart and John Stewart; a tight network of expatriates who were determined to help each other succeed.

The first to gain a lucrative post was John Stewart. In January 1771 he was appointed Judge Advocate General of Bengal through the help of Sir George Colebrooke, and was soon on his way to India. In April another glimmer of hope

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1. Sutherland, p.194 (n.2), and p.197.
2. Henry Vansittart, Francis Forde and Luke Scrafton. They left England in the Aurora, and were never heard of alive again after leaving the Cape of Good Hope. One report (P.A., 2 July 1773) suggested that they were murdered.
3. Penelope Agnew (1736-1773), widow of Lt.Colonel Alexander Agnew (d.1768), Military Judge Advocate of Scotland, and daughter of Lt.General Sir Andrew Agnew, 5th Baronet of Lochnaw. Her only legitimate son, Patrick Alexander Agnew (c.1764-1813) was adopted by Lauchlin Macleane in 1769 or 1770.
4. I.O.L./Orme: O.V.202(33F), f.86, R.Orme to Wm.Ridge, Snr., 19 December 1771. Orme's co-trustees were two London merchants - Peter Simond and John Hankey.

came for those ruined in 'The Great Scheme' when the long sought coalition of Colebrooke and Sulivan was achieved at the Company's annual election.[1] A month later Macleane gave up his seat in Parliament to Jack Stewart, and accepted a sinecure from Lord North,[2] the Prime Minister, as Superintendent of Lazarettos, which supplied him with enough money to buy back a £500 voting stake in the Company as a Proprietor.[3] He had made a great show of supporting Lord North's Administration, and had disingenuously defended his action before relinquishing his seat by claiming before the House of Commons that he had "supported the present Administration for these four years."[4] He had also compiled a report on the Spanish Colonies which had probably helped North to formulate his policy on the dangerous situation caused by Britain's dispute with Spain over the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands. The information for this report he had obtained from the Marquis d'Aubarède.[5]

In January 1772, Macleane received a second sinecure from Lord North, and became the Collector-General of Philadelphia, which incurred no travelling to America but brought him an income of at least £1000 a year.[6] At the next annual election of the Company in the spring, the Colebrooke-Sulivan coalition was continued; Colebrooke as Chairman and Sulivan as Deputy Chairman. But they were captains of a shaky empire. The collapse of the London money market in June, when many of the banks stopped payment, and when (among other things) a decline in the territorial revenues of Bengal (where a trade depression had been

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1. Sutherland, p.204.
2. Frederick North, styled Lord North (1732-1792).
3. P.A., 15 May 1771.
4. Cavendish Debates, p.289, speech of 13 February 1771.
5. Claude-Guillaume d'Aubarède, Marquis d'Aubarède (1717-1795). See: P.R.O., Home Office Papers (Domestic Series) SP-37/7, ff.262-309, Papers and Narrative relative to the Marquis d'Aubarède's Plans & Schemes, dated 21 December 1770, compiled by Lauchlin Macleane, and entered into the records by J[ohn] R[obinson] for Lord North.
6. P.A., 15 January 1772.

aggravated by a disastrous famine) placed the Company in serious financial straits, obliged the Directors to seek a loan from the government.[1] This lessened appreciably the Company's ability to resist government interference.

A new Commission of Supervisors had been proposed, and to prevent the government making suggestions for candidates the Company hurriedly issued its own list of nominations. Andrew Stuart and Robert Monckton were chosen as Supervisors, and in the same list Lauchlin Macleane and his former employee in the West Indies, John Weir, were named as Comptrollers.[2] These appointments drew from the press a long and violent spate of abuse, so violent that in December 1772 (on the recommendation of the Committee of Secrecy) an Act was quickly pushed through Parliament to prohibit temporarily the dispatch of Supervisors to India.[3]

By this time anyway the Company had already lost its fight to remain fully autonomous. In April 1772 the House of Commons had set up a Select Committee under Colonel John Burgoyne[4] to look into the Company's affairs. In November North had appointed a Secret Committee to inspect the Company's papers, with a view to government action.[5] In this desperate situation Sulivan exerted all his power and managed to obtain a post for Macleane as Commissary General of Bengal, which carried with it the rank of Colonel.[6] It was passed by the Company in December 1772, and was finally confirmed when he was given permission

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1. Sutherland, pp.222-225.
2. P.A., 31 July 1772. For the fullest comments on this attempt to form a Commission of Supervisors (other than reports in Company records) see: N.L.S., MSS.4945 (Mure of Caldwell Papers), ff.135, 174-175v, 182-183v, 190-191v, and 192-193v; five letters from Andrew Stuart to Baron William Mure and David Hume, all bearing dates in 1772. Monckton and Stuart failed to secure their posts as Supervisors, and John Weir failed to go out to India as a Comptroller. Weir (see above, p.12, n.4) eventually secured the post of Commissary General of Dominica (P.A., 19 December 1776) in addition to his appointment as President of the Council of Dominica (P.A., 7 September 1776). The details of his subsequent career and the date of his death are not known.
3. Sutherland, p.236.
4. John Burgoyne (1723-1792), M.P. for Preston, later a General and remembered for the disaster of his surrender at Saratoga during the American Revolution.
5. Sutherland, pp.231-238.
6. I.O.L./H.M.S.,358, ff.95-96; and I.O.L./Court Bk.81, p.336.

to proceed to India in April 1773, a few days before Sulivan and Colebrooke lost their seats in the Court of Directors, and only two months before North's Regulating Act, the government's mandate for controlling affairs in India, became law.

In May 1773 Macleane's mistress Penelope Agnew, who bore him two children, died.[1] The following month Macleane, his great frame wasted to a skeleton as the result of worry, his past exertions and recurrent chest complaints, boarded the Egmont Indiaman with his brother Henry Macleane (who had been given the post of Writer in the Company's service)[2] and set sail for Calcutta.[3] In his forty-fifth year Lauchlin Macleane had nothing left except his incredible will to succeed again, for his last act before leaving had been to resign his sinecure as Collector-General of Philadelphia.[4] On him rested the hopes of Shelburne, Sulivan and his many other creditors.

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1. The combined Baptismal/Burial Register of St.Mary's, Lambeth, for the years 1755-1773, which is kept at The Minet Library, London, S.E.5.
2. I.O.L./Orme: O.V.43(32B), f.237, L.Macleane to R.Orme, 13 November 1773.
3. ibid., and I.O.L./H.M.S.,358, f.101.
4. N.L.S., Ch.3906, Letter of Attorney from John Patterson to Nathaniel Coffin, dated 29 June 1773 at Philadelphia. The instrument confirming the surrender by Lauchlin Macleane of his perquisites of office as Collector-General to John Patterson of Philadelphia, who by the same instrument transferred them to Nathaniel Coffin of Boston.

CHAPTER 2 - Commissary General of Bengal: October 1773 - April 1774.

When Lauchlin Macleane landed at Calcutta at the end of October 1773 he[1] was in such poor health, and his resistance to illness so low, that he became an immediate victim of the Indian climate. He succumbed to a severe bout of "bilious flux" (as he described dysentery) and its attendant ailment, acute depression, which brought to the surface all his feelings of disappointment and frustration. His state of mind was revealed in a letter he sent Robert Orme two weeks after his arrival. He said:

"I went a skeleton on board, I got fat and full of gross humours at sea, I bustled about in the sun on landing, and the consequence of all this has been a bilious flux with a slow fever. ...

I should do very well here if I had a permanent seat in Council; without this I must drudge on many years. Only look into the list of servants now below Council at Bengal, and you will find they have all come out boys to this settlement since I have been in business of confidence and trust at home.

Where, then, can the impropriety be of giving me some efficient rank here; for at present I am in appearance a great deal, while in reality I am nothing. I have a partial voice, partially at the Board, and yet that voice is no voice. I am a Colonel and yet I am no Colonel. To explain this I refer you to a copy of Resolutions enclosed to General Monckton." [2]

The Resolutions to which Macleane referred were dated 30th October 1773, and were governed by the Company's General Letter to Bengal of 17th April, which set out the reasons for his appointment, and the limitations of his authority, in the following terms:

"The absolute necessity of retrenching the excessive military charges of your Presidency has induced us to appoint Lauchlin Macleane Esq.r Commissary General

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1. I.O.L./H.M.S., 358, f.101, Extract of the General Letter from Bengal, dated 10 November 1773, "Mr.McClean [sic] whom you have been pleased to appoint Commissary General of Army Accounts, arrived here in the Egmont about a fortnight ago."
2. I.O.L./Orme: O.V.43(32B), f.237, L.Macleane to R.Orme, 13 November 1773. Robert Monckton, Macleane's former patron and associate in the West Indies land deals and East India stock ventures, remained his friend, in spite of the stock crash.

of Bengal, whose sole attention being fixed on one subject, we flatter ourselves that he will be able to effectuate such a reduction of extra and contingent expences as may fully answer our expectations in his appointment. ...

Mr.Macleane for his services as Commissary General is to be allowed the salary and emoluments annexed to the station of Youngest Counsellor, and in order to give him rank in the field, we have granted him a Brevet Commission with the rank of Colonel, but he is not to perform any military duty, or receive any pay or batta[1] or other emoluments in consequence of his military rank."[2]

On these basic instructions the Council of Bengal had resolved on 30th October that Macleane had authority "to control and regulate all paymasters and contractors, to audit and certify all bills for military charges of whatever nature"[3] and it was considered correct not only to allow him the "privilege of recording his dissent to any measure regarding them which may be adopted by the Board,"[4] but it was also "thought expedient and consonant to these orders to give him a share in the deliberations of the Board upon them;"[5] it was "resolved therefore that Mr.Macleane be at all times summoned to attend the Board of Inspection when military accounts or regulations were to come under their consideration that his advice be required upon them."[6]

The Bengal Board of Inspection had, therefore, kept within the limits of the Company's instruction of 17th April, but had interpreted them in such a way as to give Macleane the widest possible powers. He had no grounds for complaint. His commission as Colonel had been granted to give him, the holder of a civil post, some standing in the eyes of the army, and sufficient rank to deal with the regimental and battalion commanders whose units' finances came under his control. It is quite clear, and Macleane knew it, that he was never intended

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1. batta: an Anglo-Indian word for 'allowance'. It was paid to army officers on active duty in the field.
2. I.O.L./H.M.S., 358, ff.95-96, paras.56 and 58 of the Company's General Letter to Bengal, dated 17 April 1773.
3. ibid., f.98, Extract of Bengal General Consultations, dated 30 October 1773.
4. ibid., f.99, loc.cit.
5. ibid., f.99, loc.cit.
6. ibid., f.99, loc.cit.

to be accorded the military respects and privileges of a regular Colonel. His sense of grievance regarding his position on the Board of Inspection was also without foundation. He had been extremely fortunate in securing a post of any sort, let alone to have been granted "the salary and emoluments annexed to the station of Youngest Counsellor," which was a salary rating and not an award of a rank. Although he was to return again to this provision when airing his grievances at a later date, it had been a concession; and the privilege of sitting at the Board of Inspection, which the Resolution of 30th October extended to him, was an extra concession not envisaged by the Court of Directors in London when they created the office of Commissary General of Bengal.[1]

There can be no doubt that it was the psychological effects of his illness that allowed him to take such a jaundiced view of his situation and write to Orme in such pessimistic terms. Months before his letter reached Orme he had thrown off his fit of depression and had made the most of his connexions.[2] When he arrived in Calcutta in October 1773 Warren Hastings, the Governor of Bengal, his principal hope for preferment, still had a year to act without undue obstruction. He was not to feel the force of the Regulating Act until the men appointed to take their places on the reconstituted Council of Bengal arrived in October 1774. Hastings was, therefore, in a strong position to help the protégés of his friends and allies in the Company at home, and this had been brought to his notice by Laurence Sulivan, his friend and the close associate of Sir George Colebrooke, the man to whom he owed his own appointment as Governor.[3]

In a letter he received from Sulivan at the time of Macleane's arrival he

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1. On 9th December 1772 the Court of Directors created two new posts, which were designated Comptrollers of the Army and Fortification Accounts, one at Bengal, the other at Madras. On 25th March 1773 the titles were changed to Commissary General of Bengal, and Commissary General of Madras.
2. Warren Hastings (1732-1818), the only son of an irresponsible clergyman, Rev. Penyston Hastings, the impoverished cadet of landed gentry in the Cotswolds. He went to India as a Writer in 1750; he rose by sheer ability to be 'Second' of Council at Madras in 1769, and Governor of Bengal in 1772.
3. Gleig, i, pp.177-178.

was told:

"It will be an act of great kindness in you to give him [Macleane] every suitable support. I, in particular, shall feel your kindness to him in a very sensible degree, and be assured he will merit it by assiduity, ability and gratitude. With military rank the Committee had once put him of Council, whenever his own department was considered by the Board; altered again to a fixed Council [post], not to rise, and at last both rejected. I mentioned these matters that if he should establish himself in your favor by a vigorous, firm and able discharge of his trust, these should serve as hints for obtaining him respectable rank in the civil line, thro' your influence. I mean, by recommending him in the General Letter, and in your private letters to your friends. ... When I first knew Mr.Maclean[sic] he was Under Secretary of State, Lieut.^{t} Gov.^{r} of St.Vincent's, Member of Parliam.^{t} and in affluence - Alas! what a reverse." [1]

Earlier in the same letter Sulivan had left no doubt that he and many other creditors of Macleane's, as well as Macleane himself, depended on this chance to re-establish their fortunes. Sulivan, aided by Colebrooke, had, in the face of stiff opposition and bad publicity, pushed Macleane's appointment through the Court of Directors, and had justified it on the grounds that he would, as controller of military expediture, help the Company to put its own house in order; a gesture, which if noticed, had not the slightest effect on Lord North's determination to regulate the Company. The grounds did, however, provide the opponents of Sulivan and Colebrooke in the Company with a plausible explanation which saved everyone's face, and this was all they had probably intended. Their

1. B.M.Add.MSS.29133, f.533 et seq, L.Sulivan to W.Hastings, 28 April 1773. Sulivan was, of course, wrong to infer that Macleane had held three offices at one and the same time. He held them successively, as follows: Lieutenant Governor of St.Vincent (non-resident) from 22 May 1766 to 1 October 1766; Under Secretary of State (Principal, American Affairs) for the Southern Department from 7 October 1766 to 30 January 1768; and M.P. for Arundel (elected 16 March 1768, resigned (by accepting a Stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds) 8 May 1771). It must be pointed out, however, that Macleane retained his title as Under Secretary until 1 August 1768 in order to clear up his responsibilities for matters concerned with the Marquis d'Aubarède and with John Stewart's mission to Corsica, which meant that he was Under Secretary and M.P. at the same time, but from 30 January 1768 to 1 August 1768 his actual duties as Under Secretary in charge of American Affairs had been taken over by the new Colonial Department, and his title was empty and meaningless.

main object had been to provide Macleane with the best possible means of making money quickly, so that he had the wherewithal to reimburse themselves and his other creditors. The salary[1] of a Commissary General was basically £1000 a year plus a Youngest Counsellor's share in the revenue, but the scope for creating extra forms of income was limited only by the ingenuity of the office holder.

Macleane had the necessary ingenuity, but he was not fit enough to further his interests until three months after his arrival in India. On 13th January 1774, still far from well, he wrote officially to Hastings for the first time.

"I take," he said, "the first opportunity, that a bad state of health has permitted me, to pay obedience to the commands of the Board, signified by a copy of the minutes of the 30th October, that I should communicate my sentiments upon such additional powers or orders as may more effectually allow me to answer the designs of my appointment." [2]

After some general observations he continued by stating what he thought were the two ways in which he could be more effective. The first was "the right to appoint my own staff," [3] and the second was "my expectation to have a seat and voice at the Board as Youngest Counsellor fixed. This I conceived was implied

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1. The details of Macleane's salary were given when Lt.Colonel Alexander Dow was appointed his successor as Commissary General in 1775 (see I.O.L./H.M.S., 358, f.135 et seq., Extract from the Proceedings of the Board of Inspection, dated 13 July 1775) - "Resolved that he [Dow] be allowed the same pay and allowances which were granted to his predecessor Colonel Macleane.

That is to say:	Current Rupees
Allowance per month 98.7.6.	1181. 10
Salary per annum. Sicca Rupees 1820.	2111.
Factor's provision.	175.
House rent per month. 540.	6480.
	9947. 10 per annum

and

Revenue share of Youngest Counsellor on the late establishment."

By 1775 the "late establishment" meant the pre-Regulating Act administration in Bengal. If 2/-d. is allowed to be the rate of exchange for 1 current rupee (see Burke (Bohn), vi, p.49), then 9947 current rupees equals £994. 14. 0, but allowing 1 extra rupee per week (or 52 rupees more per annum) gives an exact exchange of £1,000 per annum.

2. I.O.L./H.M.S., 358, f.103, Extract of Bengal General Consultations, dated 13 January 1774, quoting L.Macleane to W.Hastings, of the same date.

3. ibid., f.108, op.cit.

by that phrase in the minute of the Directors which accompanied the General Letter, and which says that the Commissary General shall have all the emoluments, salary and allowances of Youngest (not the Youngest) Counsellor."[1] He concluded by giving the categories of extra staff he needed, which were: one Deputy Commissary General, with Major's rank, pay, batta and allowances; four Assistant Deputy Commissary Generals, each with Captain's rank, pay, batta and allowances, and nine clerks of different grades; the whole cost of their employment to be reckoned at 79,800 (approx. £8,000) annually.[2]

For a man whose primary task had been defined as the reduction of military expenditure this was an audacious demand, and his quibble over the lack of the definite article before "Youngest Counsellor" (let alone the right to sit at the Board as such) seemed provocative and pointless. By "Youngest (not the Youngest) Counsellor he probably meant "Junior (not the most Junior) Counsellor", but as stated earlier, he knew that this phrase had been used to define his salary, and not to give him status.

In spite of Macleane's effrontery, the Board at their next meeting on 28th January granted nearly all his demands for extra staff, the only amendment being that the Assistant Deputy Commissary Generals would not be allowed the batta or gratuities of Captains, and that they would each be obliged to carry out the additional duties of a Commissary of Musters (or auditor of regimental pay accounts).[3] The whole question of his demand for recognition as "Youngest Counsellor" was adriotly avoided; the Board simply refused to comment on it.

In his next letter to Hastings and the Board, Macleane also allowed the issue of his status to remain in abeyance, but he consolidated his right to employ

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1. I.O.L./H.M.S., 358, f.109, op.cit.
2. ibid., ff.123-124, Extract of the Company's General Letter to Bengal, dated 3 March 1775.
3. ibid., f.113, Extract of Bengal General Consultations, dated 28 January 1774.

extra staff by recommending "the following covenanted servants of the Honourable Company for the approbation and appointment of the Board, vizt:

Matthew Gunning - to be Deputy Commissary General
J.Peter Auriol - to be Assistant Deputy Commissary General
George Templer - to be Assistant Deputy Commissary General
Henry Macleane - to be Assistant Deputy Commissary General
David Vanderheyden to be Assistant Deputy Commissary General." [1]

The list was submitted on 17th February 1774, and the Board approved it in its entirety the same day.[2] Macleane's empire was beginning to take shape.

Hastings was impressed by Lauchlin Macleane. He had heard good accounts of him not only from Sulivan, but also from the Secretary of his Council and the Judge Advocate General of Bengal, John Stewart, one of Macleane's former henchmen. It was to Stewart that Hastings later confided his attitude to Macleane by saying of him that "no man living ever won so much of my confidence in so short an acquaintance."[3] As Hastings also admitted to Stewart that he possessed a "reserve which it is not my nature to throw off but by long and familiar intercourse"[4], it was a testimony to Macleane's charm, and his ability to project an image of sincerity and integrity, in spite of his sickness and

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1. I.O.L./H.M.S., 358, f.119, Extract of Bengal General Consultations, dated 17 February 1774, quoting L.Macleane to W.Hastings, of the same date. For the five appointees see I.O.L., Personal Records of East India Company Civil Servants vol.xiv, and Shelf Mark 31/F.2, East India Company's Civil Servants: 1771-1779. In both sources all five are listed as "Writers - 1773". Matthew Gunning was the son of Charles Gunning, the first cousin of Elizabeth, Duchess of Argyll, whose lawyer was Andrew Stuart, Lauchlin Macleane's close friend. John Peter Auriol, a very competent man, was later (1791) to be named in the fourth charge made against Warren Hastings, when the latter was tried in London. Auriol was given by Hastings the agency to supply food to Madras in addition to some valuable military contracts, which the prosecution cited as an example of Hastings's corrupt dealings in awarding contracts to his favourites. After the trial, when Hastings was in straitened circumstances, Auriol was one of the few men who came to his financial rescue (see Feiling, pp.241-242 and 369). Henry Macleane was Lauchlin's youngest brother. George Templer and David Vanderheyden have not been identified.
2. I.O.L./H.M.S., 358, f.120, op.cit.; and I.O.L., Range 2, Shelf 5, Bengal Public Council (Jan-May 1774), pp.385-386.
3. W.Hastings to J.Stewart, - Jan 1776,(printed Davies, p.220).
4. ibid., loc.cit.

his stutter.

When Macleane's health showed no signs of improving, Hastings himself, through his personal physician Dr.Hancock[1], ordered him to take a trip to Madras.[2] A month in the sea air, away from the fetid heat of Bengal, was frequently prescribed as a corrective for Europeans suffering from acute dysentery, and Macleane did as he was ordered. His department was in the hands of men he had picked himself, whose actions, in any case, could be double-checked by his brother Henry, one of the four new Assistant Deputy Commissary Generals. And, as an extra safeguard, his friend John Stewart was close by to keep an eye on his interests generally. There remained only the need to establish the means by which he might acquire extra sources of income, and this he dealt with before he set sail for Madras.

What he achieved was recorded in the General Letter from Bengal of 15th March, which stated:

"Since our last advice the Commissary General, who has long laboured under severe sickness, has gone to Madras for the recovery of his health. Some time before his departure we settled the arrangement of his office. At the same time he addressed us, representing that as besides the supplies which were furnished by contract, there were several contingencies and incidental supplies, which by their nature could not be provided by that mode, but must be entrusted to the charge of some person to provide them as the exigency arises. That it was intended by the Court of Directors that he should be entrusted with this business, and offered to furnish us with supplies at <u>15 per cent cheaper</u> than had been at an average for some years past. ... The Commissary General, from the confidential nature of his appointment, appearing the most fit for such a

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1. Tysoe Saul Hancock (d.1775), was one of Clive's protegés, and a former trading partner of Hastings in salt, timber, carpets, Bihar opium and rice from Madras. His wife was Philadelphia Austen, aunt of the celebrated Jane Austen.
2. I.O.L./H.M.S., 286, ff.39-40; and Bod., Vansittart Papers, Dep.b.97, p.27, G.Vansittart to R.Palk, 22 March 1774 - "Colonel Macleane has been obliged to have recourse to a change of air for the recovery of his health. He is gone to Madras. The approaching dispatch of the last ship of the season obliged us at length to set heartily about the reduction of military expences, although we could not have his assistance." This confirms that before Macleane left for Madras he had done nothing to justify his appointment as Commissary General, and that the Board had carried out his duties.

trust, and he absolutely undertaking to furnish these supplies considerably cheaper than heretofore, we came to the resolution that all contingent supplies not provided by contract should be furnished by the Commissary General."[1]

Among the articles to be supplied exclusively by the Commissary General were "iron, steel, copper, brass, canvas, wax candles and wax cloth,"[2] which hardly conformed to the term "contingent", but certainly would provide Macleane with the opportunity of making a small fortune. The right to supply canvas alone would give him a sure income from every ship that docked in Calcutta, and the exclusive right to supply the four most important metals was probably worth a great deal more. Hastings and the Board had stretched their powers to the limit, and had even exceeded their powers by accepting and acting on Macleane's unsubstantiated assurance "that it was intended by the Court of Directors that he should be entrusted with this business." There is no evidence to show any such intention. Hastings was, however, probably encouraged to take these steps by Sulivan, whose letter of 13th October 1773 arrived in Calcutta at this time.

"There are," wrote Sulivan, "two points I have much at heart. The first relates to Mr.Maclean [sic], of whom I have already said so much, and explained myself so fully, that it would be using you unkindly to press it further. I have only now most earnestly to entreat that his situation, to the extent you intend him, may be strongly and firmly fixed as soon as possible, because when your Council arrive they will never venture to alter your arrangements."[3]

The "because" in the last sentence gave it an optimistic meaning, which Sulivan, a political realist, could not have intended. He was probably using "because" instead of "so that", and was warning Hastings that the newly appointed members of Council under the Regulating Act were ready to depart for India, and that on their arrival it would be difficult to entrench Macleane in a position where he could make money. Earlier in his letter Sulivan had given a

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1. I.O.L./H.M.S., 358, ff.121-122, Extract of General Letter from Bengal, dated 15 March 1774.
2. ibid., f.126, Extract of Company's General Letter to Bengal, dated 3 Mar 1775.
3. B.M.Add.MSS.29134, ff.69-70, L.Sulivan to W.Hastings, 13 October 1773.

few outlines of the moves he had made to establish Hastings's position under the Act, and had said:

"From a conviction that the Bedford Party (Maclean [sic] will explain them) wished to act with great violence I very early conveyed my ideas to the fountain head. Your last letter establishing the grounds I should take I delivered to -------- for his perusal and the --------'s (these blanks will be filled up by Maclean [sic], who first opened the channel), proposing, that similar to the Gov.r General of Batavia, you alone should have responsible power over all the Presidencies." [1]

Hastings had, however, already heard from another source about the new settlement, and he knew, even before Macleane arrived, that it was intended to appoint him Governor General with control over the foreign affairs of the other Presidencies, Madras and Bombay.[2] But Sulivan's letter did underline the possibility of future difficulties, and it contained the first instance of Hastings being asked to trust Lauchlin Macleane's political judgment. By the time it arrived in Calcutta, Macleane was at sea on his way to Madras.

Up to the time he embarked there is not the slightest indication that he had become involved in Hastings's political affairs. During the first six months in India his illness had allowed him to do no more than organise his own department. In view of this handicap he had done well, but circumstances over which he could have no control were going to combine against him, and the means by which he had established himself were going to rebound when the new gentlemen, who were on their way out, took their seats on the Bengal Council.

At Madras, however, there awaited a new chance to exert his talents, and his first direct engagement in the native politics of India.

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29134, ff.69-70, op.cit. The blanks in the letter can only be guessed at; the first is probably"Lord North", the second is probably "King". For Sulivan's negotiations, and the example of the Governor General of Batavia's position, see Sutherland, p.262.
2. B.M.Add.MSS.29133, ff.443-493, J.Caillaud to W.Hastings, 15 March 1773; recd. in Calcutta, 15 October 1773.

CHAPTER 3 - Sick Leave and Introduction to Madras Politics: April to June 1774.

In this chapter it will be shown how Lauchlin Macleane, while on sick leave in Madras, laid the grounds for his future role as the agent of Mohammed Ali Khan, the Nabob of Arcot, who since 1755 had been the central figure in the politics of the Carnatic. The Nabob was in treaty relations with the Company through its Presidency of Fort St.George (Madras), and alone among Indian princes was recognised as ruler of his territory by the Crown of England. At Madras Macleane also met a man whom he had previously known in England, and who was much concerned in the Nabob's affairs, John Macpherson.

The Presidency of Madras differed markedly from that of Bengal. In general terms it may be said that the three Presidencies in which the East India Company's power in India was at this time established represented three stages in its advance from a trading company to a territorial power. The Presidency of Bombay retained most of the characteristics of the old trading settlement, that of Bengal, since Clive took over the diwani and Hastings 'stood forth as Diwan'[1], most nearly approached the status of territorial sovereignty. Madras was in an intermediate state of development, conducting its relations with the Indian powers surrounding it through its treaty relations with the Nabob, a situation which since the 1750's had mainly worked to the Company's disadvantage. This disadvantage arose from the complexity of the diplomatic situation in which the Company's foreign policy had to be carried out, the independent ambitions of the Nabob through whom they had to act, and the opportunities which their relations with the Nabob offered to Company servants and other European adventurers to seek their own ends and those of the Nabob at the expense of the Company's interest. At the time of Macleane's visit a further complication had for some

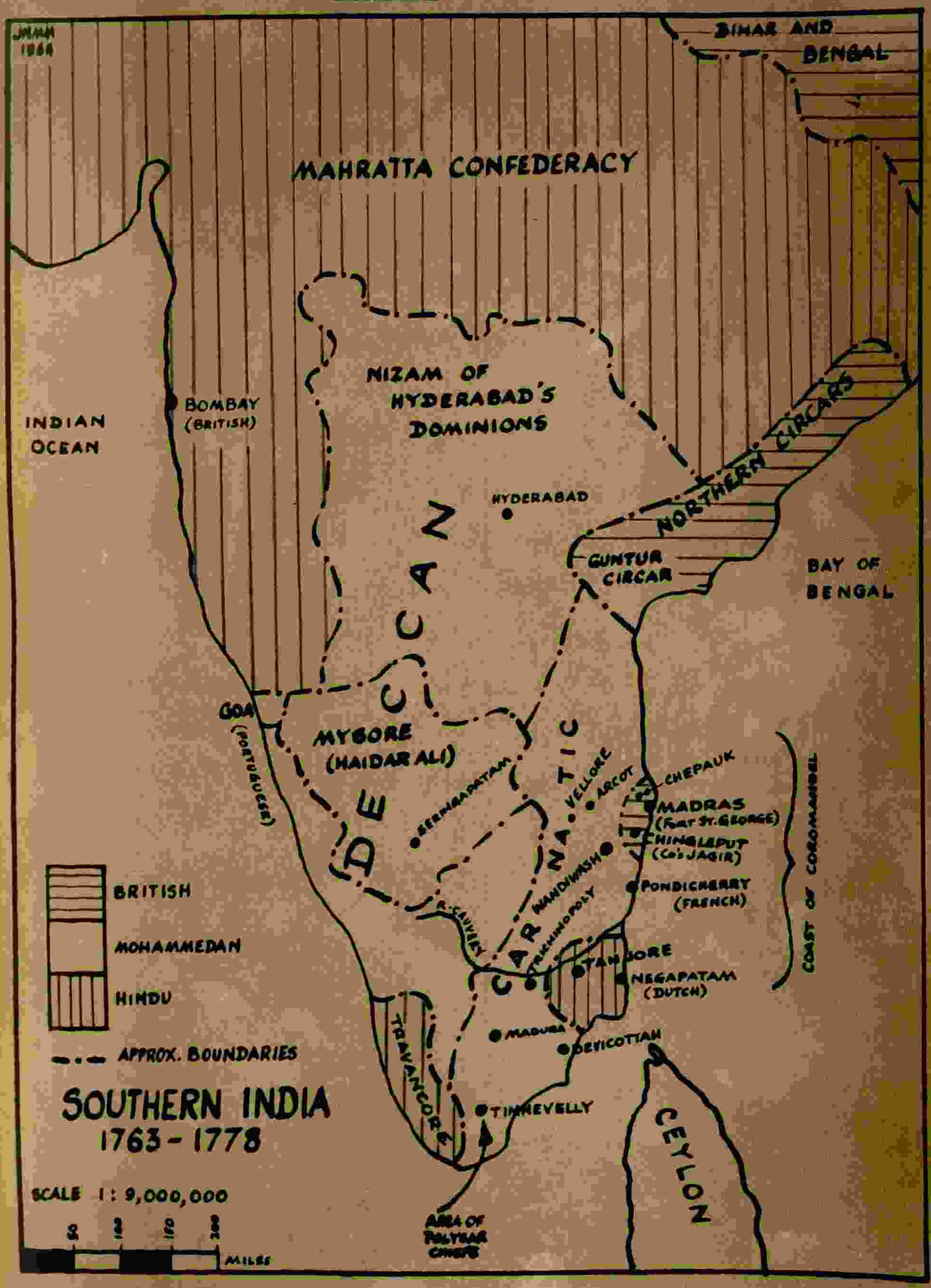
1. Quoted Sutherland, p.218. To 'stand forth as Diwan' meant assuming the diwani or the actual financial administration of the province which provided revenue. The word diwan (more familiar as divan) is the Persian word for 'bench' (cf. the magisterial 'bench' in Britain) and is extended to mean 'council' as well as the actual person in charge of the council. The diwani is the diwan's responsility.

years existed - the presence of representatives of the English government in direct touch with the Nabob, the officers acting in this capacity being the commanders of British naval units stationed in Indian waters. The Coast of Coromandel, and therefore the whole Carnatic, was at certain times of the year vulnerable to attack from the sea; and the French fleet at Mauritius was excuse enough for the presence of the British navy on permanent guard.

At this period the Carnatic comprised the whole of the broad coastal strip of south-east India from the tip of the sub-continent in the south to the Circars in the north. To the west it was joined by the Hindu state of Mysore and by the dominions of the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Subahdar (or Viceroy) of the Mogul Emperor for the whole Deccan. Within its boundaries were several minor European settlements controlled by the Dutch and Danish, and the citadels and hill forts of semi-independent petty chiefs called polygars, but the major settlements were those of the English at Madras, the French at Pondicherry, and the Hindu state of Tanjore, which was about 70 miles square, and one of the richest and most fertile areas in the whole territory.

At the close of the 17th century the Carnatic had been annexed through conquest by the Mogul Emperor, and made a dependency under the Subahdar of the Deccan, with a Nawab (or Nabob, to keep to the 18th century term) in control of the military government. The first dynasty of the Nabobs of the Carnatic (or "of Arcot" as they were generally known) came to an end in 1743, when they were overthrown and replaced by a general named Khwajah Abdullah Khan, whose confirmation as Nabob was immediately followed by his death.[1] In his stead

1. Love, ii, p.286. It was widely believed that Khwajah Abdullah Khan was murdered by his successor Anwar-ud-Din Khan, and the allegation was constantly revived by the opponents of the latter's son, Mohammed Ali Khan. On the first visit he made to England to air Mohammed Ali's grievances, John Macpherson wrote an article vindicating Anwar-ud-Din which was published in the second edition of Alexander Dow's History of Hindostan, London, 1770 (see I.O.L./H.M.S., 110, f.510, in which John Macpherson acknowledged authorship of the article).


JNHAN 1964
MAHRATTA CONFEDERACY
BIHAR AND BENGAL
INDIAN OCEAN
BOMBAY (BRITISH)
NIZAM OF HYDERABAD'S DOMINIONS
HYDERABAD
NORTHERN CIRCARS
GUNTUR CIRCAR
BAY OF BENGAL
GOA (PORTUGUESE)
MYSORE (HAIDAR ALI)
SERINGAPATAM
VELLORE
ARCOT
CHEPAUK
MADRAS (Fort St. GEORGE)
CHINGLEPUT (Co's JAGIR)
MANDIVASH
PONDICHERRY (FRENCH)
COAST OF CORAMANDEL
PULICHINOPOLY
R. CAUVERY
TANJORE
NEGAPATAM (DUTCH)
MADURA
DEVICOTTAH
TRAVANCORE
TINNEVELLY
CEYLON
AREA OF POLYGAR CHIEFS
BRITISH
MOHAMMEDAN
HINDU
APPROX. BOUNDARIES
SOUTHERN INDIA
1763 - 1778
SCALE 1 : 9,000,000
MILES

the Subahdar, Nizam-ul-Mulk[1], appointed Anwar-ud-Din Khan[2], the son of a commoner called Hadji Anwar, a Moslem scholar who had been ennobled after making the pilgrimage to Mecca.

Anwar-ud-Din, the first Nabob of the second Carnatic dynasty, was an old man when he was appointed, but he had three sons - Mahfuz Khan[3], Mohammed Ali Khan[4] and Abdul Wahab Khan[5]. Of these the second, Mohammed Ali, was the most able. He married soon after his father's accession as Nabob, and had with three younger sons and several daughters two elder sons - Umdat-ul-Umara[6], born in 1748[7], and Amir-ul-Umara[8], born two years later.

Mohammed Ali was an ambitious and devious man, but had it not been for Joseph Dupleix[9], the Governor of the French settlements in India, he might have had a different career. In 1746 the security of both the French and British in the Carnatic depended almost entirely on the protection provided by the aged Anwar-ud-Din. Dupleix, anxious to evict the British from Madras, obtained the help of Anwar-ud-Din by promising to hand over Madras to him once it had been captured. Dupleix succeeded in his aim, but failed to keep his promise, and when Anwar-ud-Din complained he took the field against him and defeated him. The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle of 1748 restored the <u>status quo</u> in India, and Madras was returned to the British. In the same year, Nizam-ul-Mulk, the most

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1. Chin Kilich Khan, Nizam-ul-Mulk, Asaf Jah (1671-1748), was of Tartar origin and one of the greatest generals of Aurangzeb, the Mogul Emperor, who made him the Subahdar of the Deccan and Nizam of Hyderabad.
2. Anwar-ud-Din Khan (1659-1749), was 85 years old when he became Nabob of Arcot.
3. Mahfuz Khan was originally appointed Deputy Nabob under his father, but was superseded by his brother Mohammed Ali in 1749. He was a treacherous person and ended his days as a dependent of Mohammed Ali.
4. Mohammed Ali Khan (1717-1795). According to one source (<u>Roberts</u>, p.107) he was illegitimate. He was a remarkably handsome man.
5. Abdul Wahab Khan was a weak and ineffectual person. When Madras was besieged in the winter of 1758-1759 he was given charge of a military unit, but proved himself incompetent as a soldier. He was probably identical with "Nasir-ud-Daulah", listed as a dependent brother of Mohammed Ali in 1780.
6. The three youngest sons of Mohammed Ali were Nasir-ul-Mulk, Saif-ul-Mulk and Itisam-ul-Mulk, none of whom were of any importance politically.
7. Umdat-ul-Umara (1748-1801).
8. Amir-ul-Umara (1750-1788).
9. Joseph-François Dupleix (1697-1763).

powerful Moslem prince in southern India died, and his sons, grandsons and several senior officials began to contest both the succession and the subordinate offices of power. Among these was Chanda Sahib, who coveted the post of Nabob of Arcot. Dupleix, who favoured him, gave his support, and in 1749 killed Anwar-ud-Din in battle and took Mahfuz Khan, the latter's eldest son, prisoner. Mohammed Ali, the second son, escaped to Trichinopoly, and Chanda Sahib was proclaimed Nabob. The only hope that Mohammed Ali had of regaining power for his family rested with the British. Circumstances had dictated his choice of ally - and his future career.

In the ensuing Carnatic War the British supported Mohammed Ali, while the French continued to aid Chanda Sahib. In 1751, Clive established his fame and reputation as a soldier by capturing Arcot, the political capital of the Carnatic. This obliged Chanda Sahib, who was besieging Trichinopoly, to split his army and send his better formations to recapture Arcot. Arcot was invested, but Clive withstood the siege, repelled Chanda Sahib's army, and followed up this victory with further successes, which gave the British the whip hand. In 1752, Jacques-François Law de Lauriston, the half-Scottish French commander, was compelled to surrender. Chanda Sahib, his army weakened, was confronted with the strength of the Rajahs of Mysore and Tanjore, who had entered into an uneasy alliance with Mohammed Ali. Overwhelmed by the threat of this coalition Chanda Sahib surrendered to the Rajah of Tanjore, and was beheaded.[1] The field was clear for Mohammed Ali. Henceforward he was <u>de facto</u> Nabob of Arcot, but he had lost his father's commanding position, for unlike his father he was beholden to a European army for his power. The French threat still existed, but at the end of 1753 the defeated Dupleix was driven to make overtures for peace. The French recalled him and sent out Godeheu, a Director of the French

1. <u>Love</u>, ii, p.429.

East India Company.[1] He negotiated a provisional treaty with the English in January 1755, the ratification of which was prevented by the onset of the Seven Years War. This did not, however, affect Mohammed Ali's de facto position. He was the native overlord of all the Carnatic, including the Hindu state of Tanjore, about which, in view of the importance in later years of the relations between overlord and tributary, something must be said.

The first Rajah of Tanjore was Ekoji, who founded the kingdom towards the end of the 17th century.[2] He was the son of the Mahratta soldier of fortune, Shahji Bhonsla, and brother of the great Sivaji, who won supremacy for the Mahrattas in southern India.[3] Sivaji's son and successor, Sambhaji, ruled the Mahrattas until 1689, when he was captured and executed by Aurangzeb, the Mogul Emperor.[4] Sambhaji's son, Sahuji, a weak man who was made more irresolute by imprisonment in Aurangzeb's jails, was forced to resign his overall leadership of the Mahrattas to his Peshwa (or Prime Minister), but in 1732 he was allowed to succeed his great-uncle Ekoji as the second Rajah of Tanjore.[5] He was unpopular, and in 1741 he was dispossessed by his second cousin, Pratap Singhji, the bastard grandson of Ekoji.[6] Anxious for reinstatement, Sahuji applied for and obtained help from the Nabob of Arcot and the English. Pratap Singhji was taken prisoner by the Nabob, but was released in 1744 and acknowledged as the third Rajah of Tanjore on agreeing to pay the Nabob an annual tribute of 50 lakhs of rupees (£625,000).[7]

The English, to whom the deposed Sahuji had promised the fort of Devicottah as an inducement to help him, ordered Pratap Singhji to honour his cousin's

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1. Love, ii, p.475.
2. P.A., 24 January 1777, Tanjore Letter No.1.
3. Love, i, p.357; and A Brief History of the Indian Peoples, Sir W.W.Hunter, Oxford, 1907, pp.157-158.
4. ibid., p.158, op.cit.
5. Love, ii, p.251.
6. Present Disputes, pp.29-30; and P.A., 24 January 1777, Tanjore Letter No.1.
7. P.A., 24 January 1777, Tanjore Letter No.1; and P.A., 27 January 1777, Tanjore Letter No.2.

promise and sent an expedition to enforce their demands. This failed, but in 1749 a second expedition under the command of Major Stringer Lawrence succeeded.[1] Pratap Singhji agreed to let the Company at Madras have Devicottah and the produce of a certain part of his lands, as well as defraying the expense of the expeditions and granting the expelled Sahuji an annual pension of 4,000 rupees.[2] Pratap Singhji's position had, therefore, been clearly defined by both the Nabob of Arcot and the English; he was a feudatory paying tribute to both of them. In 1752 this position was reinforced when he gave his overlord, Mohammed Ali, and the English support in their fight against the French and Chanda Sahib. The fact that he later tried to assert himself did not alter the relationship originally established before and during Mohammed Ali's emergence as the de facto Nabob.[3] The man who undermined this relationship was George Pigot.

Pigot assumed office as Governor of Madras on 14th January 1755, and on 21st August the same year Mohammed Ali entered his capital of Arcot in triumph. On 30th August he visited Madras and was received by Pigot, who acknowledged him with all the pomp due to a ruling native prince, but did not hesitate to bring up the long overdue question of payment for services rendered.[4] The time had come for Mohammed Ali to count the cost of English support, and to repay the debt he owed the Company. He was, moreover, obliged to assist the English against the French throughout the Seven Years War; and this meant more debts.

The French sent out the Comte de Lally[5] in April 1758 to force a quick decision in the Carnatic. At the end of that year he besieged Madras. The settlement was eventually relieved by naval forces in February 1759, but the units mainly responsible for keeping de Lally at bay were 700 of the Company's

1. Love, ii, p.392, (n.4).
2. Present Disputes, p.32.
3. George Pigot (1719-1777); joined the Company as a Writer in 1737; Member of Council of Fort St.David 1750, and Deputy Governor 1754; created a Baronet 1764, and an Irish Peer as Baron Pigot of Patshull, Co.Dublin, 1766.
4. Love, ii, pp.507-508.
5. Thomas Arthur Lally (né Lely), Comte de Lally (1699-1764), an Irish Jacobite.

native troops under Mohammed Yusuf Khan, the self-styled "Subahdar of Nellore"[1], who in spite of his Moslem names and style was a Hindu mercenary, and a close friend of Pratap Singhji, the Rajah of Tanjore. After the siege of Madras was raised the French suffered further reverses. In January 1760 they were defeated at Wandiwash by Sir Eyre Coote[2], and a year later Pondicherry itself fell. The loss of Pondicherry (although returned under the Treaty of Paris) was the blow which "sounded the knell of French dominion in India."[3] They did, however, remain a real threat for many years to come. Comte de Lally was recalled in disgrace, and executed for failure. When the tide turned in 1762 Pigot gave his mind to his own future, and concluded a treaty with Pratap Singhji.[4] If it had been Pigot's aim to keep the native powers in the Carnatic in check by dividing the Moslem overlord against his Hindu feudatory, his actions would have reprehensible though understandable, but there is no evidence to suggest this. On the contrary, the evidence shows that his first consideration was private financial gain achieved by indirect measures.

Mohammed Ali had already been the target of greedy Company servants, among them Robert Orme[5], whom Pigot had dismissed from the Madras Council in 1758 for allegedly demanding 'presents', but Pigot himself was one of the worst offenders in this respect and certainly the most dangerous. By the 1762 Treaty with Tanjore, Pigot diverted 25 lakhs of rupees paid by Pratap Singhji as a tribute

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1. Love, ii, pp.515, 545, 549, 556-557, 559; iii, p.577.
2. Sir Eyre Coote (1726-1783), had served against Prince Charles Edward Stuart in the 1745 Rising. He returned to England 1762; M.P. for Leicester 1768; came out to India again in 1769; C-in-C in India in 1777.
3. Roberts, pp.107-108.
4. P.A., 27 January 1777, Tanjore Letter No.2.
5. Love, ii, pp.513-519. Orme (see above p.15, n.7) was accused by the Nabob of demanding 20,000 Pagodas on the alleged grounds that he had been appointed to succeed Pigot as Governor of Madras, a position which would allow him to grant the Nabob special favours. The case was never proved as Orme was captured by the French on his way home to England, and all the relative papers were lost. In 1769 his alleged misconduct was condoned, and he was given the post of Historiographer to the Company at £400 a year.

to Mohammed Ali from the latter's coffers to the Company's; a bond of 7 lakhs due from Pratap Singhji to Mohammed Ali was cancelled; a river which fertilised the latter's lands was diverted to enrich the soil of Tanjore; a certain number of districts were ceded to Tanjore; and the way was opened up for Pratap Singhji to support Mohammed Yusuf Khan's rebellion in Madura and Tinnevelly in the south of the Carnatic.[1] The result of the reduction of Tanjore's tribute was that Mohammed Ali, already overburdened with debts for the Company's past services, was obliged to borrow more and more money in order to keep pace with his commitments. It was the beginning of a financial bondage from which there was little hope of escape; it was also the foundation of Mohammed Ali's grievances against the Company in general, and Pigot in particular.

Pigot, however, had not finished shaking the pagoda tree for himself, or increasing the Company's hold. Before he relinquished office on 14th November 1763 he had not only obtained a parting 'present' of "about £40,000"[2] from Mohammed Ali, but had also induced him to assign extensive lands to the Company, which combined with grants made in 1750 and 1754 embraced the greater part of the Chingleput district. This acquisition, known as "The Company's Jagir",[3] brought in a revenue assessed at 10 lakhs of pagodas (about £340,000) annually. On top of the loss of Tanjore's tribute it further decreased Mohammed Ali's ability to meet his commitments, and drove him deeper into debt. These debts became a problem for the Company as well as for Mohammed Ali himself. His financial embarrassment proved a gold mine for adventurers. His lands, ravaged by years of war, were in no condition to produce high revenues for some time, and as Indian moneylenders charged excessive rates of interest he began to

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1. P.A., 31 December 1776, An Anonymous Account of the Dispute in Tanjore, and the Terms of the Treaty of Tanjore, which was negotiated in 1762.
2. Sunku Rama to R.Orme, 6 November 1763 (printed Love, ii, p.567). Sunku Rama had been Orme's dubash or agent when the latter had been in Madras.
3. Love, ii, p.567, (n.1); and T. Pelling to R.Orme, 9 November 1763 - Thomas Pelling wrote that the Jagir was "a gift which the Musselman [Mohammed Ali] was drawn into very distant from a free will of his own" (ibid., loc.cit.).

accept loans from Europeans, many of them Company servants, who were only a degree less greedy than their Indian counterparts. The claims of his private creditors began to be a danger to the Presidency itself, for they competed with the Company for payment. Since the Company servants who had to press Mohammed Ali for the payment of his official debts were also in many cases those who had personal claims upon him, the effects on public life in the Presidency became increasingly undesirable.

Mohammed Ali, with a devout Moslem's contempt for usury, and a total indifference to financial detail, was unmoved by the growth of this problem. He was more interested in his social position. Pigot had made him lose face over Tanjore, but the year 1763 brought him one great consolation. The Treaty of Paris, at the insistence of Laurence Sulivan, included an article[1] by which the British and the French recognised Mohammed Ali as the lawful Nabob. From 13th February 1763 he was de jure Nabob of Arcot, and by definition the acknowledged overlord of Tanjore.

Pigot's successor as Governor of Madras, Robert Palk,[2] a former naval chaplain, was less rapacious than his predecessor and established good personal relations with the Nabob, but the Nabob's attitude to the Governor did not reflect his attitude to the Madras Council as a whole. Those members who had been too scrupulous or too slow in making a deal with the Nabob were jealous of those who

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1. I.O.L./H.M.S., 286, f.5, "Extract of the 11th Article of the definitive Treaty of Peace between Gt.Britain and France, dated 10th February 1763. ... in order to preserve future peace on the Coast of Coromandel and Orixa [sic], the English and French shall acknowledge Mahomet Ally [sic] for lawful Nabob of the Carnatic, and Salabat Jing [sic] for lawful Subah of the Deckan [sic]; and both parties shall renounce all demands and pretensions of satisfaction, with which they might charge each other, or their Indian allies, for the depredations or pillage, committed on the one side, or on the other, during the war. ..." See also Sutherland, p.93.
2. Robert Palk (1717-1798), was first a Royal Naval chaplain, but transferred to the Company's Civil Service in 1749, without fixed status; admitted as a covenanted servant in 1761 and appointed 3rd Member of the Madras Council; in 1766 he concluded a treaty with Salabat Jang, the Nizam of Hyderabad and Subahdar of the Deccan, which gave the English possession of all the Northern Circars, with the exception of the Guntur Circar. He was created a Baronet in 1782.

had, and the letters they sent to their friends in England eventually helped to hamper his agents.

In 1764 Mohammed Yusuf Khan, with arms, men and money supplied by Pratap Singhji, rebelled in Madura and Tinnevelly, and this revolt was suppressed on Palk's orders by the Company's forces. In 1765 the Mogul Emperor, Shah Alam, conferred on Mohammed Ali the title of "Nawab Walajah, Amir-ul-Hind"[1], and in the following year declared the Carnatic independent of Salabat Jang, the Nizam of Hyderabad and Subahdar of the Deccan, which meant that the Nabob of Arcot was finally recognised as an independent ruling prince by both the European and native powers, and that he had achieved a higher status than any previous Nabob. Palk negotiated a new treaty which brought in more revenue to the Company, but in the interest of the Company as well as fairness to the Nabob he ruled that

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1. During the 1750's Mohammed Ali had been generally known by his father's name and style, Anwar-ud-Din Khan, which the Europeans usually corrupted to the form "Annaverde Cawn". After 1765 his full style and names were: His Excellency Mohammed Ali Khan, Nawab Walajah, Amir-ul-Hind, Umdat-ul-Mulk, Asaf-ud-Daulah, Anwar-ud-Din Khan, Bahadur, Mimsur Zulfikar Jang, Sepoy Salah, Subahdar of Arcot and the Carnatic. From 1765 he was generally known by various phonetic forms of "Walajah". His title "Amir-ul-Hind" (or Prince of India) was the one which gave him recognition in the eyes of the other native rulers. Shah Alam's recognition had been preceded on 25th March 1765 by a treaty:

"... concluded between the Nabob OMDETOULMOULOUK, SURADJOTDOLA, ANAOURDIKHAN, BAHADER, MOUNSOURJUNGE [Mohammed Ali] on the one part and Mr.Law de Lauriston, Commandant of the French Nation in India, on the other part. The French acknowledge the Nabob lawful Governor of the Carnatick, and his eldest son MOHOAINOULMOULOUK, ASSADOULDOLA, HUSSEIN ALLY KHAN BAHADAR, ZOULFEKARDJANGUE [Umdat-ul-Umara, who is here referred to by some of his subsidiary names, viz: Mohan-ul-Mulk, Asaf-ud-Daulah, Hussein Ali Khan, Bahadur, Zulfikar Jang] for his successor." (quoted I.O.L./H.M.S., 286, ff.5-6).

Shah Alam confirmed his recognition in a "Treaty between the Company, the Nabob of the Carnatick and the Soubah of the Deckan, dated 26th February 1768. Article 7. - The exalted and illustrious Emperor, Shaw Allum [sic], having been pleased, out of his great favour and high esteem for the Nabob Wolau Jau [sic], to give and to grant him, and his eldest son, Meyer el Mulck, Omdet ul Omrah [sic], and their heirs, for ever, the Government of the Carnatic, Payen Gaut [sic, Payanghat in Berar], and the Countries dependent thereon, by his Royal Fermaund, bearing date the 26th of August 1765, or 27th of the Moon Zuphur, in the 6th year of the said Emperor's reign; and the Nabob Ausuph Jau, Nizam ul Mulck &c [Salabat Jang] having also, out of his affection and regard for the said Nabob Wolau Jau [sic], released him, his son, Mayen ul Mulck [sic], and their heirs in succession, for ever, from all dependence on the Deckan [sic], and given him a full discharge of all demands, past present and to come, on the Carnatic, Payen Gaut [sic], by a Saned under his hand and seal dated the 12th of November 1766." (ibid., ff.12-13).

the highest interest to be charged on loans should be 10%. By the time Palk left office on 25th January 1767, the Nabob's debt to the Company had been reduced from nearly 2¼-million pagodas to under 1½-million pagodas, although in reality his financial position had deteriorated, for at that date he owed private creditors a great sum of money, the true extent of which is only now being examined.[1]

It was also in 1767 that the Highland adventurer John Macpherson arrived in Madras, and made a quick impression on the Nabob by interesting him in electricity and the magic lantern. Indeed, he so much impressed the Nabob that the latter appointed him his agent, and sent him to England in the same year to ventilate his grievances. Macpherson arrived in London in 1768, and with the help of his former patron, the Earl of Warwick,[2] obtained an introduction to the Duke of Grafton.[3] Nothing is known of his mission except what he claimed to have accomplished in a subsequent memorial.[4] The memorial, however, is probably more valuable as evidence of what the Nabob had hoped to gain by the agency, than as evidence of what Macpherson actually achieved. He claimed, for example, that he had brought about "an Act of Parliament limiting the power of the Company's servants, and making it a crime in them against the State to interfere with the government and succession of Indian princes in treaty with the Company,

1. Bod., MS.Eng.Hist.,b.178, ff.64-64v., "List of the Old Consolidated Debt", dated 1 January 1767. It contains 217 entries and the total of the debts is "Star Pagodas 22,655,750." This is considered to be a more accurate statement of the Nabob's private debts than (ibid., ff.103-106) "List of Bonds granted in the New Consolidated Fund", dated 26 November 1777, which contains 292 entries with a total of debts of "Pagodas 3,500,000", and (ibid., ff.114-115) "List of the Nabob's Old Consolidated Debt", dated 31 December 1777, unnumbered entries with a total of debts of "Pagodas 483,017.31.40." These debts of the Nabob and the whole matter of the Arcot Interest is the subject of an Oxford D.Phil.thesis at present being compiled by Mr.J.D.Gurney of St.Edmund Hall, Oxford.
2. Francis Grenville, 1st Earl of Warwick (1719-1773).
3. Grafton was the Prime Minister when Macpherson arrived in England.
4. I.O.L./H.M.S., 110, ff.503-512, "A Short Memorial of Services rendered to His Highness the Nabob of the Carnatick, Waulaujah, by John Macpherson, whom he sent upon a secret commission to His Majesty's First Minister of State in 1767."

and ... to make this Act particularly relative to the Nabob and his posterity,"[1] but no such Act was passed or, so far as is known, even discussed. The reference makes clear, however, the grounds for the Nabob's grievances and draws attention for the first time to an issue which was later to exercise him greatly; his claim to arrange his own succession, and his well-based fear that attempts might be made to frustrate it. The proposal which the Nabob was alleged to have made "to provide for his youngest children by investing a capital of 70 Lacks (sic) of Rupees in any of the National Stocks of Britain, as the Minister would direct him, or lend the same or greater capital to the Treasury, a pledge of his fidelity towards and trust in the British State,"[2] if ever presented to the Treasury was certainly never implemented; but it has some significance in connection with the persistent belief in the 1770's and 1780's that the Nabob could exercise a corrupt influence over the British government. ~~Macleane himself was to revive the proposal at a later date.~~

Although it is doubtful whether Macpherson's mission was of much importance except as the first of its kind, it does seem to have had one effect. When the government, at the request of the East India Company in 1769, sent out Sir John Lindsay[3] as Commodore of a fleet intended to protect their possessions, he was given secret orders[4] to enter into direct relations with the Nabob, to enquire into his grievances against the Company servants and to report his findings to the government

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1. I.O.L./H.M.S., 110, f.507, op.cit.
2. ibid., f.508, loc.cit. Macpherson also supported the Nabob with letters to the P.A. under the pseudonyms "Indianus", "Hindoostanus" and "A Company Servant" (which he was not at this time) - ibid., ff.510-511, op.cit.
3. Sir John Lindsay (1737-1788), the younger son of Sir Alexander Lindsay of Evelick, Perthshire, by his wife Emilia, sister of William Murray, 1st Earl of Mansfield. He was knighted 1762; appointed Commodore in the East Indies in August 1769, and Admiral and Naval CinC at Madras in March 1771, when he was invested with the Order of the Bath by the Nabob, acting on behalf of the King.
4. I.O.L., Cleveland (Ohio) Public Lib. MSS, Microfilm Wf 091.92-L645L, Roll 19 (Microfilm Index EUR 26). Letters from Sir John Lindsay to Lord Weymouth, and an account of Lindsay's secret orders from Weymouth, and of his mission to the Carnatic. Weymouth was the Secretary of State for the Southern Department.

Lindsay's arrival in Madras in 1770 was deeply resented by the members of the Council, especially by Josias Du Pré[1], who had replaced Charles Bourchier[2], Palk's successor, as Governor on 31st January 1770. Since Macpherson's departure the Company in Madras had faced an attack by Haidar Ali Khan, the upstart grandson of a Punjabi Dervish, who had usurped the Rajah of Mysore and was to prove as great a threat to the British as the Mahrattas. In 1767 he entered into an alliance with the Nizam of Hyderabad and attacked the Carnatic, coming to within a short distance of Madras with 5,000 horsemen. According to Bourchier, the Nabob and his sons had narrowly escaped capture. It was the rumours of this assault, and the supposed mustering of the French fleet at Mauritius, that caused the great stock crash in England which ruined Macleane and his associates and which led to Lindsay's appointment. Peace was made on Haidar Ali's terms, and in early 1769 the Company entered into a treaty with him. This was undermined by Lindsay's arrival.

Since 1763 the Nabob's confidence and ambitions had been growing. He had exchanged presents with George III, a palace had been built for him at Chepauk just outside Madras, he had been allowed to employ Europeans as leaders and instructors in his ever-increasing personal army, and as physicians, secretaries and administrators in his household. The Company itself was primarily to blame, having encouraged these measures as a means of saving money. And now the British government had personally recognised him by accrediting Lindsay as envoy to his Court or Durbar. It placed a strong weapon in the Nabob's hands. Henceforward he could play off the Company against the State. In Lindsay, who had been ostracized by the Madras Council, he found a willing ally[3]. When the Mahrattas invaded Mysore in 1770, Haidar Ali, besieged in Seringapatam,

1. Josias Du Pré (1721-?1780)
2. Charles Bourchier (1726-?1801)
3. S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 39/1, John Macpherson to James Macpherson, 19 December 1770; and 39/2, John Macpherson to James Macpherson, 20 July 1771.

appealed to the Madras Council for the help guaranteed by the treaty. But Lindsay backed the Nabob when he refused to allow his troops to go to Haidar Ali's aid, and nothing was done to honour the treaty. Haidar Ali had to make peace on the Mahrattas' terms, and lost much of his territory to them, which incensed him against the English and led to repercussions later.

In 1771 the presence of Lindsay encouraged the Nabob to settle the longest standing affront to his dignity by persuading Du Pré to send an expedition to Tanjore, in order to force the submission of Shri-Ram Pratap Tuljaji, the fourth Rajah and son and successor of Pratap Singhji, who had recently died. With the expedition, which was led by Brigadier General Joseph Smith, went the Nabob's two eldest sons, Umdat-ul-Umara and Amir-ul-Umara, both now in their early twenties and in charge of detachments of native cavalry. It was their first chance to prove themselves as soldiers. Amir, the second son, gave a good account of himself; Umdat, the eldest, did not, and this made his father change his mind about the succession, and choose Amir as his heir. The Nabob's

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1. Love, iii, p.20.
2. See P.A., 27 January 1777, Tanjore Letter No.2.
3. Joseph Smith was the son of a Gunner and Engineer of the same name; he was commissioned as an Ensign in the Madras Infantry 1754; and rose after serving with distinction in many engagements to be C-in-C of the Company's forces at Fort St.George, Madras; his first appointment as such was from 1767 to 1770, when he was superseded for a short time. His second period as C-in-C was from 1770 to 1772, and his third was from 1773-1775, when he retired. He was well liked by the Nabob (see S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 167/12, The Nabob of Arcot to L. Macleane, u.d.)
4. B.M.Add.MSS.29125, ff.275v.-276, W.Hastings to A.Wynch, 8 March 1774 - "I do not know how far you may consider the Company's interests are likely to be affected by the measures taken by the Nabob for the future succession, but I think it my duty to communicate to you what may have come to my knowledge concerning it. By a copy of a letter lately addressed to the King Shah Allum [sic] informing him of the reduction of Tanjour [sic], which he has put into my hands, I observe that he mentions the conduct of his eldest son on the occasion of the first Siege in very discreditable terms, and extolls the behaviour of his second son." The Nabob had written to the Mogul Emperor in the hope of getting the treaty of 1768 (see above, p.46, n.1) altered in favour of his second son, but the Emperor was unwilling to do this. John Macpherson in a letter he sent to James Macpherson on 1 October 1772 gave the reason: "Shaw Alum [sic], in despair of the solicited attention of the Crown, and in the indignation of seeing his inferior here [Madras] honoured with that attention." (see S.O.A.S./ Macpherson, 39/4).

decision was understandable and reasonable. Apart from the disappointment that a man of proven courage must have felt in having to admit that his eldest son was a coward, he could not, in a land where survival often depended on military prowess, leave his country to a weakling after his death. From the time of the first siege of Tanjore in September 1771 he transferred his affections and confidence to Amir. Smith's troops forced Tanjore to submit on 24th October 1771, but the job had not been done properly.[1] The Nabob, however, was delighted to receive George III's congratulations on the expedition; the letter referred to Rajah Tuljaji as the Nabob's "tributary".[2]

Lindsay was recalled before the Tanjore expedition. The Company had asked the government to remove him, and the request was granted. Lindsay had offended the good Company servants as well as the bad.[3] "Not only Warren Hastings, who was doing admirable work in the Carnatic under Governor Du Pré, but the ministry who had sent Lindsay, were obliged to admit that the results of his mission were unfortunate. It is true that on his return in 1771 relations with France made North's Government consider desirable the appointment of a successor, Admiral Harland,[4] but he went out with instructions to refrain from independent action and to impress upon the Nawab the fact that the interests of the State and the Company were the same."[5]

As a result of a more cautious approach to his mission, Harland was better

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1. P.A., 28 January 1777, Tanjore Letter No.3.
2. ibid., quoting letter sent by George III to the Nabob of Arcot in April 1772 - "It gave us satisfaction to hear that the Governor and Council of Madras had sent the Company's troops with yours to reduce your tributary, the Rajah of Tanjore, to obedience."
3. Warren Hastings arrived in Madras on 3rd September 1769, and took his seat as Third Member of Council the following day; on 31st January 1770, when Du Pré became Governor, he became Du Pré's Deputy and Second Member of Council, as well as acting as Commissary General of Madras. He left Madras on 2nd February 1772 and went to Bengal as Governor.
4. Admiral Sir Robert Harland, a Baronet, like his predecessor Lindsay, was given the posts of Commodore of Royal Naval forces in the East Indies and Naval C-in-C at Madras. For his mission see Sutherland, pp.198-201; Love, iii, p.48; B.M.Add.MSS.29216, f.73; and S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 39/4.
5. Sutherland, p.201.

liked than Lindsay by the Madras Council, and consequently not so well liked by the Nabob. Nevertheless, the Nabob obtained as many advantages as he could from the presence of a Plenipotentiary at his Durbar. In 1772 he persuaded the Company to help him to reduce the naiks (minor chiefs) and polygars in the southern districts of Tinnevelly, Madura, Marawar and Little Marawar; a campaign conducted by Colonel Abraham Bonjour with unnecessary ferocity.[1] On 1st February 1773 Du Pré[2] was superseded as Governor by Alexander Wynch, who in the same year was prevailed upon by the Nabob to mount a second expedition against Tanjore.[3] The conquering force was again led by Brigadier General Joseph Smith, supported by Amir-ül-Umara, who had been appointed Captain-General of the Nabob's army.[4] After a siege Tanjore was stormed and Tuljaji was deposed as Rajah. The effects of this war were to exacerbate dissensions which already existed within the Presidency and at the Nabob's Durbar. Conflicts for the favour of the Nabob became acute. On one side were Governor Wynch, Admiral Harland (through his

1. Love, iii, pp.71-73. Bonjour, who was called to account for his brutality, was accused of carrying out the mission on behalf of Amirul-Umara, who bribed him with a promise of 50,000 pagodas (£20,000). The money was not forthcoming, and Bonjour was listed as one of the Nabob's private creditors. John Macpherson gave a moving account of the reduction of the Little Marawar, and of the great bravery of the young Naik and his favourite wife, who "fell to the same bayonet that had pierced her Chief. They were both of most extraordinary beauty; he remarkably handsome, and robust; and she of so elegant a form that the officers, after the storm, wept over her, and had her buried after the Gentoo custom. The work of reducing these independent Chieftains is too hor[r]id not to entail a retribution of blood upon the perpetrators. Yet what can the Company do ? They are obliged to act as auxiliaries to the Nabob, and when he applys [sic] to them for force to reduce the Feudatory Lords of the Carnatic, the Presidency must give him that force, otherwise they are called to account by the King's Minister, who is sent here to see the 11th Article of the last Peace enforced, as well as the Company's performance of their engagements to the Nabob, for the Jaguire [sic] &c which he has given them. The Nabob may now be called a powerful Independent Sovereign Prince." (S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 39/4, John Macpherson to James Macpherson, 1 October 1772). The conquest of Marawar and Little Marawar brought to the Nabob "an addition of near £300,000 Annual Revenue ... beside the Pearl Fishery upon its coast, and along the Straits of Ceylon." (ibid., loc.cit.)
2. Alexander Wynch (c.1720-1781), became a covenanted servant 1740; admitted to the Council of Fort St.David 1744, and was acting Deputy Governor there in 1758 when it was surrendered to the French, by whom he was taken prisoner. He was released and resigned from the service, but was re-appointed in 1768 as Chief at Masulipatam. His father, uncle, and three sons were in the Company's service.
3. Love, iii, p.66.
4. ibid.

private secretary George Paterson)[1], the notorious private creditor Paul Benfield[2], or "Count Rupee" as he was later known, the latter's ally Francis Jourdan[3], and some other Company servants. On the other side were a variety of persons, including Company servants and a group frequently called the Scottish adventurers[4], among them John Macpherson[5], who had suffered an eclipse in the Nabob's favour since Lindsay's appointment. He was, however, fighting back with all his skill. When Hastings had been in Madras he had not been too well disposed towards Macpherson, but this did not stop Macpherson from trying to keep, among other lines, one open to Hastings when he went to Bengal as the

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1. George Paterson (1734-1817), a native of Edinburgh, where he qualified M.D; he went to India as Sir John Lindsay's private secretary and stayed on in the same capacity to Sir Robert Harland when Lindsay was recalled. He left India with Harland in July 1775 having made in five years a small fortune. In 1776 he married Anne, daughter of Lord Gray of Kinfauns, and bought Castle Huntly in the Carse of Gowrie, where he lived as a wealthy laird for the rest of his life. John Macpherson called him "Titus". On 1 October 1772 he told his kinsman James Macpherson: "Our acquaintance Titus is Secretaire de L'Embassade. He and I are little with each other. Titus's abilities you know. He is with great success and a very laudable rather than blameable activity working for himself." (see S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 39/4). When John wrote to James on 30 September 1774 his attitude to Paterson had changed; he called him "the most miserable of Reptiles, Titus." (ibid., 39/7).

2. Paul Benfield (d.1810), arrived in Madras in 1764 as Civil Architect and Asst.Engineer, with the rank of Lieutenant. He was promoted to Engineer of Madras in 1767, and appointed Contractor for the Black Town Wall in 1769; he was also employed by the Nabob to build Chepauk Palace. He became involved in the Nabob's financial affairs as soon as he arrived in Madras. See I.O.L./H.M.S. 118; European Tracts 419/184; and 85.E.13.-The Case of Mr.Benfield; also Materials for a History of Cricklade (ed.T.R.Thomson, 1949), chap.vi, by W.B. Crouch, pp.32-34. For Benfield's relations with Bourchier, Du Pré, Wynch, the Nabob and Jourdan see S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 167/12, u.d., op.cit.

3. Francis Jourdan was appointed a Member of the Madras Council in 1773, having previously served from 1770 as Deputy Commissary General of Madras.

4. When in Madras Hastings had disapproved of the Nabob's Scottish supporters, see B.M.Add.MSS.29126, f.105v., W.Hastings to L.Sulivan, 10 February 1772; and Feiling, p.72; and Warren Hastings, L.J.Trotter, Oxford, 1890, p.50.

5. In spite of having operated against the Company's interest in England, John Macpherson had returned to Madras in 1771 as a Company's Writer, with letters of recommendation from Orme to Du Pré and Brigadier General Smith (see I.O.L./ Orme, O.V.202(33F), f.36, 2 letters R.Orme to J.Du Pré and J.Smith, both dated 28 March 1770). On his way to India Macpherson was detained in Rio de Janeiro and the Cape of Good Hope (see S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 39/1 and 39/2). He rose rapidly to Factor, and was Mayor of Madras in 1773. In 1774 he was appointed Paymaster to the Forces at Madras, which in a letter to James Macpherson, dated 30 September 1774, he referred to as "an office, indeed a sinecure, I hold of about £1,200 a year, the best in the colony." (ibid., 39/7).

Governor, especially now that it seemed likely that Hastings was going to be the beneficiary of the new Indian settlement, which all the Presidencies were eagerly awaiting. Macpherson was also keeping a very close watch on the intrigues at the Nabob's Durbar, and was reporting his findings to his kinsman James Macpherson[1], one of the government's most able pamphleteers in London. Both the Macphersons knew Lauchlin Macleane, who arrived in Madras in May 1774, just before news was received from England that altered the situation in the whole of India.

To summarise the events in the Carnatic before 1774: The Company, in order to retain control in the Carnatic had had to guard against the ever-present threats of attack from the Mahrattas, from Haidar Ali of Mysore, from the Nizam of Hyderabad, and from any alliances they might make between themselves or, more important, with the French, whose agents were constantly believed to be seeking means to reassert themselves on a coast which, unlike Bengal, was at certain times of the year extremely vulnerable to naval invasion. To retain this uneasy balance of power the Company had needed the revenues and military forces of the Nabob, whom they had courted and exploited for over 20 years; providing him with power but keeping his ambitions in check. Although the Company and the Nabob were inter-reliant, it was the Company that called the tune and the Nabob who ~~payed~~ *paid* the piper. The check on the Nabob's ambitions had been applied by keeping him subordinate through debts, but these public debts had been swollen by private debts, which had reached scandalous proportions, and were becoming

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1. James Macpherson (1736-1796), a member of the ruling house of the Macpherson Clan, and fourth or fifth cousin of John Macpherson.(The only accurate article on his parentage and background, which hitherto has been wrongly identified, is James "Ossian" Macpherson's Ancestry: an Elucidation of the Mystery, by Alan G. Macpherson, Creag Dhubh (The Annual of the Clan Macpherson Assn.), no.xvi, pp.20 -25, publ.by the Assn., Clan Museum, Newtonmore, Inverness-shire, 1964). He first came to the public's notice by publishing, under the patronage of Lord Bute, a work in English called Fingal, which he claimed he had translated from an ancient Gaelic MS., the work of Ossian, son of Fingal, King of Morvern in the West Highlands. It had a great success, but the strong prejudice against things Gaelic and those who spoke it brought its authenticity into doubt.

the cause of serious dissension among the Europeans in Madras. The Nabob, who had been recognised as an independent ruling prince by the British, the French and the Mogul Emperor, had successfully evaded the role of a puppet, and he resented any attempts to curtail his rights as a feudal overlord (especially over his tributary, the Rajah of Tanjore), or to interfere with his internal rule, or to meddle with his rights as a Moslem to decide the question of his successor and the future of his country. The Company, as a means of saving expense, had allowed him to acquire a well-disciplined standing army, with European officers as instructors, and his favourite son, Amir-ul-Umara, as its Captain-General. This posed a potential threat to the Company, whose Councillors in Madras disliked the ambitious Amir, and preferred Umdat-ul-Umara, his weak elder brother. The appointment of Plenipotentiaries by the British government had given the Nabob both a greater sense of his own importance and a weapon to use against the Company, but this was balanced by the emergence in Parliamentary and Company circles in England of a faction, whose members were friends and connexions of the opponents of the Nabob and the Plenipotentiaries. Into this explosive state of affairs walked Lauchlin Macleane, now fully recovered from his illness,[1] and his unusual fit of depression.

There is no reason to believe that he came with any mission from Hastings, but the fact that he was known to have had inside information before he left England, and that he was high in Hastings's favour, made him an important visitor. He was quick to sum up the situation in the society in which he now

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1. Richard Barwell (1741-1804), a Councillor of Bengal, said in a letter he sent to his sister Mary Barwell in England in March 1774 that advanced age and anxiety were making Macleane wish to return home. (see B.P.& P., ii, p.299, R.Barwell to Mrs.M.Barwell, u.d., but it is listed and printed between a letter dated 4 March 1774 and another dated 5 March 1774). Barwell's opinion may have been justified, but it is more likely that he had heard Macleane, who was still only in his middle forties, express such sentiments during his illness, which had been accompanied by a state of acute depression. In May 1774, two months after Barwell expressed his opinion, Macleane was once again his usual optimistic self, and had certainly recovered his good health. He himself said as much in a report he wrote at a later date (see APPENDIX 1.)

found himself. He was immediately approached by Governor Wynch, Admiral Harland, the latter's secretary George Paterson, and by John Macpherson, with whom he seems to have come to the closest terms almost at once. All of them brought him speedily to the Nabob's Durbar, where he lost no time in engaging actively in its complex intrigues and politics. Here, his assurance, his air of inside knowledge and his remarkable personal qualities made their customary impression. The Nabob was much taken with him, and Macleane soon began to exercise a strong influence over him; an influence which he proceeded to use in the interest of himself, of John Macpherson (whose position at the Durbar rapidly improved), and also it must be said, of his patron Warren Hastings and the Company in general. The evidence of Macleane's activities comes almost entirely from two sources; from his own narrative[1] presented to the Court of Directors some two years later, and from the correspondence of Macpherson. Both must be accepted with some suspicion; Macpherson's letters in particular are, like all his correspondence, couched in terms which make them peculiarly suspect. Nevertheless they enable a coherent story to be pieced together.

A letter from Macpherson to Hastings of 29th July 1775 gives the fullest account of Macleane's introduction to the Nabob, and the way he won his confidence. He wrote:

"Prior to the news of the establishment of a Gov.r General, Col.McLeane [sic] was here for his health. It has been the custom of Mr.Patterson [sic] to lay hold of every stranger of consequence who arrived here, and who might first impress them with his ideas; and then after introducing them politely, get them to answer the Nabob's questions as he wished. The minute Col.Macleane arrived Patterson [sic] was with him, and the old political trick was played off. McLeane [sic] saw it at once, and heard what others had to say. He was carried to the Nabob by the Governor and Paterson successively, and the enconiums they passed to His Highness of the Colonel's abilities, and their account of the stations he had filled, and his consequence in India affairs were extravagent.

1. See APPENDIX 1.

Mr.Macleane, like an able politician, permitted them to speak, but when they would have him act and join in the imposition he turned at once against them, and in the very presence of Paterson made the Nabob feel that His Highness's confidence was misplaced.

The Nabob asked many questions of Mr.McLeane [sic], which he answered upon his honour and as a good Company's servant. The first was about His Majesty's proposed division of the power of India with His Highness. His answer to this question was that he believed one Government would be formed of our possessions in India and strong laws made, but he believed no part of our possessions would be given to the Nabob. The propriety of blowing up Vellour [sic Vellore], conquering Cudapa [sic Cuddapah], and making singular arrangements in the army, was submitted to his opinion. He told the Nabob that he should have patience, and not avail himself so of the weakness of the Company's present Government [in Madras]. The Nabob, who had been long surrounded with imposition, heard these bold advices with an astonishment that gave them efficacy.

Paterson felt the changes. McLeane [sic] was secretly represented as a bankrupt and a man of no knowledge. But an event happened as he was embarking for Bengal that gave a complete victory to McLeane [sic]. A copy of the Act of Parliament arrived overland [from Bombay] with not a syllable in it of Sir Robert Harland's powers for a Partition Treaty. Then it was the Nabob felt most forcibly the effect of imposition on one hand and of truth on the other. The power of peace and war being taken from Mr.Wynch, Benfield could no longer as Banker [to the Nabob] treat for territory. The stream that had run so rapid to forward the schemes of avarice stood still; 12 pr.Cent was an unfortunate boundary from law." [1]

Nothing that Macpherson wrote need be taken at its face value, and the accusations in this letter against both Wynch and Harland are on the face of them misleading and exaggerated. In the uncertainty of the times, rumours had been going round Madras and the Nabob's Durbar about the forthcoming changes in the government. There is no doubt that the Nabob fostered strange hopes of the effects these changes might have on his own situation. Even before they were mooted he had had hopes of the Nizamat, [2] and on 8th June 1773 Macpherson himself

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29136, ff.261v.-263, John Macpherson to W.Hastings, 29 July 1775.
2. Camb.Hist.India, v, p.274.

had told Hastings that the Nabob would esteem him more "if you made him or any of his sons Nabobs or Viziers in your Empire [i.e. in Bengal]. He wants the Circars too - in short, if you go to Delhi and make a Mogul of any other House but Timor's [Shah Alam's] the Court of England will insist on Walajaw [sic] being the man."[1] But it is inconceivable that either Wynch or Harland would have propounded so fantastic a proposition as is suggested in Macpherson's letter, and unlikely that they would intentionally have encouraged the Nabob's ~~strange~~ *ill-based* hopes. Nevertheless, Macleane's information about the probable form of the new government and the confirmation of this information by the receipt of a copy of North's Regulating Act, which had been sent overland to Bombay and forwarded on to Madras by H.M.S. Swallow[2], must have greatly increased the Nabob's confidence in him.

In a further letter of 22nd May 1774, written to John Stewart, Judge Advocate and member of Hastings's 'family', John Macpherson gave further particulars of Macleane's achievements at the Durbar, laying stress on the good work he had done in soothing the Nabob's grievances, and the way in which he had worked to increase Hastings's influence over him. He said:

"Macleane has overset all. [He] has got him [the Nabob] to disband many of his forces, pay some public debts, and every other thing is to await the fiat of Hastings; tho' Hastings was more an object of terror than love to the Nabob before. Behold! he has now writ Lord North thanking the King and Parliament for the appointment of so just, so great a man. I have charged Macleane to inform you of my whole story from beginning to end. One thing you may trust to, if I stay here, that I will be a favour on no bottom but that of the Nabob's, taking the excellent public line laid down by Macleane, and his steering confidentially with Hastings. Never was I happier in the affection and friendship of any man breathing than in Macleane's. I esteemed him as much as I did

1. B.M.Add.MSS.29133, f.580v., John Macpherson to W.Hastings, 8 June 1773.
2. See APPENDIX 1.

any man before he came here, for his vitally tried virtues of friendly zeal, manliness, honesty and ability, but these qualities of the man I formerly valued abstractedly. I now love them as the properties of my friend. What a blessing he must be to you: what a valuable friend to Mr.Hastings. ... When he told me how his office was arranged through Mr.Hastings's friendly offices, I asked no more, for gratitude I saw would bind him for life. I think the letter to L.d North &c was no bad immediate return. Had he even, according to my advice on the occasion, accepted the Nabob's offer of a present to him, he could have done nothing; but every word he spoke afterwards (you know his warmth) fell by God like a four and twenty pounder. He'll tell you all himself."[1]

No doubt this letter was meant for Hastings's eye, but there is no reason to question that Macpherson was describing the lines of Macleane's policy, and that the latter did indeed use his new found influence with the Nabob on public ~~events~~ affairs in a responsible and intelligent way. There was, however, another side to Macleane's activities which does not appear in these letters, though John Macpherson may have been glancing at it in a private letter he sent to James Macpherson on 30th September 1774. He wrote:

"With whom have I passed many merry hours lately here, but with honest Dermot,[2] now the Commissary General of Bengal. The best and warmest heart! & the most

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29134, ff.448-452v., John Macpherson to John Stewart, 22 May 1774. Hastings had not previously thought very highly of the Nabob. Two months earlier he had been told by his old friend Du Pré: "The Freemason [the Nabob] can't ever be shown as anything but a villain. I've warned Wynch." (see B.M.Add. MSS.29126, f.139, J.Du Pré to W.Hastings, 21 March 1774).

2. The use of "Dermot" as a nickname for Macleane is a strong indication of the opinion formerly held of him by both John and James Macpherson. On 27 February 1772, in a very vulgar Gaelic letter, James Macpherson had, in expressing his contempt for Sir George Colebrooke and Jack Stewart of Buckingham Street, also referred to Macleane, whom he called "Diarmod O'Sulivan", which use of O' with Sulivan meant that "Diarmod" (Macleane) belonged to Laurence Sulivan's "Clan", or in the political sense "Party". Diarmod (or Dermot in English) was the progenitor of the Campbells, and they alone among Highlanders used it as a Christian name. As the Campbells were hated by the other clans it was a great insult to call a man who was not a Campbell by their most used Christian name. A "dermot" was freely used to describe a treacherous person, just as "quisling", "boycott", "lynch" and "martinet" have acquired the notoriety of their original owners. By calling Macleane "honest Dermot" John Macpherson was saying in effect "our new ally is known to be treacherous, but in the present circumstance he is honest enough to be given a chance to win our confidence." In short, it was a back-handed compliment. (see S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 4/7, James Macpherson to John Macpherson, 27 February 1772).

intelligent and deepest head. I was of infinite service to him here, and he to me. The Plenipo. Harland has writ against him home, but the miserable fool, the avaricious insolent old knave will repent it. Lachlan [sic] has sworn vengeance; and will be soon enabled to take it - croyez moi. [1]

Macleane was much in favour with the Premier and Mr.Robinson - he gave me the best and fullest ideas of both. ... Macleane knew all your services to the State, and told me he sometimes pointed out on Robinson's table the noise of thousand voices from your one. He insists on your friendship through me, and adds that he and John Stewart, the Bengal Secretary, with you & me may any day carry the State." [2]

During the four weeks he was in Madras, as Macleane himself later admitted,[3] and as Governor Wynch suspected at the time,[4] he had also taken the opportunity to do something for his own fortunes. It would have been surprising if, surrounded by those who were doing so at the Nabob's expense, he had missed so golden an opportunity. He did not seek a present from the Nabob, though John Macpherson stated that he was offered one. His aims were different and bigger. In his narrative of 1776[5] he admitted that after hearing the Nabob's accounts of his grievances, he had suggested that the Nabob should once again send an agent to England to place his wrongs before the Crown. He maintained that in urging the Nabob to "look up to the King as the head of the whole"[6] he had also urged him "to look through and not over the Company"[7], but this is scarcely borne out by the rest of his narrative, and is inconsistent with the deep secrecy in which the transaction went forward. He also maintained that he was astonished at the Nabob's request that he himself should undertake the mission, and that

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1. John Robinson (1727-1802), Secretary to the Treasury, and Lord North's right hand man.
2. S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 39/8, John Macpherson to James Macpherson, 30 September 1774.
3. See APPENDIX 1.
4. I.O.L./H.M.S., 286, f.20, A.Wynch to The Chairman of the East India Company, 4 February 1775 - "The scheme seems to have taken place here, after his arrival in May last."
5. See Appendix 1.
6. ibid.
7. ibid.

he rejected the offer as inconsistent with his duty to the Company and his personal obligations to Hastings. Nevertheless, there seems little doubt that before he left Madras he had virtually accepted an office which would hold out so many advantages to him, and that Macpherson was actively encouraging him to do so. In the letter which Macpherson sent to John Stewart on 22nd May and dispatched by the same ship on which Macleane returned to Bengal, he had referred to just such a scheme: "The Governor [Hastings] will plan the line; you will give smoothness and precise connection to the detail, and Macleane will make it felt with all his powers and soul at home and abroad,"[1] and he had added a plea that Hastings's relations with the Nabob should be carried on through himself. Still further, in September 1774, the Nabob had his secretaries[2] prepare all the letters he wished Macleane to take with him to England, and, finally, in October, to the alarm of the Madras authorities, one of the Nabob's servants, James Johnson,[3] who was to accompany Macleane to England, went on a secret mission to Hastings in Bengal to obtain his co-operation.[4] Macpherson in September 1774 explained to Hastings the nature of the scheme, and pressed the advantages which could be expected from it.

"The whole of Macleane's and my labours here," he wrote, "have now wound up to a point, and the whole is to animate into life or blow into non-existence at your nod. My friend James Johnson, a person you know but slightly, if not

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29134, f.452, op.cit.
2. I.O.L./H.M.S., 118, ff.297-308, 2 letters from the Nabob of Arcot to George III, and 1 letter from the Nabob of Arcot to Lord Rochford (Secretary of State), all dated 24 September 1774 at Chepauk Palace, Madras.
3. James Johnson, an adventurer, arrived in Madras in 1764. He was first a free merchant, but later entered the Nabob's service as a secretary. He was a friend of Robert Palk. In the unpublished Palk Commercial MSS. at Exeter Public Lib. there is a Bill of Exchange (Doc.No.15) dated 1 March 1769 for £2,000 marked: "James Johnson, Madras, and James Johnson of London, Merchants". It is likely that the former was the son of the latter, and that the latter is probably identical with the James Johnson who died on 16 January 1774 (P.A., 19 January 1774, Wednesday, "On Sunday Morning last died, at his House at Ham Castle, in Worcestershire, James Johnson, Esq., formerly an eminent Merchant in the City").
4. I.O.L./H.M.S., 118, f.317 - "In October Mr James Johnson was sent to Bengal, but returned from thence before he was expected."

unfavourably, carries the whole negotiation with him. Receive him on my testimony as a man of worth and consummate ability, and who under M.c leane will act a useful and great part.

It would be presumptious in me to recommend a line to you, but it is friendship in me to tell you that it is my cool opinion (often a nearer and more intimate view of some of the first springs in the present English Gov.t than ever a man in my situation of life had) that by espousing the side of the N---- of the Carnatick, so as to keep him in good humour here, and his friend (for such is the King) in the same at home on the affairs of his ally, you take the surest step to a quiet and powerful administration of India. And this more especially when you have His Highness's Min.r Plenipo.y and one of your warmest friends (Mr.Macleane) in one person working for you at home. Without your nod the business moves not. But a counter-acting one will for Paterson [who] will, after news of the failure of this measure, be appointed Plenipo.y for the N---- at home, and so others will be looked to, and not you or your friends."[1]

Several points of interest arise in connection with this demarche. In the first place it is clear that unless Hastings gave the scheme his blessing, they did not think they could go forward with it. Hence Macpherson's attempt to show how Hastings himself would gain from Macleane's going on the mission. In the second place it would seem that Hastings was, or was believed to be, ignorant of what had been planned in Madras. Macleane in his 1776 narrative[2] stated that when he refused the Nabob's offer the Nabob replied that he would write to Hastings about it. He did not do so, and Macleane obviously did not expect that he would, because he also stated that he refrained from telling Hastings anything of what had been discussed at Madras, though the reason he gave for so doing is far from convincing. In the third place it would appear that when James Johnson propounded the scheme, Hastings was by no means taken by it. It was hard to keep a secret in an Indian presidency, and the Governor

1. B.M.Add.MSS.29135, ff.234-236, John Macpherson to W.Hastings, 27 September 1774.
2. See APPENDIX 1.

and Council of Madras reported that Johnson came back earlier than was expected, and that he had been unsuccessful.[1]

It was not until Macleane had been attacked by the 'new gentlemen' on the Bengal Council at the end of 1774, and Hastings himself was under intolerable attack from the same quarter, that the scheme was considered, and by that time Hastings not only sanctioned it, but himself appointed Macleane as one of his agents. Before matters came to a head, however, Hastings employed Macleane on a secret mission to the Rohilla country; a task which provided him with the final chance to combine duty with an opportunity to make some money.

1. I.O.L./H.M.S., 118, f.317, op.cit.

CHAPTER 4 - The Rohilla War Prize-Money Dispute: June to November 1774.

When Macleane returned to Bengal in June 1774, refreshed in health and with new possibilities before him if he should need them, there was little time left to take advantage of his official situation before the arrival of the 'new gentlemen', about whose probable attitude he had no illusions. He had already, it is true, succeeded in remitting sums to England.

"I have the pleasure to tell you," wrote Laurence Sulivan to Robert Palk, "that Mr.Maclean[sic] goes on well, and will certainly wind up honorably. He has already made a beginning, and sends me by the Resolution money to buy in Mr.Dunning[1]'s India Stock, which will so far take off a load from [Henry] Van [sittart]'s estate and me. If I can return to the Direction and keep him upon his legs, a very large debt will be secured." [2]

Orme too had received a remittance from Macleane, by the Egmont Indiaman,[3] but it is doubtful if he was doing more than borrowing from 'Peter' to pay off 'Paul'; for as he paid off debts in England he began to incur new ones in India. During his absence in Madras probably little was done on his behalf, because his youngest brother, Henry Macleane, one of his Assistant Deputy Commissary Generals and ablest co-adjutors, had succumbed[4] to the dreaded

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1. John Dunning (1731-1783), later (1782) 1st Baron Ashburton, From 1768 to 1770 he had been Solicitor General, and during that period he had been involved, as a supporter of Lord Shelburne, in Lauchlin Macleane's 'Great Scheme'.
2. H.M.C./Palk MSS., p.242, L.Sulivan to R.Palk, 23 August 1774. Vansittart had been a subscriber in the 'Great Scheme', and had lost heavily in the 1769 crash.
3. I.O.L./Orme, O.V.43(32B), f.237, L.Macleane to R.Orme, 13 November 1773.
4. I.O.L., Range 2, Shelf 6, Bengal Public Council (May-Oct 1774), p.150, L. Macleane to the Bengal Board of Inspection, 20 June 1774. Henry Macleane was never married and had no known or acknowledged illegitimate children; he left no will and his estate was never administered. The claim made by Henry Maclean of Streatham (see Armorial Families, A.C.Fox-Davies, London, 1929, ii, p.1277) and accepted by a former Lord Lyon King of Arms, that he was Henry Macleane's armorial heir and descendant is fraudulent. Lauchlin Macleane's other brother, Rev.Matthews Macleane, also died in May 1774 (in Dublin), leaving a widow but no issue. The latter's estate was managed by his brother-in-law, Cuthbert Wilson (who had married the Macleane brothers' only sister Mary). Wilson applied in London on 17 March 1774 for the Company's permission to join Lauchlin Macleane in India. On 22 March 1774 Wilson was given leave to go "on condition that he returns to England at the expiration of three years", and securities were lodged in his name on 11 April 1774, but the death of Matthews Macleane a month later prevented his departure (see I.O.L., Court Book 82, pp.879, 898 and 961).

dysentery; and it was not until after his return, on 13th June 1774, that the Council of Bengal completed their instructions for the conduct of his office. He was then ordered to keep:

"exact and regular musters throughout every branch of the service for soldiers, seapoys, artificers, labourers, carriages, bullocks, elephants, boats and every other fixed article of expence, and also wherever contingencies are provided by contract you are to see that they are faithfully and properly supplied. These articles of contingencies, which by their nature are not susceptible of being supplied by contract, are, for reasons set forth in the Minute of the Board of the 7th February, left solely to your management and provision, subject to our immediate controul in the passing of the accounts. You will therefore take care that they are furnished on the best terms and most suitably to the want of the service. All bills to pass your audit daily; pay and allowances to be checked against musters. ... As you will be summoned to all meetings of the Board or Committee on Military Accounts, you will have it completely in your power to communicate your ideas on these subjects." [1]

So far Macleane had done nothing to justify his title of Commissary General, except to obtain permission from the Council to choose and recruit extra staff for his department, to leave these subordinates to run his department while he was on sick leave in Madras, and to request the privilege to supply on his own account all the contingent supplies for the army. The last request had been granted during his absence, and was now confirmed in the above instructions. He filled the vacancy left by his brother with Matthew Leslie, already on his establishment as a senior clerical assistant, a distant cousin of the Macleanes [2]

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1. I.O.L., Range 2, Shelf 6, Bengal Public Council (May-Oct 1774), pp.140-145, General Instructions to Lauchlin Macleane, Commissary General, 13 June 1774.
2. ibid., pp.150-151, L.Macleane to the Bengal Board of Inspection, 20 June 1774. - "There being a vacancy for the office of Assistant Deputy Commissary General by the death of Mr.Henry Macleane, I have the honour, agreeable to the Honourable Board to recommend Mr.Matthew Leslie as a person proper to succeed to that appointment, and Mr.Jonathan Duncan to succeed to the vacancy in my office in Calcutta. .. Agreed: Matthew Leslie appinted. .. Agreed: Jonathan Duncan succeeds Mr.Leslie as an Assistant in the Commissary General's Office... Mr.H.M.Creswicke be appointed to the Office of the Dutch Translator in the room of Mr.Duncan." Matthew Leslie (d.1805), was the second son of Dr.Charles Leslie of the city of Cork. He was related to the Macleanes through their maternal grandmother, who was a Leslie.

who had come out with them on the Egmont in 1773 as a Writer. Having once more settled his staff problems Macleane was in a position to resume his activities. Almost immediately, however, he was interrupted again. Warren Hastings sent him to Rohilkhand on a secret mission to investigate and try to iron out the difficulties which had arisen in the latter stages of the Rohilla War. This mission is of some interest both for the career of Macleane himself and as an indication of Hastings's diplomatic methods. Only Sir John Strachey, however, among historians of the war, has found it necessary to refer to it,[1] and his account is both inadequate and unsatisfactory in several particulars.

Since the Treaty of Allahabad of 1765 the territory of Oudh, north-east of and adjacent to Bengal, had been treated as a buffer state against the Mahrattas, with Shuja-ud-Daulah, the Vizier (or Prime Minister) of the Mogul Emperor, Shah Alam, as the ruling Nabob. To keep Shuja-ud-Daulah in check, and to protect the territory against aggressors, the Company had garrisoned Oudh with a force of its own troops, whose expenses were supposed to be defrayed by the Nabob-Vizier (or the Vizier as he was simply known). The arrangements between the Vizier, the Emperor and the Company had always been unsatisfactory, and in 1773 Hastings, as a part of his re-organisation of Bengal's diplomatic relations with the country powers, had negotiated new financial and military arrangements for Oudh. Among these arrangements was an agreement to support the Vizier with Company troops if he proceeded against the Rohillas, Moslem Afghans controlling a Hindu population, who harassed his northern frontiers. In the event of war a fixed monthly payment was to be made to the Company forces assisting him, and a further 40 lakhs of rupees were to be paid to the Company on the successful termination of such a conflict.[2] Though the war expected in 1773 was postponed, early in 1774 the Company's assistance had been demanded

1. Hastings and the Rohilla War, Sir John Strachey, Oxford, 1892, pp.167-170.
2. Gleig, i, p.418.

and granted, and a brief and successful campaign under Colonel Alexander Champion[1] (fighting alongside native troops under the Vizier) led to the rapid overthrow of the Rohillas, whose leaders Hafiz Rahmat Khan and Faizullah Khan had quarrelled and had been divided at the critical period. By the end of April 1774 the main campaign was over, but further operations against Faizullah Khan were necessary before peace was fully established in October 1774, and many difficulties sprang up within the victorious armies, between the British Commander-in-Chief, Champion, and the Vizier, and between the British Commander-in-Chief and the Bengal Council, fostered by the jealousy between the military and Hastings's civilian adviser, Nathaniel Middleton[2], Resident at the Vizier's Court in Lucknow.

By June, when Macleane was back in Calcutta, the Bengal Council was perturbed by an attempt on Champion's part to obtain a reward for himself and his army, under great pressure from his officers and men, in the form of prize-money, a demand which on 3rd June the Council absolutely refused to grant. Indeed, a few days earlier Hastings had told Champion:

"upon the subject of prize-money to the army..the only instance wherein our troops in the present service could have any pretensions to it by the customs of war would be in the actual assault of a place by storm; in every other case it is clear that the capture becomes the sole property of the power carrying on the war [i.e. The Vizier of Oudh in this case]." [3]

The Council was also perturbed by accounts of friction between the Vizier and the British forces, by the fear that hostilities and the negotiations to end them were being spun out, and the fear that the Vizier would cease to keep

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1. Alexander Champion (d.1793), is first recorded as a Lieut. in the Bengal Inf. in 1757. He served as a Captain under Major John Caillaud 1760-61, and as 2i/c to Major Hector Munro at the Battle of Buxar 1764; promoted Lt.Colonel 1766 and Colonel 1770; appointed Commander of 2nd Infantry Brigade and temporary C-in-C of the Bengal Army on 18 January 1774, and as such led the Company's forces in the Rohilla War. He was also a member of the Bengal Board of Inspection.
2. Nathaniel Middleton (d.1775), was also an official interpreter.
3. Gleig, i, p.427, quoting W.Hastings to A.Champion, 28 May 1774.

up his payments for the troops and postpone the date of the payment of his 40 lakhs of rupees was also in the background. These circumstances were rendered the more unsatisfactory by the knowledge that the 'new gentlemen' were shortly due to arrive in the country.

During the next two months accounts became increasingly alarming, particularly with regard to the Company forces, who received the Council's rejection of their claim for prize-money with open discontent. In August there were real fears of a mutiny, and the Vizier thought it best to offer them a donation on his own account, and Champion for them to accept it, in defiance of Company regulations against such gifts, while disagreements between Champion and his senior officers, as well as between Champion and the Vizier, added to the general uneasiness. On 3rd September Middleton, in reply to an urgent letter from Hastings, wrote in strong terms of the mounting disorder.[1] It was to the receipt of this letter that Strachey attributed Macleane's appointment to undertake a secret mission as an officer Hastings could trust to investigate conditions for himself, and to try to conciliate the dissident parties.[2] And, asserted Strachey, Macleane hastened with all dispatch to Rohilkhand.[3]

Macleane's own account of the genesis of his mission would seem to lend force to this interpretation of events. In a narrative he submitted to the Court of Directors in 1776 he wrote:

"Mr.Hastings said these things made him very uneasy lest the public service might suffer. He was afraid of a mutiny or that the war might spin out into a length he did not expect, and therefore he had come to a resolution to send

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1. For these events see Appendices 27 and 28 to the Fifth Report from the Committee of Secrecy appointed to enquire into the Causes of the War in the Carnatic and of the Condition of the British Possessions in those Parts (in Reports from the Committees of the House of Commons, vii, (1781-82), printed in 1806, pp.914-943). Although the Carnatic War and the Madras Presidency appears to be the major subject of the enquiry, the Committee actually investigated matters concerning all three Presidencies. Events and Correspondence connected with all phases of the Rohilla War were dealt with at length.
2. Hastings and the Rohilla War, op.cit., p.167.
3. ibid., loc.cit.

some person of conciliatory disposition to heal all these differences. 'If,' he was pleased to say, 'your health will allow you to go, I had thought of asking you to undertake this commission.' I answered that I should esteem myself honoured in the trust, and that my health was perfectly re-established. ... I soon set off for the Army, which I reached with as much expedition as was expected." [1]

In fact, however, Strachey's interpretation was incorrect. Macleane's mission was a secret one; nominally he travelled to visit the Army solely in his capacity as Commissary General, nobody but Middleton was informed of the real purpose of his visit, and no record of it appeared in the Council records. It is true that he was sent to act as a conciliator; but he was not appointed for this purpose late in September, but at least two months earlier, and so far from hastening to the scene of the disorders, he took well over two months to complete a journey which an ordinary messenger covered on an average in no more than 17 days.

These facts are of significance. The exact date on which Macleane received Hastings's orders is not known, but it is clear from two letters[2] he sent on 9th July to Captain Robert Patton, The Military Secretary and Hastings's A.D.C., that he was already making preparations to leave for Rohilkhand, and by 15th August a request that a clerk named Eldred Addison should be transferred to his department was granted during Macleane's "absence with the Army".[3] He therefore set out on his journey between those dates, and from the evidence of his letters to Patton it was probably in mid-July. The arrangements may even have begun to be made as early as 16th June, for on that date he was granted an unlimited letter of credit[4] on the Company's factories at Patna and Cossimbazar.

The reason why he took so long on his journey was nothing to do with its

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1. See APPENDIX 1.
2. B.M.Add.MSS.29135, ff.25-27v., L.Macleane to R.Patton, Two letters dated 9 July 1774. Robert Patton, a Scot from Grange near Burntisland in Fife, was an acknowledged member of Hastings's 'family' (see B.M.Add.MSS.29143, ff.67-72).
3. Hodson Collection: Extracts from Bengal Public Proceedings, 15 August 1774.
4. I.O.L./H.M.S., 118, f.154.

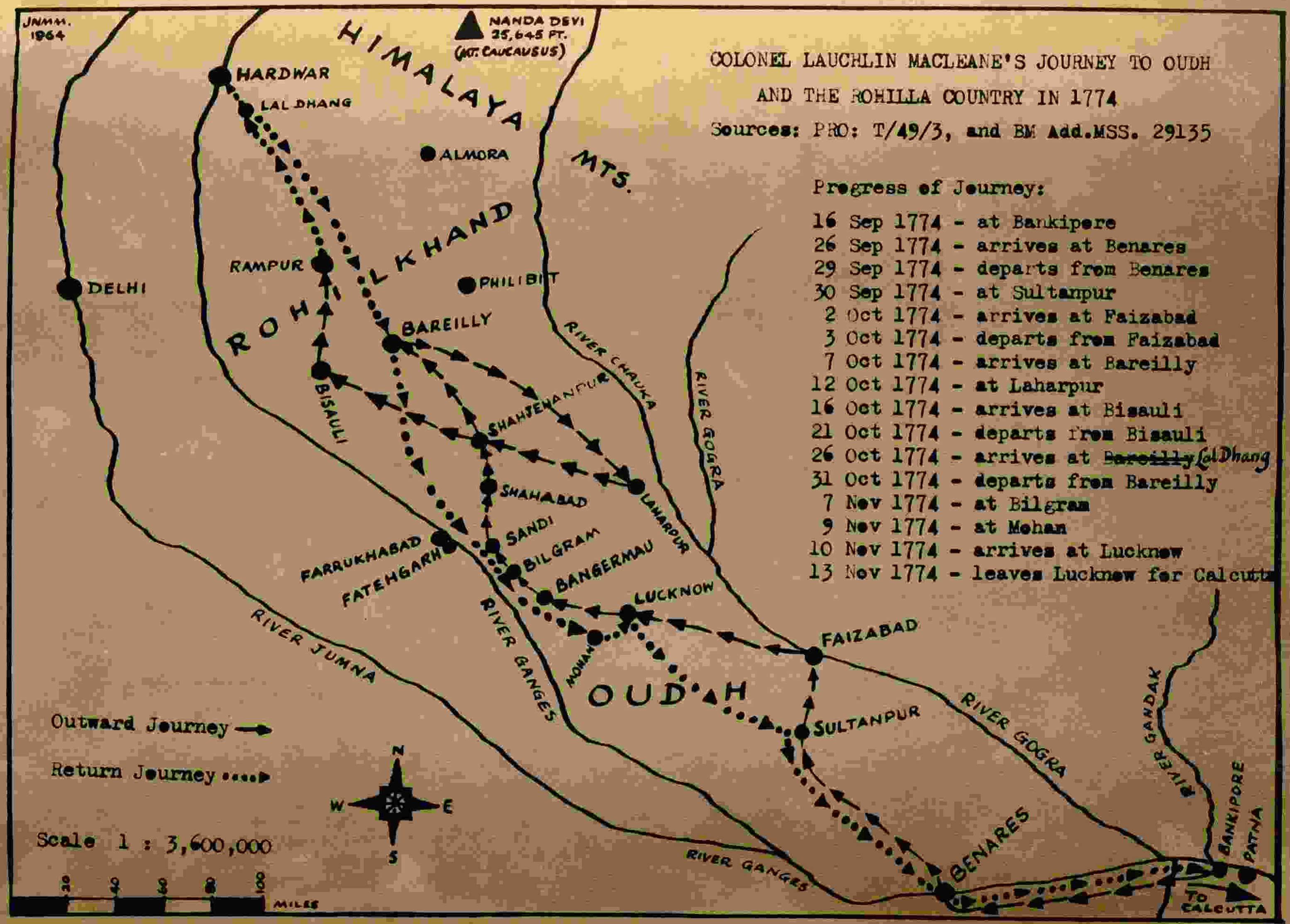
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COLONEL LAUCHLIN MACLEANE'S JOURNEY TO OUDH AND THE ROHILLA COUNTRY IN 1774

Sources: PRO: T/49/3, and BM Add.MSS. 29135

Progress of Journey:

16 Sep 1774 - at Bankipere
26 Sep 1774 - arrives at Benares
29 Sep 1774 - departs from Benares
30 Sep 1774 - at Sultanpur
2 Oct 1774 - arrives at Faizabad
3 Oct 1774 - departs from Faizabad
7 Oct 1774 - arrives at Bareilly
12 Oct 1774 - at Laharpur
16 Oct 1774 - arrives at Bisauli
21 Oct 1774 - departs from Bisauli
26 Oct 1774 - arrives at ~~Bareilly~~ Lal Dhang
31 Oct 1774 - departs from Bareilly
7 Nov 1774 - at Bilgram
9 Nov 1774 - at Mohan
10 Nov 1774 - arrives at Lucknow
13 Nov 1774 - leaves Lucknow for Calcutta



main but secret purpose, or any other mission he was undertaking on the way. He was, in fact, engaged <u>en route</u> to Oudh (quite obviously with Hastings's connivance)[1] on a private trading venture on his own account. Though in the letters he sent Hastings during his journey he was careful not to include any information which would be damaging if it came out, an examination of their timing makes it clear that, notwithstanding the serious nature of his mission, it was not treated as one of urgency, and that the opportunity which it gave him for private gains <u>en route</u> was an integral part of the scheme. Even the fact that Hastings delayed until 27th September[2] before informing Middleton of Macleane's mission shows that Hastings did not expect his envoy to arrive at his final destination with the Army in the normal travelling time.

Macleane's first letter[3] to Hastings was dated at Bankipore on 16th September, which meant that Macleane took approximately 9 weeks to cover the 350 miles from Calcutta, a journey over the easiest part of the route which should have taken no more than 10 days. In this letter, which gave no reasons for the delay, he merely requested the latest news of the "situation of things in England" as he was "very anxious to know what part Mr.Sulivan took in the late transaction at home, and how his affairs stood for the election [of Directors]."[4] The next...

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1. Hastings had been urged by Laurence Sulivan and Lord Shelburne to do all he could to help Macleane, see B.M.Add.MSS.29134, ff.69v-70, L.Sulivan to W. Hastings, 13 October 1773; and ibid., ff.366-367, Lord Shelburne to W.Hastings, 30 March 1774 (which was delivered with a verbal explanation by Sir Elijah Impey)
2. B.M.Add.MSS.29135, ff.238-240, W.Hastings to N.Middleton, 27 September 1774. - "I have given him [Macleane] a letter of recommendation to the Nabob [The Vizier], and desire that you will give him an introduction to his Excellency... He is enjoined by me to place an entire confidence in you, to speak to the Vizier by your sole interpretation, and to avoid with caution every circumstance ..which may lessen your consequence. ... Mr.McLean [sic] has a perfect knowledge of affairs at home. Added to this he possesses a great strength of understanding, and an unblemished honor. I rely implicitly on his integrity and attachment, and I have told him that I repose an equal confidence in you on the same ground."
3. B.M.Add.MSS.29135, ff.202-202v., L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 16 September 1774.
4. ibid., loc.cit.

letter from Macleane to Hastings was sent from Bareilly, 400 miles on from Bankipore, and this was dated 7th October and gave a long and detailed account of his journey. It is clearly a tissue of excuses written in order to avoid compromising Hastings in the event of the letter falling into the wrong hands; and from one small slip it is evident that Hastings probably knew Macleane's modus operandi, for the latter used a term, perhaps unwittingly, which assumed prior knowledge on the part of the former. In giving an account of his progress after leaving Benares on the Ganges, Macleane wrote: "I am far from being pleased with myself for having been so long in quitting my boats." His slip was to say "boats" instead of "boat". The budgerows, as the boats used on the Ganges were called, were large enough for several men and their baggage, let alone one, and an envoy in a hurry had no need of more than one.

Macleane also stated exactly how long he had spent (or had been held up) in various places en route, and his travelling times between places. From Benares to Faizabad had taken 2½ days in actual travelling time, but he had lost one whole day at Sultanpur in between, and he had left Benares after a stay there of 3 days. From Faizabad, where he lost one whole day, to Bareilly he had travelled by way of Bangermau, Bilgram, Sandi and Shahabad, and had completed this distance, 200 miles, "in a little more than three days." Working back from 7th October, when he arrived in Bareilly, it can be positively established that he reached Benares on 26th September. From Bankipore, which he left on 16th September, to Benares is just over 100 miles, yet he took 10 days to cover this short stretch.

The most suspicious aspect of the account of his journey was his willingness to offer Hastings lengthy but specious excuses for taking 9 days to cover the

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29135, ff.270-271, L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 7 October 1774.
2. ibid., f.270, loc.cit.
3. ibid., ff.270-270v., loc.cit.
4. ibid., f.270, loc.cit.

400 miles from Benares to Bareilly (which he admitted was only one day under the time taken by a fast native courier), and yet he was careful to avoid giving explanations for taking 9 weeks to cover the 350 miles from Calcutta to Bankipore, and 10 days to cover the 100 miles from Bankipore to Benares. There can be little doubt that his unnecessary excuses were false.[1] He claimed that he had been delayed between Benares and Bareilly by bad weather and the difficulty he had had in obtaining native bearers, and that those he did manage to hire were insulting and greedy. He exposed himself as a liar on both counts.

In the next letter he sent Hastings he concluded by saying that "the season in point of rain has been remarkably favourable,"[2] and in a long letter he sent Lord North, in which he gave a closely observed description of the people and places he had seen on his journey, he said that he had "passed without attendants or escort in the midst of the operations from Benares to Loldong [sic] - 600 miles - without having had the smallest insult offered to me."[3] So much for the bad weather and the insulting bearers, both of which had been non-existent.

The true cause for Macleane's slow progress from Calcutta to Benares was revealed in the Minute of 11th January 1775 written by the new Councillors, when Macleane's past activities were under investigation. They wrote:

"The idea which we have conceived of his [Macleane's] abilities must be confirmed in the minds of the Court of Directors by the number and variety of different characters which he undertook to represent at the Army. In point of rank he appears as a Colonel. In Suja Dowla's [sic] Country he appears as a Merchant, having carried a considerable quantity of merchandize with him which could not find entrance into that Country without a particular dustuck or permission. This merchandize he conveys in boats which he thinks it reasonable that the Company should pay for. Arrived at the Army he becomes an Agent to make a bargain with himself on behalf of the Company. He then charges the

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29135, ff.270-270v., op.cit.
2. ibid., f.281v., L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 12 October 1774.
3. P.R.O., T/49/3, Doc.6, L.Macleane to Lord North, 9 December 1774.

Company 15 per cent for his trouble; and last of all, in his quality of Comptroller he controuls the same accounts which he delivers in, in his quality of Agent." [1]

To this caustic summary was added an insinuation of the manner in which Macleane had financed his transactions, as follows:

"When the Directors see a fact asserted under Colonel Macleane's own hand, and the same fact adapted and made use of in argument by the Governor [Hastings], vizt., that he has never had a Shilling of the Company's Money in his Possession they may observe, perhaps with surprise, that in consequence of an unlimited Letter of Credit given to Colonel Macleane by the late Board of Inspection on the 16th of June last, on the Factories of Patna and Cozimbuzar [sic], his Agents have received 9,000 Sicca Rupees, which are yet unaccounted for." [2]

Hastings's reply to this allegation was weak and evasive, and virtually passed the responsibility for answering the charge back to Macleane. He wrote:

"I refer to the Consultations of the 7th February 1774 for the motives of the late [Bengal] Administration in granting Col.° Macleane the provision of the petty stores which could not be contracted for. The Company were sure of a saving by it of at least 15 p.ct. The saving had been much more considerable, and was in fact the most effectual method of reducing the Company's expences in those articles. I do not know on what grounds it is affirmed that he carried a considerable quantity of merchandize with him to the Army. I am assured and do believe that he carried none. ... For a more particular information, if you will be pleased to call upon Col.° Macleane, I doubt not he will afford you full satisfaction. That an advance of 9,000 Rupees [about £900] to Colonel Macleane should have escaped my memory will not, I hope, be thought any great crime." [3]

There is not one outright denial in the passage, and it could be inferred that Hastings not only knew what Macleane had done, but that he had told him

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1. I.O.L./H.M.S., 118, f.155, Minute of 11 January 1775.
2. ibid., ff.153-154. Until 1836 there was not a universal rupee in India. Before that date there were many, including Arcot Rupees, Farrukhabad or "Company's Rupees," Benares Rupees, Sonaut Rupees, Current Rupees (im which the Company's accounts were kept), and Sicca or Sikka Rupees; and their value differed according to the content of pure silver in the gross weight of the coin. 100 Sicca Rupees in 1774 equalled 116 Current Rupees. See Hobson-Jobson, A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words & Phrases, London, 1903, pp.774-6.
3. I.O.L./H.M.S., 118, f.418, W.Hastings to the Court of Directors, 22 Feb.1775

that in the event of his transactions coming to light he would accept no responsibility or even knowledge of them. The fact that they did come to light was probably due to information gathered by Macleane's opponent Colonel Champion, and, more surely, to Macleane's return to Calcutta after the arrival there of the new Councillors, which meant that he had no time to hide the flaws in his accounts. The 9,000 Rupees paid out to him were never accounted for, and he escaped from India without giving a reply to the charge; indeed, he never rebutted it.

In summing up the first part of Macleane's journey to Rohilkhand it can be shown that he left Calcutta in mid-July; that he probably picked up money and supplies at Cossimbazar (acting on his right to deal with "contingent supplies" and financed by a Company letter of credit); that shortly after leaving Cossimbazar he reached the Ganges and hired, at the Company's expense, a fleet of boats to travel to Patna, where he picked up further money and supplies; and that it was between Cossimbazar and the Ganges that he probably had had trouble in obtaining bearers and not, as he claimed, at a later stage of his journey. From Patna to Bankipore is a short distance, and he probably sold his remaining merchandize between Bankipore and Benares, where he finally dismissed his boats. After Benares he was no longer hampered by goods, and he travelled at a very fast pace. The useless excuses he made to Hastings for this last stage were, in all probability, applicable to the early stages. When he stated that he reached the Army "with as much expedition as was expected" he was undoubtedly telling a half-truth. It implied that Hastings knew what could have been "expected" in the circumstances.[1]

It is not known how much or how little Macleane made as a result of his transactions, but an interesting footnote to the affair was added in 1777, when

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1. See APPENDIX 1.

he had given up all hope of re-employment as a Company servant. On 17th June of that year, a memorial in which he claimed 59,000 Rupees from the Company was read in the Court of Directors.[1] It was ignored until 10th October, when Colonel James Capper[2] acting as Macleane's attorney revived the matter, which was referred to the Committee of Correspondence. It was eventually dealt with by the members of the Committee on 4th December, by which time Macleane was either dead or approaching his death. Ignorant of his fate, they ruled:

"that they have taken into consideration the claims of contingent charges said to have been incurred on a journey to Camp and from thence to Calcutta, amounting to 17,000 Sonaut Rupees, and Rs.3,000 p.month in lieu of privileges of trade, and offering as their opinion that Mr.Macleane be allowed and paid Sonaut Rupees 6,500, being the sum charged for Budgerows [Boats] to the Army, and also Sonaut Rupees 1,000 for one month's table expences and contingent charges, but that the further sum of Rs.9,500 be not paid by the Company. And in regard to the claim of Rupees 3,000 p.month in lieu of trade, the Committee are clearly of the opinion that Mr.Macleane has no right to the payment of any sum whatever on that account."[3]

It will be noted from this account that Macleane was awarded allowances for no more than one month's journey, and that he had the effrontery to make a demand for allowances in lieu of trading rights, to which he had no claim and which, in fact, he had been exercising.

After Macleane reached Bareilly on 7th October 1774 there is no evidence to

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1. I.O.L., Court Book 86, p.163. Maclean, p.435, incorrectly gives Rupees 59,000 as £59,000. At the 1777 exchange rate Rs.59,000 would have been £5,900.
2. I.O.L., Court Book 86, p.337. James Capper, the brother-in-law of James Johnson, one of the Nabob of Arcot's aides, was appointed Commissary General of Madras at the time Lauchlin Macleane was appointed Commissary General of Bengal, and they were the only two men who were ever granted brevet commissions as full Colonels as a means of supporting the authority of a civil post (see Hodson Collection, and Love, iii, p.70). Capper was in England in 1777 as the agent of the Madras majority (see later, Chapter 8).
3. I.O.L., Court Book 86, p.434. From 1773 a Sonaut or Sanaut Rupee was the same value as a Farrukhabad or "Company's" or Current Rupee, and its use as a qualifying term in accounts was superfluous; it bore the impression of the 19th San or year of the reign of the Mogul Emperor, Shah Alam - hence its name, see Hobson-Jobson, pp.774-776, op.cit. Rupees 3,000 p.month for 14 months (Oct.1773 -Jan.1775), the duration of Macleane's stay in India, equals Rupees 42,000; this added to Rs.17,000 he claimed as expenses gives a total of Rs.59,000, the total amount of his claim of 17 June 1777. He was awarded Rs.7,500 only.

show that he concerned himself further with trading ventures. Indeed, he laid them aside and concentrated on his mission. Hastings may not have taken this mission seriously enough to hasten him on his way, but there was work to be done and work which he settled into. At Bareilly he found that the last leader of the Rohillas, Faizullah Khan, had surrendered, and that the British brigade had moved to new quarters 100 miles to the south-east at Laharpur, and here he arrived on 12th October. He immediately wrote to Hastings:

"I have been very cordially received by Colonel Champion; he lies confined to his bed by the gout and appeared to me to be in a very indifferent state. As I saw he was in great pain I made my visit very short. ... I have written immediately on my my arrival to Mr.Middleton that I would wait upon him tomorrow. If neither he nor Colonel Champion open themselves to me, I shall conclude that they are not acquainted with your intentions in sending me. ... I shall use my utmost endeavour to contribute towards the success of what you have entrusted to me, by seizing every favourable opportunity of inculcating your sentiments without letting it appear that I have received any kind of instructions on that head." [2]

On 27th September Hastings had written to Macleane, and had enclosed a letter addressed to Champion explaining the mission with which Macleane had been entrusted. In his covering letter to Macleane, Hastings said: "From the disposition which you perceive him to bear towards me or towards yourself I leave it to your discretion to deliver or suppress my letter." [3] Macleane decided to suppress the letter, and it was not until some time later that Champion discovered what seemed to him a further example of treachery on Hastings's part. For the duration of Macleane's visit Champion apparently thought that his visitor was no more than what he appeared to be, an inspecting Commissary General. Contact with Middleton, even though Hastings's letter to

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29135, f.270v., op.cit.
2. ibid., f.281, L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 12 October 1774.
3. Hastings and the Rohilla War, p.167, op.cit., quoting W.Hastings to L. Macleane, 27 September 1774 (B.M.Add.MSS.29117).

the latter had not yet arrived, and contact with Champion's senior officers gave Macleane an entrée into the politics of the camp.

Middleton obviously welcomed Macleane as an emissary of the Governor. Macleane also had personal links with several of Champion's senior officers. Since these were at the time on bad terms with Champion, Macleane readily adopted their point of view.[1] One of them was his distant cousin Lt.Colonel Matthew Leslie, the Quarter-master General of the Bengal Army, who not only had known Macleane many years before in Martinique,[2] but was the uncle of young Matthew Leslie whom Macleane had recently promoted to Assistant Deputy Commissary General. Two other senior officers on bad terms with Champion were Colonel Primrose Galliez,[3] the second-in-command and an Ulsterman in spite of his French Huguenot surname; and Major Alexander Hannay,[4] the Field Officer and an intimate acquaintance of

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1. Matthew Leslie (d.1778), 2nd son of Rev.Matthew Leslie of Kilmacrenan. He joined the British army as a Second Surgeon's Mate on 1 September 1745, and was posted to North America; promoted Surgeon to the Hospital in North America for the British Colonial Army 1754; appointed to a direct Lieutenancy in 48th Regt. of Foot 1755; Capt. 48th Regt 1760, having been A.Q.M.G. to Wolfe at Quebec, where he was severely wounded; A.Q.M.G. to the West Indies Invasion Force 1762; deputy to Lauchlin Macleane in Martinique 1762-63; Capt.(half-pay) 76th Regt.in 1768; transferred to East India Company's army as Lt.Colonel on the Bengal Establishment in 1768; appointed Q.M.G. of Bengal Army 12 December 1773; in 1777 he commanded a Temporary Brigade, and he died in March 1778 (from 'flux') while leading a force to assist the Bombay Presidency against the Mahrattas.

2. P.R.O., C.O.166/2.

3. Primrose Galliez (1738-1819); his Christian name was the maiden name of his mother, who belonged to the Scottish family of Primrose, Earls of Rosebery. He joined the East India Company's army as a Cadet 1758; and in 1763 as a Captain he became commander of 1st Battalion (later 12th Regt.) Bengal Native Infantry, a famous unit which always bore the name "Gallies-ki-Paltan" in honour of his bravery; he was promoted full Colonel on 18 January 1774 and given command of the 2nd Brigade, acting as 2 i/c to Champion, the temporary C-in-C of the Army. He resigned from the Army in 1776 and died in London on 2 November 1819 - he was accidentally burnt to death by falling upon his head into the grate.

4. Alexander Hannay (1741-1782), eldest son of William Hannay of Kirkdale, and brother of Sir Samuel Hannay, Baronet of Mochrum. He originally served in the British army as a Lieut. 51st Foot, and was wounded at the Battle of Minden in 1759; transferred to the East India Company's army as a Capt. 1765, and was promoted Major in the 2nd Brigade, 1 October 1769. Hannay was thoroughly hated by Philip Francis, one of the new Bengal Councillors, but in 1775 he was "confirmed in his post of Adjutant General by a drole mistake of Francis's voting for him. He wanted to retract but could not." (see Bod., Vansittart Papers, Dep.b.97, p.67, G.Vansittart to J.Graham, 23 February 1775). In 1778 he entered the service of the Vizier of Oudh and commanded his troops until 1781.

John Macpherson, from whom Macleane had recently parted in Madras. Galliez and Leslie had been in an open clash with Champion,[1] and the army as a whole was highly dissatisfied with Champion's handling of their claims for a reward, as well as with the Bengal Council, who had opposed them. When Macleane arrived in their midst he told Hastings:

"I am happy to have arrived time enough to use every effort to prevent a step being taken which must, if taken, prove very detrimental to those concerned in it. This is a deputation from the Captains to Colonel Champion to demand whether any notice has been taken of the Army in the Treaty of Fizoola Cawn [sic] - as they were ready to storm the place before the Treaty took place. As I have received this piece of intelligence from a person who puts great confidence in me, I avoid mentioning his name at present, lest by any accident my letter should miscarry..he is a man in whose welfare I shall ever interest myself..he has many foibles as well as virtues, but they are foibles of temper and not of the heart, which a twenty year acquaintance with him has given me undoubted proof of. One division of the Army moves from this ground tomorrow."[2]

The man from whom Macleane received his intelligence was certainly Lt.Colonel Leslie, the description fits no other. When the army moved from Laharpur, Macleane moved with it, and went 100 miles to the north-west to Bisauli. From there on 16th October he sent his next report to Hastings. He wrote:

"Since my letter of the 12th I deferred writing till I could speak with some certainty of the matter on which I had then barely touched. I am now happy in being able to assure you that though many things of a disagreeable nature still continue to occupy the minds of the army, there is not the most distant apprehension tending to sedition or mutiny. May I venture further to assure you that when matters ran highest, there were not three men of any consideration who would not have shuddered at the very thought of mutiny. Indecent clamour,

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1. Gleig,i, pp.429-430. Champion had been told to forbid his officers to visit the Vizier in a letter he had received from Hastings, but Galliez and Leslie had disobeyed. Champion, instead of censuring such senior officers in private, had violated the strict code of military manners by publishing his reprimand in General Orders to the Army, which had caused bitter resentment. Although Galliez and Leslie had been in the wrong, Champion's high-handed act had shifted Hastings's sympathy from Champion to his outraged subordinates.
2. B.M.Add.MSS.29135, f.281v., op.cit.

I am sorry to say, not only prevailed but was encouraged, but the more clamorous the author of it was, the more necessary they found it, in points of service, to behave well and obediently. It would be rash in me to say more on this head till I can push my investigation a little further. ...

In my letter of the 12th I mentioned that a remonstrance of a disagreeable nature would, I was apprehensive, be signed by all the Captains relative to the late Treaty with Fizoola Cawn [sic]. The ferment ran very high, particularly against the Commander-in-Chief [Champion], who has lost all credit and weight with the Army, and I was for two days very uneasy, lest some unruly spirits should prevail over the more moderate. It was very necessary for me to act vigorously and without delay, but it was also very necessary to conceal that I had any particular inducement to do so, and to make it appear that the business of my department only had drawn me to Camp. The first step I took was to see Mr.Middleton, to whom I opened myself confidentially, though he had not yet received any letter relative to me from you. ..we took our measures in concert.

The thing we desired was to bring the Army back to that point from whence they ought never to have departed,...and our endeavours I may venture to say will be crowned by success." [2]

The threat of mutiny, which had existed for some time, was the fear of a general protest of the officers of the brigade against the Bengal Council's refusal to allow them to receive a donation, or prize-money, or even to take direct action to acquire some sort of reward. The method Macleane used with his friends among the senior officers was to work in order to prevent such a general and disorderly protest, rather than to attempt to check the protest altogether. He continued his letter of 16th October to Hastings, by saying:

"In a day or two I shall be enabled to give you a particular detail of the remonstrance business..but I should act with ingratitude to Col.Leslie and Major Hannay did I not now assure you that, however warm they may have been on the rights of soldiers, they have exerted themselves with uncommon zeal in moderating matters, and in distinguishing that there is a point in which clamour commences to become sedition." [3]

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1. A subaltern named Murray appears to have been the most hot-headed malcontent.
2. B.M.Add.MSS.29135, ff.285-286v., L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 16 October 1774.
3. ibid., loc.cit.

On 26th October, in his next letter to Hastings, Macleane described what he had done. He had worked, he claimed, on Galliez, Leslie and Hannay, whose reluctance held the hot-headed Captains and subalterns in check, to persuade the malcontents to send an address to Hastings, "submitting respectfully to his determination and craving protection and good offices for the Army," and to agree that this address should be signed by these three senior officers and not by the "tumultuous Captains." In this way, though Macleane did not disguise his sympathy with their claims (he pointed out to Hastings "that no power of oratory or agreement will ever persuade a soldier that he has not, when victorious, a right to contribution and plunder"), the danger of a public outbreak of discontent was averted. Attempts were made by the senior officers, Macleane still remaining in the background, to obtain the agreement of Champion to their protest, but they disagreed over small matters of wording in the address and it was finally transmitted to Hastings on 28th October by Macleane and Middleton without Champion's agreement. Though by this time Champion's three senior officers as well as Middleton knew that Macleane's mission was other than it seemed, he still remained ignorant of it.

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29135, ff.293-294; L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 26 October 1774.
2. ibid., f.293v., loc.cit.
3. ibid., f.293, loc.cit
4. ibid., ff.298-298v., L.Macleane & N.Middleton to W.Hastings, 28 October 1774.
5. Macleane had kept up the pretence that he was in Rohilkhand as an inspecting Commissary General only all the time he was there. He told Hastings (ibid., f. 293) "that I appeared to have been employed in no other business while in Camp than that of my office. ...Indeed, my not having been introduced to the Vizier before his departure, as well as my having come so far on my way by water, had intirely put an end to some whispers that had been passing about before my arrival." In the same letter (f.294v.) he also admitted: "I have not forwarded your letter to Colonel Champion," which meant that he had kept up the pretext of being about his nominal duties to all except Middleton and (according to his own statement) Galliez, Leslie and Hannay. Much later, by means never revealed, Champion found out why Macleane had been in Rohilkhand, and on his return to England in 1775 he launched a press attack on Macleane, which was weak and ineffectual. See S.R.O., Kinross House Papers, MS.2128/2, L.Macleane to J. Graham, 20 September 1775 -"Col.Champion has brought forth a most extraordinary production in large and long folio. I am now reading it, but there can be little amusement and less instruction in analysing water-gruel. The cook, Mr.Murray, seems sensible of the insipidity of the mess and wishes to season it with a little arsenic; but his poisons are too gross to be swallowed without detection."

Before the affair of the discontented officers had been settled, however, Macleane had moved on to another part of his mission. On 15th October the Vizier had suddenly left the camp with Middleton in attendance. The following day Macleane told Hastings:

"To my regret I am deprived of Mr.Middleton's bid in the very onset, for the Nabob [The Vizier] departed yesterday without giving him the least previous notice. In other respects I am not sorry that his Excellency has taken his departure, for while he remained here there would always have been hopes and fears entertained from that quarter, and springs put in motion to operate differently upon him, of which work there has been too much from more parties than one during the campaign." [1]

While this meant, however, that nothing could be done to bring Champion and the Vizier together, it did not diminish the importance of placating the ruffled Vizier and of assuring that he kept his financial commitments with the Company. With this in view Macleane, as soon as he could leave the discontented officers to their own devices, departed from the British camp at Bisauli on 21st October and set out for the Vizier's army. It had turned out that the latter's purpose in breaking camp was to make a tour of the conquered Rohilla Country,[2] and Macleane caught him and Middleton up at a camp between Lal Dhang and Hardwar, 130 miles north of Bisauli. At Lal Dhang, Macleane reported to Lord North that he saw "the tops of the Tibet Mountains, Mount Caucausus [Nanda Devi] towering over them, covered with eternal snow. ... Loldong [sic] was for the season colder than that of England in the month of October, except in the middle of the day when it was very hot."[3]

Macleane had not been presented to the Vizier while he was in the British camp, because he had been anxious to avoid any suspicion that he was on a secret mission. Now this disguise was put aside. He was introduced to the Vizier,

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29135, f.286-286v., op.cit.
2. ibid., f.293, L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 26 October 1774.
3. P.R.O., T/49/3, Doc.6, L.Macleane to Lord North, 9 December 1774. With his eye to the future Macleane sent this unsolicited report as he knew Lord North "had it so much at heart to obtain just and perfect accounts of the actual state of Bengal." It was in fact a very full report.

and found "the conversation was very interesting, the Vizier remarkably open, and his behaviour frank and unembarrassed."[1] No great difficulty was expected from this part of the mission. The goodwill of the Vizier was to be assured, and arrangements for the payment of the 40 lakhs he was due to pay the Bengal government were to be expedited, but Middleton, whose function this was, had established good relations with the Vizier and no obstacles were apparent. Macleane was anxious to return to Calcutta before the 'new gentlemen' arrived, and at first he thought he would get back within fifteen days (which shows that he knew the average time for covering the 950 miles from Lal Dhang to Calcutta). "But," he told Hastings "the Vizier has pressed me so warmly to remain till he can send you all his thoughts"[2] and "Mr.Middleton has also expressed his desire that I should not hurry my departure lest we should execute imperfectly what you expect from us,"[3] that he agreed to postpone his departure. At this point a sudden alteration in the Vizier's attitude sharply changed the situation. On 31st October, while at a temporary camp in Bareilly (the Vizier's army had turned south after reaching Hardwar and was making its way back to its headquarters at Lucknow in a series of forced marches), Middleton reported to Hastings:

"Several circumstances have occurred since Colonel Macleane's letter of the 26th instant to make us suspect, if not totally change our opinion of the Vizier's sincerity in those professions of deference and respect for your advice which we then thought well grounded. We were very loth to entertain this suspicion when we first thought that we perceived cause for it; but the remarkable coldness and indifference with which he listened to many points deserving his most serious attention at a subsequent visit left us no room to doubt, tho' we were exceedingly astonished at the change and quite at a loss to assign any reason for it. At length he let us into the secret himself by telling us that he had Advices from his Correspondents at Patna that the General Council was

1. B.M.Add.MSS.29135, f.294v., L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 26 October 1774.
2. ibid., loc.cit.
3. ibid., loc.cit. In the same letter (f.293) Macleane said he had heard "the news of the Gentlemen from England having arrived at the Cape," and because of this news he wanted to get back to Calcutta "as my office would..undoubtedly undergo a great change."

arrived and that they had determined to give him an immediate meeting at Benares!"[1]

The 'new gentlemen' had arrived in Calcutta on 18th October, and within a week had launched an attack against Hastings on account of the Rohilla War. News of the former might just have reached the Vizier from native sources; news of the latter could not have done so; but the event is an interesting illustrat-ion of the speed with which Indian opinion reacted to changes in the policy of their European rulers, and, although in this case the conclusions drawn were faulty, of the ingenuity with which these changes were interpreted. Middleton and Macleane did what they could in the absence of information to set against these rumours. Middleton told Hastings:

"Without denying that it was very possible the news of those gentlemen's arrival might be true, though the time seemed very short for it, we contented ourselves with laughing at the idea of such a measure originating from any person except yourself, or the probability of its being known to him [the Vizier] first thro' any other channel than by a direct conveyance from you, as these gentlemen were appointed to encrease your power, and not to control or diminish it." [2]

Macleane added in a postscript that they avoided further comment on the Vizier's belief as "every endeavour to remove the impression which the Patna intelligence had made upon his mind would only serve to confirm him in his error."[3] Nevertheless, Macleane and Middleton remained uneasy. When the army reached Bilgram on 7th November they sent Hastings a joint report;

"Since our last there has not been the least change in the conduct of the Vizier; on the contrary he has industriously avoided any interview under the pretext of ill health. But at the same time we have continued our march without intermission from eight to ten leagues a day while his Excellency found

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29135, ff.300-300v., N.Middleton to W.Hastings (with a postscript L.Macleane to W.Hastings), 31 October 1774.
2. ibid., loc.cit. (This paragraph was followed by one in code. This was submitted to Lt.Colonel Arthur Skinner of 137 Old Bath Road, Cheltenham, Glos., a codes and cyphers expert, for an opinion. He replied that there was not enough material for an interpretation, but that it was a "dictionary code").
3. ibid., f.301, loc.cit.

strength enough to amuse himself with hawking, shooting and other diversions on the route. As this made it evident that the gaining of him was the drift his Excellency had in view in pleading bad health, it confirmed us in the line we had taken of proceeding cautiously, and taking our measures from such workings as we might be able to discover in the Vizier's mind on the receipt of those intelligences which he evidently waits for from his Correspondents. On this principle we determined that the overture for an interview should arise from him. ... This degree of caution, however, will not prevent us, when we see it absolutely necessary, from making him see how much he has been wanting to you. But we hope it will not come to this. At all events a few days must determine it, as he means to halt at Lucknow (which we shall reach in three days), for there it will not be possible for him to avoid an interview any longer." [1]

These tactics proved successful. On 13th November, when they reached Lucknow, they were able to report that the Vizier's attitude (no doubt on the receipt of further and authentic reports) had completely changed. They wrote:

"We arrived at this place on the 10th instant. The Vizier reached it the day before by a forced march, leaving the army encamped at Mohawn [sic]. Before he left the camp he paid us a visit and apologised in very strong terms for the want of attention, as he was pleased to express it, which his illness had occasioned towards us. It was his wish, he said, to have had us much about him, and to have conferred with us often, but he had been for some days totally incapable of business, and therefore hoped we would take no offence. ...

Without being able to assign the true reason for this sudden change in his Excellency's conduct, we were pleased with the event, for it convinced us that the measures we had pursued were right. ... Still, we determined to have stronger proofs of this change in his Excellency's disposition before we entered again on business, for which purpose we allowed a day to pass after our arrival at Lucknow without desiring to wait upon him.

The consequence of this was a message to Mr.Middleton desiring anxiously to see him, and at this meeting he assured Mr.Middleton, in a manner still stronger than before, that his illness alone had occasioned his late inactivity, and he made the warmest repeated professions of his zeal to fulfill everything required of him, putting his politeness even to excess. But the most convincing proof of some essential change in his disposition was his requesting Mr.

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29135, ff.309-310, L.Macleane & N.Middleton to W.Hastings, 7 November 1774.

Middleton to enter immediately on receiving as much of the 40 Lacks [sic] for the Company as he has now ready for him; and also that he would receive and forward to the Army two month's pay in advance, lest any accident should prevent his sending it at the time it might become due. He concluded with saying that he was very solicitous to have his letters forwarded with dispatch to you, for which reason he would endeavour to get everything ready for Colonel Macleane's departure in two or three days. ... It is probable that Colonel Macleane will reach you soon after the receipt of this letter, if not before it." [1]

Macleane left Lucknow on 15th November, and was back in Calcutta by 9th December.[2] His confidential mission had been successful, even if his personal actions had done no more than further the actions of others. He had encouraged the senior officers to adopt a moderate line, which averted the danger of mutiny in the army, and he had strengthened the hand of Middleton in dealing with the Vizier, in what proved to be a difficult situation. Suggestions were later made by Macleane's enemies that his activities had not all been for the public good, and that he had fomented the differences between Champion and the Vizier by fabricating a hostile letter for the Vizier in which Champion was attacked;[3] but there is no evidence to support this charge, and it seems unlikely to be true.

While on his journey to and from Rohilkhand, the last of his public activities in India, Macleane had undoubtedly done some useful work. The coming of the 'new gentlemen' was to bring both his public and private activities in Bengal to an end, but not his involvement in Indian affairs. The understanding he had reached with the Nabob of Arcot when he was in Madras earlier in the year was to prove of vital importance to him.

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29135, ff.311-312v., L.Macleane & N.Middleton to W.Hastings, 13 November 1774.
2. Macleane was certainly back in Fort William, Calcutta, by 9th December 1774, for on that day he sent Lord North a letter from that place (see P.R.O.,T/49/3, Doc.6, op.cit.)
3. Memoirs of Sir Philip Francis, K.C.B., J.Parkes & H.Merivale, London, 1867, ii, p.54, quoting Philip Francis - "The European style in which it [the Vizier's letter against Champion] was conceived showed plainly that it had been fabricated by Macleane." Macleane denied this vigorously (see APPENDIX 1).

CHAPTER 5 - Resignation and Return to England: December 1774 to July 1775.

The 'new gentlemen', Lt.General John Clavering[1], Colonel George Monson[2] and Philip Francis[3], arrived in Calcutta on 18th October 1774. With Warren Hastings, the Governor General, and Richard Barwell they formed the new Council of Bengal as constituted by the Regulating Act. Thousands of words have been published[4] on the immediate conflict between Hastings and Barwell, the two representatives of the old Company administration, and the 'new gentlemen', who combined to form the 'triumvirate', or as they were better known (because of their superior voting power) the 'majority'. For the purpose of this thesis it is sufficient, therefore, to give a brief summary of the affair, and to show how their arrival affected Lauchlin Macleane.

The character of Francis, the brains of the majority, has been examined thoroughly.[5] Briefly, he was a born trouble-maker and a malicious liar, but had undoubted abilities as an organiser and a letter writer. He went out to India, as he himself admitted, with the intention "to adopt and unite all Lord Clive's friends to me,"[6] which was another way of saying that he was going to

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1. John Clavering (1722-1777). He had risen steadily in the army as a result of bravery in many campaigns, including those in Europe and the West Indies during the Seven Years War.
2. The Hon.George Monson (1730-1776), the 3rd son of the 1st Baron Monson by his wife Lady Margaret Watson, youngest daughter of the 1st Earl of Rockingham. He had distinguished himself at the Battle of Pondicherry in 1760, and was A.D.C. to George III in 1769. When he arrived in India in 1774 he held the substantive rank of full Colonel and the local rank of Brigadier-General. His wife was Lady Anne Vane, daughter of 1st Earl of Darlington.
3. Philip Francis (1740-1818), son of Rev.Dr.Philip Francis. He was an Anglo-Irishman, both his parents being of English origin, and was born in Dublin. In 1753 he entered St.Paul's School, London, where he stayed until 1756, when he was found a junior clerkship in the Secretary of State's Office. In 1763 he was appointed First Clerk at the War Office by Welbore Ellis, the Secretary at War. When Lord Barrington succeeded Ellis in 1765, Francis's position was unaffected, and he continued to hold the same post until he resigned, in somewhat mysterious circumstances, in 1772. His appointment as a member of the Supreme Council of Bengal was also shrouded in some mystery.
4. Sutherland, Weitzman, Gleig, Davies and Feiling all give accounts of the conflict between Hastings and the majority.
5. Weitzman gives a thorough and objective view of Francis, and corrects the blatant eulogy of Parkes and Merivale in Memoirs of Sir Philip Francis, op.cit.
6. Quoted Sutherland, p.293.

actively oppose all the friends and supporters of Laurence Sulivan, foremost among whom in India were Hastings and Macleane. He undoubtedly used the sea voyage out to Calcutta to consolidate an alliance with Clavering and Monson, and to gain their approval for an attack on Hastings at the first opportunity. Clavering, an ambitious forthright martinet, took precedence on the Council after Hastings, but he was not equal to Francis in political cunning. Monson, although cast in the same military mould as the arrogant Clavering, was the most moderate member of the majority, but he had a shrewish wife, whose mendacious gossip about Hastings's supposed lowly origins was later quoted by Francis in one of his scurrilous libels.[1]

Hastings had been warned by his friends in England to expect trouble when the majority arrived, but the speed and determination they showed in their desire to destroy both himself and his policies was probably worse than anything he had ever imagined. From the very first meeting of the new Council, they treated him with insolent hostility, and made no attempt to conceal their belief that he was a 'has-been' whom they would force out of office as quickly as possible. After only one week in Calcutta they launched an attack on his Rohilla War policy,[2] and demanded to see his personal correspondence with Nathaniel Middleton on the subject. This was a matter that not only lent itself to sensational handling (over alleged atrocities committed against the defeated Rohillas), but also provided the means for attacking the Governor's prerogative

1. Davies, p.200, quoting Francis, who wrote: "I understand him [Hastings] to be the natural son of a steward of the late Lord Darlington (so I have been repeatedly assured by Lady Anne Monson, who was a daughter of that Family)."
2. ibid., pp.155-159. A little later Clavering, Monson and Francis gave their view of the Rohilla War and the subsequent prize-money dispute as follows: "Indulging troops with the hopes of plunder have been too often exemplified in this Country. The Rohilla War, with respect to the share we took in it, had no other object, and to judge from the Correspondence which has been laid before us, it should seem that plunder had ingrossed the attention not only of the Government, but of the Army from the commencement of the campaign to the end of it. ... We mean to fix our censure upon the Government." (see I.O.L./H.M.S., 118, f.164, Minute of 11 January 1775.).

of dealing personally with all 'foreign' affairs. If they could succeed in depriving Hastings of this preserve they knew they would be virtually destroying his real power and authority as Governor General.

When Macleane returned to Calcutta in the first week of December 1774 he found that the struggle between Hastings (and Barwell) and the majority had been joined. Not only was he a protege of Hastings and Sulivan, but he had been actively engaged on Hastings's behalf in Rohilkhand. The threat to his career that had been anticipated for so long now had to be faced, and Macleane himself forced the issue. He did so knowing ~~that~~ why James Johnson, the Nabob of Arcot's aide, had been sent to ~~see him~~ Bengal during his absence with the Army, which meant that he had at least one commission to fall back on.

On 15th December Macleane addressed the Council, asking to be confirmed in his appointment as Commissary General with the same salary and emoluments as before, under the old Bengal administration.[1] In a General Letter they sent to London, Francis and Clavering gave the details of his request, and his attitude on 17th December, when he refused to waive any rights of his office.[2]

"The Commissary General," they wrote, "lately returned from the Army and soon after his arrival, addressed us [on 15th December] on the alteration which he conceived his situation had undergone by the late change of administration, and requested that he might be summoned as formerly to take his seat with a deliberative voice at the Board of Inspection, and that he might be put on the establishment as to salary on the same footing with the Youngest Member of our Board. We acquainted him, thro' our Secretary, in reply, that we did not conceive that we were entitled from the Act of Parliament to admit him to a seat on any condition on our Board, nor did we think ourselves empowered to grant any greater allowance as Commissary General than what was enjoyed by the Youngest Counsellor of the late establishment.

On this Resolution being communicated to him, the Commissary General thought

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1. Hodson Collection: Extracts, Bengal Public Proceedings, 15 December 1774, L.Macleane to the Supreme Council of Bengal.
2. ibid., Extracts, Bengal Public Proceedings, 17 December 1774, L.Macleane to the Supreme Council of Bengal.

fit to address us again, [on 17th December], representing that he could not acquiesce in it, as he apprehended he could not answer the original intention of his appointment if he was debarred from the Seat he required, and also declared that he deemed himself entitled to the allowance of the Youngest Counsellor on the present establishment; and for these reasons he required [on 21st December] our permission to resign the Service and to repair to Europe to submit his case to your Hon^ble Court for their final determination.

We accordingly granted Colonel Macleane the permission he asked for, having first called him before us to examine him concerning some accounts and matters in his Department on which we desired information."[1]

When the matter of Macleane's resignation had come before the Council on 21st December it had been Clavering who had moved that before Macleane

"was permitted to resign the Service he might lay before the Board of Inspection, which was to meet the next day, his accounts and demands on the Company. If he had been confined to the office which the Directors originally gave him, he could have had no demands to produce nor accounts to settle. Soon after his arrival here he was employed by the late administration to supply the Army with a variety of contingencies, the accounts of which he was himself to controul. The above obvious and regular motion of General Clavering is called by the Governor: <u>an unpresidented [sic] injury done to Colonel Macleane to detain him by violence in the Service for a debt due by the Company to him</u>, and by Colonel Macleane himself it is supposed to amount to a <u>ne exeat.</u>"[2]

On 22nd December Macleane sent an evasive letter to the Board in which he hedged about the details of his Department's accounts, and this, in spite of Clavering's motion of the previous day, was accepted.[3] The majority had probably weighed the advantage of asserting themselves by forcing one of Hastings's supporters to resign against any pleasure they might have derived in making that same supporter, who had had no time to 'adjust' any irregularities

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1. I.O.L./H.M.S., 358, ff.131-133, General Letter from Bengal (signed by Clavering, Monson and Francis only), dated 4 January 1775.
2. I.O.L./H.M.S., 118, ff.152-153, Minute of 11 January 1775 (signed by Clavering, Monson and Francis only).
3. Hodson Collection: Extracts, Bengal Public Proceedings, 22 December 1774, L.Macleane to the Bengal Board of Inspection.

in his account books, answer a lot of awkward questions; and had decided in favour of the former course of action. Indeed, Macleane was allowed to leave India with a minimum of fuss, but although there was no scandal at the time it did not prevent the majority from investigating and censuring his actions when his successor, Alexander Dow,[1] was appointed. Dow told the Supreme Council two months after he had assumed office that his Department was "so much in want of regulation as to render it necessary to transcribe all the accompts that have hitherto passed through it."[2] He was, moreover, forced to clear up this mess without the help of any of the extra staff whom Macleane had recruited. They were all dismissed by the Directors in London, who told the Bengal Council:

"We are concerned to find that the establishment fixed for the office of the Commissary General greatly exceeds our intention. Mr.Macleane has deviated in two very essential points from the letter and spirit of our said orders, first, by recommending an expensive establishment and, second, by suggesting an improper mode of providing contingent supplies."[3]

The Directors continued by ordering the discharge of the Deputy Commissary General, the four Assistant Deputy Commissary Generals, nine clerks of different grades and several occasional assistants, which saved an annual wages bill of 79,800 Rupees (about £8,000),as well as rescinding the Commissary General's right to supply contingencies.[4] At the end of the letter, however, they wrote the cryptic phrase "Consider again after three years",[5] which, as they did not know that Dow had taken over from Macleane, probably meant that they would consider the latter's requests for extra staff and the right to supply

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1. Alexander Dow (1735-1779), a native of Crieff, Perthshire, and a close friend of James and John Macpherson (whose Gaelic rendering of his surname, Duwach, makes it clear that it was pronounced 'doo' as in 'moo', and not 'dow' as in 'cow'). He was not only a Lt.Colonel in the Company's army, but also an historian and playwright. He was appointed Commissary General of Bengal on 13 January 1775, the day after Lauchlin Macleane sailed from Calcutta.
2. I.O.L./H.M.S., 358, f.135, Proceedings of the Bengal Board of Inspection, dated 6 April 1775, quoting A.Dow to the Supreme Council of Bengal, 31 Mar.1775.
3. ibid., ff.123-124, The Company's General Letter to Bengal, dated 3 March 1775.
4. ibid., loc.cit.
5. ibid., loc.cit.

contingencies again after three years. The small 'empire' that Macleane had built up was destroyed quickly, and its existence had helped to increase the military expenses of the Bengal Presidency, but to obtain a fuller view of his effects as a Commissary General it is necessary to turn to the comments of his friend George Vansittart.[1]

In a letter Vansittart sent to his brother-in-law Robert Palk soon after Macleane's departure from India, he enclosed "Hastings's observations on finance", which showed a balance of "near 60 Lacks [sic] of Rupees" in the Company's Treasury at Calcutta,[2] and in another letter sent at the same time to John Graham,[3] who was on his way home with Macleane, Vansittart wrote:

"I enclose you an abstract of Army Expences from May 1771 to April 1774. You will see the last year is more than either of the others, so that it was high time for our retrenchment to take place. Macleane knows best whether the expences were kept within bounds according to our regulations during the time of his Commissaryship. Colonel Dow has now got that office."[4]

From Hastings's own Minute[5] it is apparent in his assessment of the finances for 1775 that the credit balance in the Calcutta Treasury had arisen from grants, gratuities and payments from the Vizier of Oudh, and not from savings on contingent supplies. This shows that Macleane had probably done nothing as Commissary General of Bengal to decrease military expenditure, although that was the principal object of his employment. But the part he had played as

1. George Vansittart (1745-1825), sixth son of Arthur Vansittart (Van Sittart), and brother of Mrs.Robert Palk (née Anne Vansittart) and Henry Vansittart, the former Governor of Bengal who was lost on his way out to India as a member of a Commission of Supervisors. Until the arrival of the 'new gentlemen' George Vansittart had been a member of the Bengal Board of Inspection.
2. Bod., Vansittart Papers, Dep.b.97, p.60, G.Vansittart to R.Palk, 22 Feb.1775
3. John Graham (d.1776), was the son of John Graham, merchant of Leith (and a descendant and armorial heir of George Graham, brother of William Graham, 1st Earl of Montrose) by his wife Agnes, daughter of Rev.Robert Macfarlane, minister of Buchanan. His uncle, Sir William Mayne, Baronet, was a friend of the two Macphersons, and his brothers George, Robert and Thomas Graham were all in the service of the Company. He was a cousin of Brig.Genl. John Forbes (p.8, n.1).
4. Bod., Vansittart Papers, Dep.b.97, p.67, G.Vansittart to J.Graham, 23 Feb.1775
5. ibid., Dep.b.79, p.95.

Hastings's agent in Rohilkhand gave him some claims to have helped in procuring these sums from the Vizier of Oudh, and therefore in achieving these satisfactory financial results. The state of the Bengal finances was not known, however, before he left India, and if they had been known they were not likely to have softened the Bengal majority's attitude to him, given their views on the Rohilla War.

By 4th January 1775, the majority were able to write in their General Letter to London that Lauchlin Macleane had given them "the satisfaction we wanted,"[1] and he was at liberty to proceed home on the Dutton Indiaman. On 11th January, on the eve of the Dutton's departure, Clavering, Monson and Francis informed the Court of Directors in a last-minute official dispatch:

"Colonel Mackleane's [sic] resignation of your Service for the reasons he alledges will, we imagine, be considered in England as a remarkable event. He owed us no explanation of the motives of his private conduct, nor shall we hazard any conjectures concerning the real objects of his mission [i.e., his mission as Hastings's agent in England]. On this head every man will naturally compare the professed motives of relinquishing a post of such rank and advantage as that of Commissary General, with Colonel Mackleane's [sic] understanding, and draw a conclusion for himself. In our conduct to him as Members of the Supreme Council, we desired nothing but that some decent appearance of regularity might be observed in the proceedings of the Board [of Inspection]."[2]

Being an official communication this statement was worded carefully, but it was still calculated to stir up trouble for Macleane in England. Private opinions were not so restrained. Reporting to Lord Clive, Francis gave his personal view on Macleane's 'mission' in a letter he put on board the Dutton just before it sailed on 12th January. He said:

"Colonel Macleane has resigned his employment and goes home by this mail with

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1. I.O.L./H.M.S., 358, f.133, General Letter from Bengal, dated 4 January 1775.
2. I.O.L./H.M.S., 118, f.152, Minute of 11 January 1775 (signed by Clavering, Monson and Francis only).

the Honourable Mr.Stewart [sic][1], a son of Lord Bute, under his care and tuition. I really believe that the place of Comptroller did not answer Col.Macleane's expectation, but I also am convinced that the cause alone would have sent him home. They are both commissioned, as I verily believe, to support Mr.Hastings and do us all the mischief they can."[2]

This was sheer hypocrisy, as ~~it was~~ Francis and his colleagues well knew ~~himself who was the instigator of much of the mischief~~, but the essence of what he said was true. Hastings, a man of stubborn courage, was unwilling to tolerate the situation created by the majority, or to watch the fruits of his labours in Bengal being deliberately destroyed by three men with no experience of the complex problems of the country. He might have seen in the way Macleane brought matters to a head the means of obtaining a decision in his own case; that is, by threatening to resign unless certain conditions were acknowledged: or, he might have encouraged Macleane to resign so that the latter had a valid excuse for going to London, where their common and individual grievances could be aired. The matter was one of great urgency for Hastings, and as he could not abandon his post it was essential that a person or persons with full knowledge of the facts should plead his case before the Court of Directors.

The moment Macleane resigned he was a natural candidate for the post of one of Hastings's agents. Moreover, apart from being recommended for the role by John Macpherson before the majority had even arrived, he had, by his adroit

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1. The Hon.Frederick Stuart (1751-1802), the third son of the 3rd Earl of Bute. He had gone out to India (in the same ship as Warren Hastings) in 1769 as a Writer, after a wild life in Oxford and Paris. When Nathaniel Middleton had to be replaced as Resident at Lucknow, he was Hastings's candidate for the post, but he was rejected in favour of another put forward by the majority. In the eventual conflict in London between the supporters of the majority and those of Hastings this rejection placed the Bute family on the side of the latter.
2. I.O.L., MSS.EUR.E.15, f.31, P.Francis to Lord Clive, 12 January 1775. Clive never received this letter; he had committed suicide before it reached England. In a later letter Francis was much more scathing about Macleane, who, he said, came "from the cabals of the India House and the ruin of Change Alley to comptrol the accounts of the army in India. .... such were the motives which prevailed with Macleane to resign his place, and once more meet beggary and his creditors in Leadenhall Street. In the person of this gentleman they undoubtedly made a very judicious choice. With his natural disposition to intrigue, his zeal and perseverance are indefatigable." (Memoirs of Sir Philip Francis, ii, 54)

handling of the Rohilla dispute, confirmed all that Hastings must have heard from Laurence Sulivan[1], John Stewart and John Macpherson[2] and others about his ability as a negotiator. In the treacherous waters of British home politics, where Hastings would have been out of his depth, Macleane had previously proved himself to be a highly skilled navigator. He had not, however, had time enough to master the cross currents of purely Indian affairs. John Graham had; and he was a trusted friend of Hastings. Until the arrival of the majority, Graham had been a member of the Bengal Council and the Bengal Board of Inspection. His health had started to deteriorate at this juncture, and, instead of asserting himself under the new administration, he had decided to go home on the Dutton. Long experience as a Company servant in India, friendship and immediate availability made him the obvious choice for the second agent, and Hastings appointed him as such.

When the Dutton sailed the two agents, Macleane and Graham, took with them certain of Hastings's papers, and his authority[3] to use their discretion when

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29135, f.402v., L.Sulivan to W.Hastings, 20 December 1774. - "Great would be my satisfaction if I could obtain for John Stuart [sic] any honourable distinction. I know him to be an able and worthy man. He had always my confidence, but your wish to have him of Council is now at an end by the new regulations." Against this realistic attitude was the strangely optimistic one which Sulivan, in the same letter, revealed after thanking Hastings for the help he had given Macleane - "it will now be in his [Macleane's] power to take care of me (on which too much depends) and of [Henry] Van[sittart]'s estate." The wish of Hastings to have Stewart, and if possible Macleane, as members of the Bengal Council was repeated in his memoranda of conditions (see APPENDIX 3.).
2. B.M.Add.MSS.29135, f.235v., John Macpherson to W.Hastings, 27 September 1774.
3. Hastings actually said that he gave his agents "an unlimited discretion to act for me as they thought best." (quoted Feiling, p.135). Among the papers carried by the agents was "Hastings's correspondence with Middleton, which was to be shown to North." (ibid., p.136). Hastings's actual written instructions to his agents (APPENDIX 3) were discovered by Dr.L.S.Sutherland, who, before finding them, had written the only thorough account of when and how Hastings had issued them in her The Resignation on behalf of Warren Hastings, 1776: George Vansittart's Evidence (in B.P.& P., lxxvi, p.22) where she states: "Historians have been..confused by the error of Gleig, Hastings's first biographer, who believed that these instructions were to be found in a letter of 27 March 1775, and that, in consequence, they were countermanded by a further letter of 19 May. This contention is manifestly incorrect. ..both these letters were written after the agents had sailed for England, and Hastings himself makes it clear that the instructions were given them before they left Calcutta."

acting on his behalf. It is also probable that they had with them a set of written instructions which gave, in a closing 'memoranda', the core of Hastings's conditions.[1] The set still in existence is undoubtedly the copy Hastings made for his own reference.

Also on board the Dutton was a letter from George Vansittart to his relation Robert Palk, the former Governor of Madras and still a man of influence in Company circles, whose support for Hastings was solicited. Vansittart wrote:

"I refer you to Graham and Colonel Macleane for everything which Mr.Hastings & I may have omitted. You must advise and co-operate with them without scruple and ceremony."[2]

The die had been cast. As soon as the official dispatches and the private letters of respective opponents reached England nothing could prevent the struggle in the Supreme Council of Bengal being made the subject of factional warfare in Leadenhall Street, the headquarters of the Company in London.

When the Dutton reached Madras further dispatches were loaded aboard which were to aggravate and complicate the inevitable conflict of factions, entwining Bengal and Madras; and Hastings and the Nabob of Arcot through their appointment of a common agent. The Nabob, ~~by now stubborn on the question of his successor,~~ did what Macleane had probably counted on, and confirmed him as his official agent, with the rank of Colonel "in his Service."[3] Governor Wynch, whose links with the Durbar had become so weak that he was reduced to speculating about the Nabob's plans, reported to the Company on 4th February: "I have good reason to think that Colonel Macleane who embarks on this ship is charged with some secret negociation from the Nabob."[4]

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1. See APPENDIX 3.
2. Bod., Vansittart Papers, Dep.b.97, p.57, G.Vansittart to R.Palk, 11 Jan.1775.
3. Maclean, p.446, (statement in Macleane's Will). There is no record to show that Macleane ever resigned his Company commission as a full Colonel; a hostile Court of Directors continued to address him as such after his resignation, and having held the full rank he was, in any case, entitled to it as an honorific.
4. I.O.L./H.M.S., 286, f.20, A.Wynch to the Chairman of the East India Company, 4 February 1775.

The next day Wynch added a postscript to his report in which he stated: "That this day at noon Mr.James Johnson applied to me to go on this ship."[1]

A further report to the Company's Secret Committee gave a fuller picture:

"Colonel Macleane and Mr.James Johnson, who embarked on the Dutton, are charged with some secret negotiations from the Nabob.

He [Wynch, who was writing in the third person] has for some time observed that intrigues were carrying on at the Durbar, but of late they have proceeded to much greater lengths than he apprehended they could have done, and, that the Company may have a proper idea of them, he should lay before the Committee such information as he had been able to obtain.

From the manner the Asiaticks do all business of this kind, he here premises that it must be evident to the Committee that it will be impossible for him to prove the facts asserted, or to detect the parties in these intrigues, but this much he will take upon himself to say: that he is convinced that the events will prove the assertions made to him to be true.

During the course of last year the schemes of making applications to other parts were adopted. In October Mr.James Johnson was sent to Bengal but returned from thence before he was expected, not being able to effect the business he went on. The Nabob and his Second Son, from this failure of the hopes of success, were induced to turn themselves towards England. An opportunity offered by the Dutton, and they embraced it, contrary to the opinions of the Durbar.

The following are the subjects of the Embassy to His Majesty, as I am informed

- That he, the Nabob, has been long oppressed by the Company and their Servants here, and intreats His Majesty that he may not have the least connexion with or be the least controuled by the Governor and Council of Madrass [sic], or the Supreme Council of Bengal; and wishes only to be connected with the King of England.

- That the Company's Troops may be withdrawn from the different Forts in the Carnatick, as, in many respects, their being stationed there proves repugnant to his Honour and Interest.

- That he may have permission to reduce the Mysore Country with his own Troops.

- That he may be allowed to rent the Circars to the Northward.

- That as there is no Moorman of Rank or Family in the Province of Bengal he hopes His Majesty will accept of his proposal for renting the whole Soubahship.

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1. I.O.L./H.M.S., 286, f.22, A.Wynch to the Chairman of the East India Company, 5 February 1775.

That he, the President [Wynch], understands the specious designs of this Negotiation are to have a specious pretence for removing the Eldest Son to Bengal, so that the Carnatick may be clear for the succession of the Second Son.

That the President further understands that the Nabob has commissioned that His Majesty may be requested to assume the Government to Himself, and that the Company may be considered in no other respect than as individual Merchants, and that he will send out people himself to the charge.

That the Negotiation is carried on at an immense Expence and with considerable powers and latitude."[1]

With this highly coloured, and perhaps deliberately provocative report, Wynch sent the Directors a separate dispatch in which he listed the Nabob's several shortcomings. These included:

"The increase of his Troops to their present number when the Company are supposed to keep a force sufficient (cavalry excepted) for the Carnatic; his application for the withdrawing the Company's Troops from Vellum which tho' privately was nevertheless made, but which I dissuaded him from[2]; his refusal to admit a Company Garrison into Tanjore, also [his refusal] to permit the Survey of the Roads of the Carnatic; the frivolous argument for that refusal, and the not giving me a list of Europeans in his Service altho' often asked for it; to which I may add the receiving of people in public characters from Pondicherry, from whence a French Officer, Mr.Baylie [sic, Baillieu], came here lately, who in a very recent conversation he had with the Nabob told him that a French War was not very distant, they having now a Minister disposed for War; and having had offers of men and money from the Spaniards...All these shew a rooted jealousy of the Company and ardent desire of Independence."[3]

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1. I.O.L./H.M.S., 118, ff.317-318, Copy of the separate Proceedings of the Select Committee of Fort St.George, dated 13 February 1775, mentioned in their Letter to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors of the East India Company, dated 15 February 1775, (sent by the Seahorse).
2. At this time the Nabob would not have listened to Wynch, who is here claiming the credit for another man's work. It was Macleane (see APPENDIX 1) who had altered the Nabob's mind about the garrison at Vallam Vadakusetti, a fort within 15 miles of Tanjore city (which Macleane and Wynch called 'Vellum').
3. I.O.L./H.M.S., 286, ff.25-27, A.Wynch to the Chairman of the East India Company, 15 February 1775, (by Seahorse, the ship that sailed immediately after the Dutton). The letters and dispatches of Wynch and the Madras Council were in the care of Edward Stracey (1741-1829), later a Baronet, a Translator and Member of the Madras Select Committee, who was returning home. Wynch hoped that he would offset the effect of the Nabob's agents, Macleane and Johnson, by putting forward the Madras Council's case. (ibid., ff.29-30). If Stracey did do any good, his efforts went unrecorded.

Wynch concluded his report with a long tirade against Amir-ul-Umara, the Nabob's second son, and a complete approbation of Umdat-ul-Umara, the weak eldest son, whom Wynch and the Madras Council preferred as the Nabob's eventual successor. The possible justice of some of Wynch's complaints was diminished by his unsubstantiated insinuations that the Nabob was being suborned by the French. As a means of making the Directors take interest, Wynch could not have used a better ploy than the well-tried one of hinting at a French invasion. The opponents of the Nabob, and particularly of his agents, had been provided with their first rounds of ammunition.

When the Dutton sailed from Madras on 7th February, James Johnson was on board, but Hannah Butterworth, whom he had married the same morning, was not.[1] He was an unscrupulous bankrupt adventurer with little or no finesse, and, from the way he treated his bride, an apparently cold-blooded fellow as well. Like John Graham he supplied the special experience which Macleane lacked; in his case a long and intimate connexion with the Nabob's affairs. Unlike Graham he was not appointed Macleane's co-agent, but Macleane's subordinate. He probably resented this role, for soon after his arrival in England he tried to trick Macleane "by stealing the box containing his credentials and presents and offering them himself. He was unsuccessful in the attempt."[2] Macleane gave him a severe reprimand, but did not dismiss him.

On 21st July 1775 the press announced that "John Graham and James Lawrell, Esqrs., late of the Chief Council in Bengal, are come to England in the Dutton, together with many other persons of distinction."[3] After two years away from England ~~Macleane~~ he had returned, and he was little or no better off financially.

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1. The Genealogist, (New Series), London, 1904, vol.xx, p.204.
2. Sutherland, p.305, (n.1), quoting Abergavenny MSS, i, p.62, J.Robinson to Lord North, 12 August 1775.
3. P.A., 21 July 1775. See also: I.O.L./H.M.S., 286, f.33 - "Colonel Macleane and Mr.James Johnson both returned to England in July."

As a debtor he was liable to be seized and imprisoned as soon as he stepped ashore in England, but, as he was not arrested, he must have made some sort of arrangement with his creditors.[1] While in India some of his debts, including those he owed Shelburne, Sulivan and a number of English, French and Dutch brokers (all dating from the 1769 stock crash), had been reduced; but a private debt of £10,000 he owed Mary Barwell (sister of Hastings's colleague on the Supreme Council of Bengal) had been scarcely diminished, and he had incurred new ones in India.[2] As he was travelling home there were ships going out to India carrying letters from Orme to his new creditors.[3] He had, however, the promise of an annual salary of £4,300 from the Nabob,[4] which he may never have received, the prospect of calling on Hastings's attorneys for a sum exceeding £10,000,[5] which was intended as a fund for supporting Hastings's cause, and the hope of future reward if he succeeded in one of his three agencies.

His first agency, his own, was for reinstatement as a Company servant on terms that suited him; his second, for Hastings, was one which handled well could make his own reinstatement as Commissary General not only tolerable but lucrative; his third, for the Nabob of Arcot, was essentially a last ditch hope if the first two failed.

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1. Lansdowne MSS. A full account of Macleane's debts, and the manner in which they were reduced, can be found in this collection.
2. I.O.L./Orme, O.V.202(33F), f.42, R.Orme to L.Macleane, 16 February 1775. In this letter the extent of some of Macleane's old debts as well as some of his more recent Indian debts are outlined.
3. ibid., f.41, R.Orme to G.Stibbert. This letter to Colonel Giles Stibbert, who was on his way out to India, gives some details of Macleane's Indian debts; it was dispatched on 16 February 1775 with the letter to Macleane (above n.2). In a further letter to Macleane (ibid., f.46, 3 March 1775) Orme added some more details about Macleane's debts, but the total information available is not sufficient to give an accurate or full account of Macleane's liabilities.
4. See Macleane's own statement, APPENDIX 1. See also Sutherland, p.304.
5. Sutherland p.304, quoting F.Sykes to W.Hastings, 16 December 1775 (B.M.Add. MSS.29136, f.431).

CHAPTER 6 - Mustering the Supporters: August 1775 to May 1776.

Lauchlin Macleane's activities from mid-1775 to mid-1777 have been reviewed in a few well-documented works, foremost among them the definitive examination of the Company in the 18th Century by Dr.L.S.Sutherland.[1] But the findings of scholars can be supplemented and the knowledge of Macleane's career considerably increased by the use of further material. In this chapter the unpublished and previously unquoted letters from Macleane to his co-agent Graham, and those from James Macpherson in London to his kinsman John Macpherson in Madras, will be used to give a fuller picture of Macleane's opening manoeuvres and his relationship with John Robinson.

Although the Macphersons were not celebrated for their veracity, the fact that they relied upon each other for accurate news, and that their most revealing comments were written in Gaelic (which was not only a safeguard against potential interceptors of their mail, but also a proof that they were not writing in the hope that the same potential interceptors might be misled by false statements) lends credence to an otherwise dubious source. At the time of Macleane's arrival James Macpherson had, by his services as a pamphleteer, won the trust of Lord North and John Robinson, whose interest and goodwill were necessary to Macleane if he was to achieve success for his principals. James Macpherson was, therefore, an important ally, though what influence he had with North and Robinson was diminished by their attitude to Indian politics and Indian politicians.

The harbingers of bad tidings from Bengal and Madras placed North in a difficult position. As the author of the Regulating Act he thought he had disposed of Indian problems in 1773, and the news of an immediate clash between the men who were supposed to make his Act work, coupled with the news of more

1. Sutherland, pp.291-328.

trouble in the Carnatic, only served to annoy him, especially at a time when he needed to give his attention to the serious trouble in the American Colonies. It was a situation which was bound to enflame all the violence of factional warfare when he could least afford it, with the danger of Company fights being made issues in Parliament. Clavering and Monson were both well connected in royal circles, and had friends among North's own supporters, but Hastings too had a following, which also included some of North's supporters. Nor were Francis or Barwell to be ignored, even if they were less well known. The former was sure of backing from some of the now leaderless Clivites, and Barwell had a considerable personal interest in the Company, headed by John Purling.[1] Having no wish to offend any of these groups North decided to temporize, a policy maintained by his able Secretary, John Robinson, a man with a thorough grasp of practical politics, who was left to deal with the details of the problem.

Macleane wasted no time after his arrival. Although hampered by his bad record, it says something for his character that he returned to the scenes of his downfall quite unabashed, and threw himself into the new fight with his old zeal and confidence. Not unnaturally he gave his own affairs priority, and on 11th August he wrote to the Court of Directors asking for copies of all papers from or to Bengal "relative to the Commissary General or his office since his appointment thereto"[2] as the first move for reinstatement as a Company servant. Nevertheless,[3] the following day Robinson sent North a letter outlining Macleane's reasons for returning from India, to which North returned a reply on 15th August.[4] Both the

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1. John Purling (c.1730-1800), Chairman of the Company 1771-72; M.P. East Looe.
2. Hodson Collection: Extracts, Court Minutes, 16 August 1775, quoting letter from L.Macleane to the Court of Directors, 11 August 1775.
3. Sutherland, p.304, (n.1), quoting Abergavenny MSS. In his letter of 12 Aug. 1775 Robinson urged North not to receive Macleane, but to "acquaint the Indian powers that if they have anything to offer, either by way of complaint for redress or as compliment, it is wished that it may come through the Governor General and Council of Bengal." The Nabob, however, wanted to deal with the British Crown directly, and had been encouraged in this attitude by the appointment of Plenipotentiaries to his Court before the passing of the Act.
4. H.M.C., 10th Report, Abergavenny MSS, Pt.4, pp.10-11, Items 62 and 64.

government and the Company now knew that he intended to fight for what he considered his rights, and by 25th August, when he handed in the Nabob's letters[1] for the King, for the Secretary of State and for the Court of Directors, they also knew that he was not relying on reinstatement alone for future employment. All the letters, with the exception of the one to the Directors, named Macleane as the Nabob's accredited agent.

The contents of the Nabob's letters gave the line which Macleane himself was going to take. He, like the Nabob, was going to appeal to both the government and the Company until he was forced to rest his hopes mainly on one or the other. As the network of Parliamentary and Company groups was a complicated, often overlapping and ever-changing pattern of personalities, motives and interests, and as the issues were not clear-cut, his hopes of steering an uncommitted course and of reconciling his two principal agencies were going to be difficult to sustain, as he was soon to discover.

Having made the opening moves on his own and the Nabob's behalf he next concentrated on Hastings's affairs, but without the help of his co-agent John Graham. Graham, by now a very sick man, had set out on a tour of Britain soon after landing, and had gone first to his native city of Edinburgh, where Macleane sent him a letter on 19th September, telling him:

"Since you left nothing occurred worth troubling you upon till this day. ... Mr.C.Stewart[2] (sic) arrived with despatches from Mr.Hastings. They are too voluminous to transmit to you even in extract, but I will endeavour to send you some account of them by tomorrow's post. This whole day has been spent in soliciting audiences, arranging them, &c."[3]

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1. I.O.L./H.M.S., 118, ff.297-300, The Nabob to Lord Rochford, 24 September 1774 (by Col.Macleane, recd: 24 August 1775); ibid., ff.301-308, 2 letters, The Nabob to George III, both dated 24 September 1774 (by Col.Macleane, both recd: 24 Aug. 1775); ibid., ff.309-312, The Nabob to the Court of Directors, 4 February 1775 (in the King's Box, recd: 24 August 1775).
2. The Hon.Charles Stuart (1753-1801), the fourth son of the 3rd Earl of Bute. M.P., Bossiney 1780; eventually Lt.General; Knight of the Bath (1799).
3. S.R.O., Kinross House Papers, MS.2128/1, L.Macleane to J.Graham, 19 September 1775.

The next day Macleane sent, as promised, a further letter to Graham. He wrote:[1]

"I now send you a copy of Mr.Hastings's letter to us. I make no comment. I have been in a certain quarter [probably with North or Robinson] this morning. I communicated the confidential letter. It had an extraordinary effect; somewhat like electricity. -- 'You may depend upon it, Sir, an impartial and fair hearing will be given to both sides of the question' was the sentence uttered after reading it. ..

Soujah-Dowla's [sic][2] death is a blow; but still we derive some capital good effects from it. For it has obliged the Triumvirate, sooner than they wished, to adopt the great outlines of Mr.Hastings's conduct and the measures of the late [Bengal] Administration. This change is so abrupt and unexpected that it strikes glaringly at first light, and proves to demonstration that it is men and not measures this blessed Triumvirate wish to get rid of. ...

Mr.C.Stuart talks of going down to Edinburgh for a short time. You will learn particulars fully from him."[3]

In spite of the promise of a fair hearing, it seemed by the end of September that ministerial influence in the Company would be used to secure Hastings's recall, with the possibility of allowing Barwell to remain as a link with the former administration in Bengal, but it was an idea[4] that was dropped. On

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1. The letter of Hastings to which Macleane referred was undoubtedly one sent to both the agents on 18 May 1775, in which (in a postscript) he retracted a resolution contained in an earlier letter, dated 27 March 1775. In his letter of 27 March, Hastings had resolved "to leave this place [Bengal] and return to England on the first ship of the next season, if the first advices from England contain a disapprobation of the Treaty of Benares, or of the Rohilla War, and mark an evident disinclination to me." (for these letters see Gleig, i, pp.521 and 532-533). It was these letters which have caused Hastings's biographers to assume that he had retracted his conditions and instructions for his resignation. As stated earlier (see above, p.95, n.3) Dr.L.S.Sutherland has proved that these assumptions were wrong. Hastings had retracted a special resolution and not his instructions for his resignation.
2. By the Treaty of Benares (1773) Hastings had reclaimed the provinces of Kora and Allahabad from the Mogul Emperor, and these he had sold to Shuja-ud-Daulah, who paid the Company all the expenses of their forces garrisoning his territory. By the Treaty of Faizabad (1775), signed after the death of Shuja-ud-Daulah, the hostile Bengal majority forced the latter's son, Asaf-ud-Daulah, to pay more of the expenses of the Company's troops, and to surrender in full sovereignty to the Company the wealthy zemindari of his feudatory, Chait Singh, Rajah of Benares
3. S.R.O., Kinross House Papers, MS.2128/2, L.Macleane to J.Graham, 20 Sept.1775.
4. Sutherland, p.301 (and n.3).

27th September Macleane urged Graham to be back in London at least eight days before Parliament met, and concluded by saying:

"In case you meet with any Members of the House in your peregrinations it may not be amiss to engage as many as you can in favour of the common cause, to back our solicitations to Lord North; for as we have nothing to dread but Parliamentary interest it is incumbent on us to bring all our strength in the same line into one focus at the opening of the Session. ...

I have not a possibility of sending you an abstract of the papers mentioned in the letters to us from Mr.Hastings..for I have given them all to Mr.Robinson and God knows when I shall get them back." [1]

On 10th October Macleane expressed his pleasure at hearing that Graham was soon to join him in London, [2] but this was not to be. Graham's health deteriorated further and he went to Bath to take the waters, leaving Macleane to organise Hastings's friends, a task he did with his usual energy throughout October and November. [3] On 17th of that month Welbore Ellis reported to Philip Francis that the trouble in America had driven the Bengal dispute "out of doors", [4] and two days later Robert Palk wrote to Hastings, and assured him that although the government had no desire "to be further embarrassed with disputes in India, nor are they very anxious to vindicate your opponents further than what men will naturally do to justify their own nomination." [5] Palk also wrote to the Nabob, [6] and promised to give Macleane all the assistance in his power. The first rivet in the inevitable association of the causes of Hastings and the Nabob, as a result of their having a common agent, had been forged; an unfortunate link for both principals, but particularly so for Hastings.

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1. S.R.O., Kinross House Papers, MS.2128/3, L.Macleane to J.Graham, 27 Sept.1775
2. ibid., MS.2128/4, L.Macleane to J.Graham, 10 October 1775.
3. Welbore Ellis (1713-1802), later (1794) 1st Baron Mendip. He was a former patron of Philip Francis. M.P. for Petersfield and (1775) Treasurer of the Navy.
4. I.O.L., MSS.EUR.E.13, f.269, W.Ellis to P.Francis, 17 November 1775.
5. B.M.Add.MSS.29136, f.341, R.Palk to W.Hastings, 19 November 1775.
6. H.M.C./Palk MSS., p.274, The Nabob to R.Palk, 20 June 1776. Thanking Palk for his letter of 17 November 1775 the Nabob wrote: "I am much obliged to you for your promises to assist Colonel Macleane in my affairs."

On 22nd November Macleane wrote to Graham in Bath, with the news that the matter was coming to a head in the Company. He said:

"The Directors have at last come to two Resolutions -

1. That the Rohilla War was impolitic; 2. That Mr.Hastings ought to have shewn all his Correspondence [with Nathaniel Middleton on the Rohilla War to Clavering, Monson and Francis].

Mr.Gregory[1] moved several violent propositions, but was over-ruled. These I think are triumph enough for the Clavering Party; especially if no positive praise is to be given. Of this however I have hopes. The General Court is to be on Wednesday next [29th November]. Mr.Elliot[2] says it is not possible that you do not mean to be at that Court.

All the papers from India relative to Bengal measures will be laid before the Proprietors tomorrow, to be for their perusal till the Court, but no other lights are intended for the Proprietors previous to the Court than the above Resolutions. All Mr.Hastings' friends mean to write to him - 'On no account to relinquish the Helm.'" [3]

In his next letter to Graham, on 29th November, Macleane corrected the date for the General Court, which had been fixed for 6th December, and said: "Mr. Hastings' particular friends meet at the Turks-head Tavern privately on Monday evening the 4th Dec.r to concert their line; and I am intreated by All of them to write to you..to give your attendance."[4] Laurence Sulivan, whose support on this occasion would be of great importance, sent Hastings a report on the

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1. Robert Gregory (c.1729-1810), a returned 'Nabob' of some wealth; he was M.P. for Maidstone 1768-74, and for Rochester 1774-84.
2. probably William Eliott (1706-1779), second son of Sir Gilbert Eliott of Stobs, 3rd Baronet, and brother of Lord Heathfield. His mother was an Elliot (different spelling but a relation) of the Minto family. At a General Court in May 1776, Macleane reported that a William Eliott spoke in Hastings's defence, and seconded a motion of Samuel Pechell, a leading Hastings's supporter (see Gleig, ii, p.62). This Eliott was a London merchant with several brothers in the Company's service, and was probably involved by his kinsman Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto, 3rd Baronet. The complexities of the Elliot/Eliott/Eliot family are noted in an old Border ballad, part of which provides a guide to the recognition of the various branches. One verse is as follows:
   "The double L and single T descend from Minto and Wolflee,
   The double T and single L mark the old race in Stobs that dwell,
   The single L and single T the Eliots of St.Germains be,
   But double T and double L, who they are, nobody can tell."
3. S.R.O., Kinross House Papers, MS.2128/5, L.Macleane to J.Graham, 22 Nov.1775.
4. ibid., MS.2128/6, L.Macleane to J.Graham, 29 November 1775.

situation, imploring him to "Have Patience"[1], and telling him to rely on Macleane, whose efforts he lavishly praised. "The worst," wrote Sulivan, "that we apprehend from the Court of Directors and the General Court [of Proprietors] is a condemnation of the Rohilla War, which we believe will be softened by a compliment, and keeping back Middleton's correspondence."[2]

On 1st December Macleane wrote to the Directors "expressing his desire to attend the Court to explain the motives of his return to England."[3] The fact that he still wished for reinstatement was probably one of the reasons that made him act with restraint when the General Court met on 6th December. It was Sulivan who gave an outline of what happened on that occasion, together with a summary of events to date and the names of some of Hastings's supporters, in a letter he sent to Hastings on 7th December. He wrote:

"The language we set out with upon Mr.Maclean's [sic] arrival, by his advice and partly confirmed by your letters to Palk and me, was that if the Company approved of your service, and supported your authority, you set no bounds on your stay in India. ...

You should know those who have stood forth to vindicate your honor.. Mr.Palk, naturally wary, avowedly and openly declaring his sentiments, Messrs. Pechell[4] and Caillaud[5] have labored to the extent of their power, and so has Mr.Graham; Messrs. Dupree[6] [sic], Sykes[7], Sir G. Colebrook[8] [sic], Sir Jas. Cockburne[9] (sic),

1. B.M.Add.MSS.29136, f.362, L.Sulivan to W.Hastings, 28 November 1775.
2. ibid., loc.cit.
3. Hodson Collection: Extracts, Court Minutes, 1 December 1775.
4. Samuel Pechell (d.1782), the son of a Huguenot father and Scottish mother. He was a Master in Chancery, and the brother-in-law of the next.
5. John Caillaud (1724-1812), the son of a Huguenot. A retired Brigadier and former C-in-C at Madras (1761 and 1766-67). His wife was Mary Pechell.
6. Josias Du Pré, see above, p.49, n.1.
7. Francis Sykes (1732-1804), created a Baronet (1781); a returned 'Nabob' and former Chief at Cossimbazar; M.P. for Shaftesbury 1771-75, and for Wallingford 1784-1804. A dour Yorkshireman, he disliked Sulivan and Macleane, but he reluctantly worked with them in support of Hastings's cause.
8. Sir George Colebrooke, see above, p.11, n.2.
9. Sir James Cockburn (c.1729-1804), a Baronet; M.P. for Selkirk. A cousin of Jack Stewart of Buckingham Street, Colebrooke's man of business, and of Sir Gilbert Elliot (see below, p.108, n.1).

Sir Gilbert Elliott [sic] have zealously exerted themselves, but before us all must stand Mr.Maclean [sic], because his own situation is particularly delicate; and for management, address and intense application he has no equal. Judge of his firmness by the following anecdote: when the Gen.[1] Court was at a short distance, and Mr.Gregory's original and cruel motion stood unaltered, Maclean [sic] made several attempts both in person and by letter to see Lord North, but could not gain admittance. He then wrote him this short billet: 'My Lord, I conjure you to grant me an audience for five minutes tomorrow morning.' Happily, it was remarkably well received, and he succeeded.

Maclean [sic] throws the dye for his future fortune upon your continuing in the Chair, and ultimately triumphing over your enemies, having to this hour taken no step in his own affairs; which the Directors feel as a contempt of them, and they are at present extremely disgusted with him.

In the Gen.[1] Court no friend took any part in the debates - Col.Maclean [sic] excepted - for, unless your character was attacked, it was considered as redounding more to your honor that your conduct should be defended by those who could have no possible connection with Mr.Hastings. ...

Col.Maclean's [sic] speech was principally a modest detail of your services.. it gave universal satisfaction both within and without the bar. ... If Mr. Maclean [sic] compasses what he is now laboring - some honourable distinction for you from the Crown - we shall, all circumstances weighed, close for the present well indeed. ...

I now come to this most serious question: 'Whether you should stay or return'. Upon this important point all your real friends, with those in your particular confidence, have but one voice, that you ought to stay, and individually they will add their warmest entreaties that you do not return. Let me, in the words of Mac to the Minister, conjure you to remain, for we see the absurditys [sic] of the three [the Bengal majority] will seal their own condemnation." [2]

Either Macleane had not told Sulivan about his request to see the Directors in order to obtain reinstatement, or Sulivan thought it wiser not to tell Hastings about the matter for some special or devious reason. Graham, who certainly knew that Macleane had applied for re-employment, not only approved

1. Sir Gilbert Elliot (1722-1777) 3rd Baronet of Minto. Through his friendship with Lord Bute he was popularly supposed to be close to the King. He was M.P. for Selkirk from 1753-65.
2. B.M.Add.MSS.29136, ff.379-380v., L.Sulivan to W.Hastings, 7 December 1775, (printed Weitzman, pp.259-262).

of his action in this respect but gave him all the support he could by commending him to friends in the Company.[1]

As a result of the General Court and the previous lobbying of North and Robinson by all the groups concerned, it was decided to send a General Letter to the Bengal Supreme Council. On 9th December Macleane told Graham, who was still in Bath, that he would "use every endeavour to get the substance of the Letter to Bengal."[2] He also confessed: "I am fearful of doing my duty in the manner I could wish, by the severity of a fresh cold, so violent as to threaten me with a rheumatism and pleurisy at the same time."[3] Illness, especially chest complaints, dogged Macleane from this time onwards, but he rarely allowed his sickness to interfere with his work. Graham was already dying, but he had done as much as he could by writing dispatches to Hastings, and was even thinking of coming to London to help there.

The General Letter, which had been amended and redrafted by Robinson, was sent to Calcutta on 15th December.[4] It was, in effect, a compromise, in which both the parties in the Bengal dispute received a modicum of praise and a modicum of censure, and the exhortation to co-operate in future. It was far from a solution to the problem, but it allowed people to hope that the threat of a crisis had been reduced. In James Macpherson's opinion much of the credit for making the compromise possible was due to Lauchlin Macleane, whom he called "The Son of Coll" or, in Gaelic, "Mac Col".[5] After the General Court, James told his kinsman John Macpherson:

"Mac Col behaved with great judgment, as he exercised a great deal of moderation upon Wednesday last, when the General Court were upon the dissentions in Bengal. The ministry were much hampered on the subject. They were, on one

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1. S.R.O., Kinross House Papers, MS.2128/8 and MS.2128/9, 2 letters, L.Macleane to J.Graham, dated 12 December 1775 and 29 December 1775.
2. ibid., MS.2128/7, L.Macleane to J.Graham, 9 December 1775.
3. ibid., loc.cit.
4. Sutherland, p.302 (and n.4).
5. Lauchlin Macleane was a cadet of the Macleans of Coll; "Son of Coll" was the Scottish way of saying "Son of the house, or family".

side, baited by C[laverin]g's friends. On the other, by the wishes of the Proprietors. Their power is great, but I believe they did not incline to exert it, and they are, therefore, much obliged to the Son of Col for extricating them by his moderation. I ~~did~~ do not, however, believe they are cordial in his favour; and, I fear, they never will be to the degree I could wish. No stone shall be left unturned." [1]

The authoritative view puts Macleane's efforts into proper perspective:

"It is doubtful," writes Dr.L.S.Sutherland, "whether the threats and adjurations he addressed to North and Robinson, the publications issued, and manoeuvres planned by him and a committee of Hastings's friends, and the considerable voting power in defence of Hastings he got together in the General Court, affected in more than detail the decision of the ministry to work for a compromise. He had, however, certainly played the leading part in producing an organised interest on behalf of his patron which was a useful nucleus for further development." [2]

Although Macleane had worked hard for Hastings he had not neglected his duty [3] to the Nabob, for whom, in spite of North's reluctance to involve himself in the disputes in the Carnatic, he had obtained a compromise solution to a thorny problem. John Macpherson had warned Hastings in June 1775 that "Clavering has abused Col.McLeane [sic] to Gen.Smith" [4], and Brig.General Joseph Smith had

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1. S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 4/17, James Macpherson to John Macpherson, 11 Dec.1775.
2. Sutherland, p.305.
3. B.M.Add.MSS.29136, ff.247-247v., John Macpherson to W.Hastings, 5 July 1775 - "Petrie left on the Swallow sloop of war for the Cape, from which he takes the first conveyance to England. He is charged with resources, materials and every support for the Son of Coll from Jean Jacques. Mr.Stewart will explain these words." 'Jean Jacques' was Macpherson's nickname for the Nabob of Arcot. The fact that John Stewart also knew Macleane by the cover-name "Son of Coll" shows that it was generally used as such by all the Highlanders of Macleane's acquaintance. It was an excellent cover-name; only Macleans or Gaelic speakers would have understood its significance. William Petrie was a former Secretary to the Madras Council who had entered the Nabob's service. He brought from the Nabob to Macleane a full set of instructions, see S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 167/12, an undated letter endorsed "For Colonel McCleane [sic]" - it was sent "by the hands of a gentleman who is my friend and is to be trusted. ..He was a long time Secretary to the Government of Madras. ..The disorders in the management of Mr.Wynch he has already seen with his own eyes." Among the Nabob's sources of grievance was "the desire of Mr.Benfield to have the Renting of the Tanjour [sic] Country, by the mediation of Mr.Wynch."
4. B.M.Add.MSS.29136, f.241, John Macpherson to W.Hastings, 25 June 1775.

apparently passed on this news to Macleane's old friend Robert Orme, who on 14th December reassured Smith by writing: "I kept your letter concerning Mr. Macleane entirely to myself; he is a man of uncommon ability and will act for his employer well, but as yet the matter of old Wallah Jaw [sic, The Nabob] is not brought on the public carpet."[1] On the same day, however, James Macpherson was able to report to his kinsman John that the first success had been gained on the private carpet:

"A thing very material has been done for your Cara Dû [Black Friend, i.e. The Nabob] by the Son of Col. The Directors had resolved to direct the Nabob to appoint his Eldest Son his successor in the Carnatic. This, from various reasons, was highly improper. No stone was left unturned to prevent it.

MacRobin [Robinson] and Tua [North] were both urged; they saw the impropriety; and the words were softened into legal succession, which, I am made to understand, may, according to the custom of the East, comprehend any of the Nabob's sons; or, in other words, it leaves him in the power of disposing of the Sovereignty by his Will. ... Mac Col and I waited today on your friend Mr. Greville.[2] He is realy [sic] your friend, ach 'Slag bock an Duine ê. [but a Slack poor Man he is]. Se sin mo Varail's agus Barail Vic Chol. [That is my Opinion and the Son of Coll's Opinion]."[3]

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1. I.O.L./Orme, O.V.202(33F), f.103, R.Orme to J.Smith, 14 December 1775.
2. Charles Francis Greville (1749-1809), second son of 1st Earl of Warwick, who was John Macpherson's patron in the 1760's.
3. S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 4/18, James Macpherson to John Macpherson, 14 December 1775. This is the first letter to be quoted which contains Gaelic comments. It illustrates two points. Firstly, what James Macpherson says in English is immediately modified or contradicted in Gaelic; a sure sign that he was guarding against interception. John Macpherson, in his Gaelic letters, is even more guarded. Secondly, the difficulties in translating 18th Century Gaelic are revealed. Since the publication of the first commercial edition of the Gaelic Bible in the early 19th century Gaelic spelling has been fixed. Before that event spoken Gaelic was the same, but every Gaelic speaker used his own form of phonetic spelling. The Gaelic spelling of James Macpherson is very different to that used by his kinsman John, but both use letters (such as "v" and "k") which do not exist in the Gaelic alphabet, and both often 'Gaelicise' an English word, with extraordinary results. Translating their letters was a tedious job, and I am grateful to The Rev.Donald Cameron, M.A., B.Sc., of Blair Atholl, a native of Ardnamurchan and a painstaking scholar of old Gaelic, for making sense of the Macphersons' strange phonetics. With his help only one proper name and a few phrases still remain incomprehensible. James Macpherson's phonetics are not as crude as John's, but John Macpherson writes more stylish Gaelic. It is possible that they had considerable difficulty in understanding each other's correspondence.

Greville had been recommended by John Macpherson as a man of influence who was worth cultivating, but after this encounter neither Macpherson nor Macleane thought of him as an ally. The cost of organising support for Hastings and the Nabob must have been considerable, and if Greville had been able to offer no more than cash he would have been nursed. The question of funds was pressing. Graham, a man of some means, entered into a complicated arrangement with Sir James Cockburn, who held mortgages on some of Macleane's West Indian estates, for raising money for Hastings's cause. One loan of £5,000 was due to expire on the last day of 1775, but Macleane boldly promised Graham "for this payment I pledge myself."[2] As he was penniless he must have honoured his boast when, on Francis Sykes's confirmation, he drew £6,000 on account of £10,000 from Hastings's bankers, Gosling Clive & Gosling, on 16th December.[3]

On 29th December Macleane told Graham that he had been entertained by Mrs. Graham on Christmas Day, "but I have been confined to my chamber by a bilious diarrhoea ever since, nor do I expect to get abroad again for a day or two."[4] He continued: "If it falls in your way to mix familiarly with Mr.Harrison, will you be good enough to give him a favourable impression of me; I just opened my affair to him before he left Town, and was very handsomely received by him."[5]

John Harrison, one of the Company Directors, was the least likely person to help Macleane obtain reinstatement. In the previous year he had, still unknown to Macleane, set measures afoot concerning Tanjore that were completely opposed to the Nabob's interest, and were to bring matters to a head in Madras. With his first success as the Nabob's agent to his credit, Macleane allowed himself to become prematurely optimistic. He ended his letter to John Graham by saying:

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1. S.R.O., Kinross House Papers, MS.2128/7, op.cit.
2. ibid., MS.2128/8, op.cit.
3. B.M.Add.MSS.29136, f.431, F.Sykes to W.Hastings, 16 December 1775.
4. S.R.O., Kinross House Papers, MS.2128/9, op.cit.
5. ibid., loc.cit.

"The negotiations in which I am and have been concerned, for and with the Nabob of Arcot, are of a nature so very beneficial for the Company and this Country that certainly I deserve the support rather than discountenance of the Directors." [1]

On 6th January 1776, when he knew that Graham was at last returning to London, Macleane allowed over-confidence to prevail and wrote "we shall soon have the cry in our favour"[2], but the more realistic James Macpherson writing on the same day told his kinsman that he had just seen the most recent dispatches from India, and advised him as follows:

"Cûm u fein âs a Ghnoich pallich. 'S edir dhai an Ceannart chuir sios, a reur mo bharrail'se. Ha na deuille eille ro laidir an nan Cardin, in shô. Cha dion MacChol feum, a reur mo sheullis, an d'râst. 'S beg air na Dieuille essin! Pêrliam gun dionna an d'Olach bochd feum dhâ fhein!

Chualli mi an d'iu, gun chuir Mac an sheanné aig an êr Dhû, Agent a nâul, ân na ain m fhein. Ach bhô thanic an N'êachd bho mac Morair a Bhuide, cha chroid mi ê ach gun Cluine mi ô Dhuine eille ê. 'S boch an Gnoich nach do chuir am fear Dû ussa Dhachi. Ach dhâlh an lâ sin anois." [3]

The English translation of which is as follows:

"Keep yourself out of this business my lad. They must butt down the Headman [Hastings] according to my opinion. The other devils [the Bengal majority] are too powerful in friends here. The Son of Coll will not succeed[4], as I see it, this time. The devils hate him! I wish that poor Olach would do good to himself!

I heard today that the eldest son of the Black Man [The Nabob] sent an Agent over here in his own name[5]. But since this news came from the son of Lord Bute, I will not believe it till I hear it from someone else. It is a pity the Black Man did not send you home. But that day has gone now."

By 12th January James Macpherson had heard more about the news from India, and immediately wrote another letter to John Macpherson. He said:

"S'Diuaillie a Nuaichda thanic as na H'Inchichan. 'S barrail liomsa gun eidar do N'Hastinich, taise ata é glan na nach eil, thithin dachi. Gabh ussa

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1. S.R.O., Kinross House Papers, MS.2128/9, op.cit.
2. ibid., MS.2128/10, L.Macleane to J.Graham, 6 January 1776.
3. S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 4/19, James Macpherson to John Macpherson, 6 Jan.1776.
4. unidentified. "Olach" or "Olich" is the only person im the whole of the Gaelic correspondence of the Macphersons who has not been identified. "ich" is the nominative ending, so the person is probably "Ola", which could be a phonetic form of "Aula" or "Aulay" (from the Norse "Olaf"). In short, "Olach" or "Ola-ich" or "Aula-ich" could be a form of "Macaulay".
5. Undoubtedly Frederick Stuart, 3rd son of Lord Bute.

m'fhocul air, gun cûm an Tuâch suas na Deuille eil na aghai a Cheanart. Ata Gliocas agudse - Na Labhair moran an aighi na Tri-fherre môr; 'S aidse shessas. Chunna mi an diu an Ropostanach. Ata é an aighi N'Hastinich. Ata é aig raidh gur eidir doine eile chuir amach; agus yur eidir dhaibh arian chuir an srôn nam Brithonin. Ata na Diuille tiani môran uile lèth 'ncuide Habeas Corpus. Pi ussa sâbhach. ...

Bhâ MacCholla an lâ roi an sò maille ris na Direchdarrin. Ata è m'barrail gum beille aid air a thaobh; ach ata è ro Shânguine a 'ncôni. 'S duina onarach ê; ach lionta sè chô trîc nî gu nî, gur môr M'Thegul nach dian è. Ni air bhîth gu mâth.

Bhâ fearg gun cheil ormse gun thûg e na clochin da n'Righ gus am faica an Righ è mar Envoy an Îr-Dhuigh. 'S mor a bear do n'Fher-Dhûth airgid a chuir dhâchi dhiana lêth-cheud Votichin ân an stôc na Cuidachda agus dhâ na tri cairdin a chuir an 'n Tigh a Chummanta, na Clochin a chuir dhâchi dhâ nDeuille Gheal-shuillich ata 'n shô. Châ neille 's châ roû cairdis riâmh an na Chri. Na biâgh na Votichin aig Cairdin an Fhir-Dhuith, thiggagh na Ministirrin dha n'ionssis; agus dhianagh aid a huille nî a ghearigh aid. 'S ionâgh môr liomse nach fachda ussa, lé do Ghliocas môr, an Nî sho. Ach ata feugal ôrm gun d'fhalbh an Lâ-shin.

Ata missha gu rô-mhôr aig an Tuach agus an Ropostanach 'n trâ shô; âch châ n'urra mi nî air bîth a dhiana ar son MacCholla. Labhair mi an diu ar a shon. 'Cuin,' thubhairt iadse, 'a thianta ussa gu Barrail mhâth air Erinich ?' - -
' 'S ainna dhom gur onarich è.' - -
'Faodi shin a bhîth, ach 's mi-onarich a Charid an Suillivanich.' - -
Chunna mi na dianin feum." [1]

The English translation of which is as follows:

"Devilish is the news that came from India. I think that Hastings, whether he is clear or not, must come home. Take my word on it that North will support the other knaves against the Headman [Hastings]. You have wisdom - do not speak much against the Three Big Men; the longer to stand. I saw Robinson today. He is against Hastings. He says the other people must put him out, and that it will be necessary to put a rein in the nose of the Brehons [Judges]. The devils are doing much by the help of Habeas Corpus. You be quiet. ...

The Son of Coll was here the other day along with the Directors. He is of the opinion that they are on his side, but he is too Sanguine always. He is an honourable man, but he leans from time to time from thing to thing; great is my fear that he will not succeed in anything well.

I was excessively angry that he gave the stones[2] to the King so that the King might see he is the Envoy of the Black Man [The Nabob]. It would be better for the Black Man to send money home. Fifty Votes in the stock of the Company and

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1. S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 4/20, James Macpherson to John Macpherson, 12 Jan.1776.
2. The "stones" to which James Macpherson referred were decorations to a jewelled hat which the Nabob sent to George III, and which Macleane delivered on 24th August 1775. The main stone was a very large white diamond, the rest were pearls, see I.O.L./H.M.S., 118, ff.301-304, The Nabob to George III, dated 24 September 1774 at Chepauk.

two or three friends in the House of Commons would do more than stones have to this White-eyed Devil [The King]. There is not and there never was friendship in his heart. If the friends of the Black Man had the Votes the Ministers would come to them; and do all that they would ask him. I am surprised that you with your great wisdom did not see this thing. But I fear that day has gone.

I am far in with North and Robinson meantime, but I could do nothing for the Son of Coll. I spoke today on his behalf.

'When,' they said, 'did you begin to have a good opinion of an Irishman ?' - -

'I know he is honourable.' - -

'That may be, but dishonourable is his friend Sulivan.' - -

I saw I could not succeed."

The "devilish news" from India concerned allegations made to the Bengal majority by an aged villain named Rajah Nanda Kumar[1] that Hastings had received bribes. The accusation not only provided the majority with a new and spectacular reason for attacking Hastings,[2] but also exposed much deeper issues, including the extent of the authority of the Bengal Supreme Court (whose powers had not been clearly defined by the Regulating Act), and the corrupt fight for power among native leaders, with the age-old dispute between Hindus and Moslems adding further complications. By siding with Nanda Kumar the majority forced Hastings to defend himself by taking legal proceedings against his accuser, and this, over an incident arising out of Nanda Kumar's arrest and imprisonment, caused a clash between the majority and the Supreme Court, whose judges resented any interference. The Chief Justice, Sir Elijah Impey,[3] an old school friend of Hastings, was driven by the majority's act into Hastings's camp, and the bitter antagonisms among the Europeans in Calcutta became more intense than ever. As

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1. Nanda Kumar (c.1705-1775), was better known as Nundcomar or Nuncomar. The details of his controversial trial and his life are to be found in Nuncomar and Impey, Sir James Stephen, London, 1885, in vol.v of Camb.Hist.India, and in Roberts, p.235 et seq.
2. ibid., and The Central Authority in British India, 1774-84, A.P.Das Gupta, (London Ph.D. Thesis, published Calcutta,1931).
3. Sir Elijah Impey (1732-1809). When Impey and his family first arrived in Calcutta they found that their house was not ready for occupation, but Macleane, who was away on his mission to Rohilkhand, had left his own house for their use. (see Gleig, i, p.454).

James Macpherson had rightly assessed, the government and the Company were now bound to come down off the fence, and the liklihood was that Hastings would be recalled and the judges controlled.

Impey, who had established a firm friendship with Macleane during the short time they had known each other in Calcutta at the end of 1774, sent Macleane a letter on 20th January 1776[1] which virtually appointed him his agent, or rather co-agent[2], for Impey and Hastings had already sent home Alexander Elliot with documents concerning the new dispute. Hard on Elliot's heels came George Vansittart and John Stewart, who sailed from Calcutta in the Hillsborough, the latter having been dismissed from his post as Judge Advocate General and as Secretary to the Bengal Council by the majority.[3] They were soon to play an important part in Hastings's affairs. Meanwhile, Macleane, still unaware of their coming or of Impey's letter, dealt with the problems in hand.

James Macpherson, more pessimistic than ever, began to have doubts concerning Macleane's ability to help Hastings, and told his kinsman on 10th February:

" 'S duine onarach MacChol; ach ata è caochlatich mar Ghaoibh. Mar Chû ianich a shû bhal air Rêth, nuair ghêris Maighach roi shuil, leamase na dêagh, agus fagus è a Mhaister 's na Cearca tomain; mar sin ata do charid. Nuair bhîas gnoich na lâmh, tilgi ni eille air bâl as a chean è.
'S barrail mhôr liomsa, gur ôlc a roine è gun rômh è na fhêr-dioni do n'Hastinich agus do n'fhêr-Dhûth lè cheille. 'S beg air an Tuach agus air an Ropostanich, an d'Hastinich; agus châ nôad eid gun bhi na aghai; agus cho fâd sa bhîas MacChol na Fher-diona aig an d'Hastinich, cha ghâbh aid ê an sa Chuirt

1. B.M.Add.MSS.16259, f.18, Sir E.Impey to L.Macleane, 20 January 1776.
2. Alexander Kynynmound Elliot (1754-1778), third son of Sir Gilbert Elliot, 3rd Baronet of Minto.
3. S.R.O., Kinross House Papers, MS.2129/1 and MS.2129/2, 2 letters, James Burn (Senior Chaplain to the Company in Calcutta) to John Graham, dated 3 Sept.1775 and 25 November 1775. See also I.O.L., MSS.EUR.E.18, f.13, P.Francis to C. D'Oyly, 25 August 1775 - "We yesterday dismissed J.n Stewart, Sec. of Council. He might have prevented the stroke, but I suspect he already meant to go home and provoke resentment." On 5th November 1775, George Vansittart lent Stewart £10,000, for which he received a receipt on 30th November, and the first payment of interest, £75.10.3., on 31st December. They both left Calcutta on the Hillsborough in mid-January 1776, (see Bod., Vansittart Papers, Dep.b.99, pp. 201 and 205, and Dep.b.101, frontispiece). It is possible that Stewart borrowed the money from Vansittart to pay off some of Macleane's debts, because he acted as Macleane's attorney in India from January 1775 to January 1776 (see I.O.L./Orme, O.V.202(33F), f.109, R.Orme to G.Stibbert, 13 December 1775).

mar fher-dioni aig an Fhêr-Dhuth. 'S diaulli sho! Labhair an Ropostanach riomse aig eari ôrm scriobha an aghai an d'Hastinich; agus dhuilte mi é. ...

Thubhairt an Ropostanich riomse: 'Caid am bail am feum do n'Fher-Dhûth fer-dioni a chuir sa n duich sho gus an tuite na h'Ichichan an an lâmh an Ri ? Tachri shô án an tri bliaghna; agus an shin gâbhi shîn fer-dioni o n'Fher-Dhuth, agus a bhrathrin eille.'

Ata Mac-Chol am barrail gur è Titus a chuir na aighi n'Ropostanich; ach se è fein a bhi na Fher-dioni aig an Hastinich a roin a gnoich! Thanic aislin air an am MacCholla o chiun tri lâ, gun cuirragh e mishi 's e fein an an Tigh a Chumant. 'S barrail liom gur aon dè chuid Bruadalin sho." [1]

The English translation of which is as follows:

"The Son of Coll is an honourable man; but he is as changeable as the wind. Like a game dog walking in a line, when a hare appears before his eyes he jumps after him, and he will leave his master and the grouse; like that is your friend. When business is in his hand, anything else will immediately put it out of his head.

It is my firm opinion, unfortunate the event that made him the attorney of Hastings and of the Black Man at the same time. North and Robinson hate Hastings, and they dare not but be against him; and as long as the Son of Coll is Hastings's attorney they will not accept him in Court as the Black Man's attorney. This is devilish! Robinson spoke to me asking me to write against Hastings, and I refused him. ...

Robinson said to me: 'Where is the good of providing an attorney for the Black Man in this country until India falls into the hands of the King ? This will happen in three years and then we will accept an attorney for the Black Man; and his other brethren [meaning other Indian princes].'

The Son of Coll is of the opinion that Titus [George Paterson] put Robinson against him; but it is himself being the attorney of Hastings that did this! A dream came on the Son of Coll three days ago that he would put me and himself in the House of Commons. I imagine this is just one of his dreams."

Macpherson's view of Macleane as a vacillating dreamer has no parallels. His dream, if it is fair to describe it as such, to return to the House of Commons was an aim he took seriously. Before the end of the year he began to canvas support in his old seat at Arundel; [2] an indication that Macpherson misjudged him.

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1. S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 4/21, James Macpherson to John Macpherson, 10 Feb.1776.
2. Tompkins Diary, p.41, Entry for 16 November 1776 (Saturday): "Mr.Macleane accompanied by two other gentlemen [probably John Stewart and William Macintosh who had both been with him in Portsmouth a few days earlier] arrived at the Crown Inn in the Borough of Arundel & in the evening invited the inhabitants of the Borough of Arundel to come thither to drink his health & left the Town the next day."

If Macleane had vacillated at all it was over his own case, but on 14th February he sent the Court of Directors the narrative of his reasons for resigning as Commissary General of Bengal. It was a statement of tenuous and mainly unconvincing arguments, but it was emphatic on one point. After reiterating his old plea that as Commissary General he should have enjoyed the privileges of "Youngest Counsellor" under the new as well as the old Bengal Council, he stated: "The office I held was of great magnitude, trust and utility, and therefore deserved being put above corruption."[1] It was an odd plea to make in his defence, consistent with the ethics of the time, but nonetheless tantamount to an admission of corrupt practices. "On these grounds" he went on, "I moved for what I conceived and still conceive to have been my rights; but not succeeding I resigned my office and accepted of the Nabob's offer as the means of laying my case before this Honorable Court."[2] He was clear on the "legality of the measure having consulted the Chief Justice [Sir Elijah Impey][3]," and he hoped that as all his actions had "been within the line of my duty and much for the benefit of the Company and of the Nation they [the Directors] will be pleased to look upon me as still in their Service, the light in which I have all along considered myself."[4] He was also "ready to furnish any necessary information from and to the Nabob as a private confidential friend."[5]

Macleane's unwillingness to call himself the Nabob's agent, the duality of his approach in making it appear that his actions were equally beneficial to the Company and the government, the use of Impey's name to support the legality of his acceptance of the Nabob's 'commission', were all arguments that had lost their force. His days of following the <u>via media</u> had passed. To support his

1. See APPENDIX 1.
2. ibid.
3. ibid.
4. ibid.
5. ibid.

principals he had to take a decisive stand with the groups which were unpopular with the Court of Directors and with the government.

On 19th February James Macpherson reported:

"Ata MacChol air bôrd na Diractarin. Ata tuil mhôr aig, gun gâbh aid è mar fher-dioni do n'fher-dhûth. Croide mi, nuair chî mi." [1]

The English translation of which is as follows:

"The Son of Coll is with the board of Directors. He has great hopes that they will accept him as the attorney of the Black Man. I will believe when I see."

On 25th March James Macpherson commented in English: "Rannoch opposes, and too successfully, the Island of Coll." [2] From both quarters Macleane was being held in check. The Directors would not accept him as the Nabob's agent, and nor would the government while he acted as Hastings's agent as well.

On 27th March James Macpherson sent his kinsman a fuller picture of the situation, and wrote:

"Cha do thachair ni air bîth, o n'uair a scriabh mi dhuit Lès a Bhoc-erba. Chunna mi MacChol. Cha neil fios agum cud è ni ata è diona. Ata è 'n coni dol mon cuairt; ach 's môr m'fhagul nach dion è feum. Ni a 's mâth lès anois a dhiani 'n Sulivanich a thobhairt a 's tigh ans na directarin. Ata 'n Ropostanich na aighi. Cha chluin è focul uaimse. Ata aid aig inshi dhomse gun thug 'n Grigarich, (fer dhè na Directarin), motion 'n diu 's tigh, chuir petition do 'n Ri a d'Hastinich a chuir amach. Cha do scaoil aid air motion; agus barrail liom nach rômh n govermait mâth air a dhianâmh. Chail mishi cluas 'n Tuaich agus an Ropostanich, ni chinnir na h'Inchichin, o n'uair chual aid gun rômh mi mo charid do MhacChol. Ata aid 'm barrail gur essi chuir mo cheanse h'uille ni a thuthairt mi, mo n'fher-dhûth agus 'n d'Hastinich. ...

'S fer leò 'n Diuille a thachir ans na h'Insichan, na ni air bîth leigail sèchad air na lâmhin achda fein; agus, O 's beg orra, na h'intricichan aig MacChol. 'S math 'n duine MacChol âch 's tè chean agus iomlatich aignigh. 'S barrail liomse gun do roin è feum, ach cha n'abir iadse sin; ôr chualli mi 'n diu gun cuir aid ordu mach gus a Phiccatich gun ni air bîth a dhiana mo mThanseur. Innis sin air bâl do n'fher-dhuth; agus abir ris gun n'fhairri air bi a thobhairt air na Francich; or faicis iad ais 'n Stoc. Ata na Naidin aigi

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1. S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 4/22, James Macpherson to John Macpherson, 19 Feb.1776
2. ibid., 4/23, James Macpherson to John Macpherson, 25 March 1776. "Rannoch" is part of the territory of Clan Robertson; and "the Island of Coll" is the home of the Macleans of Coll, and the birthplace of Lauchlin Macleane's grandfather, who was a second son of a Maclean of Grishipol in that island and a cadet of the Maclean Chieftains of Coll. Robinson was an Englishman, but the closeness of his surname to Robertson was sufficient for a Highlander's allusion to him by the territorial title used by that clan. Even in plain English this sentence would have been meaningless to an interceptor of mail who was not conversant with the intricacies of Highland families, or their titles.

y'insi 'n shô, gun rômh 'n Lawich 'm Pondesheri, do lâ na chuidichd; agus gun gheul è gerriston francich a ghâbhail an 'nTansheur.

'Se barrail an Ri 'n sho, gun d'thic môran airgid huigga fein ô na h'Insichan. Innis sho do n'fher-dhûth; agus gun è bhî 'm barrail gun treic an Ri è; or a nuair a thuitis Chartarichin na Cuidichd, ţaigge 'n Ri 's n gobhermait essi.

Ata moran naidin aig 'n fher-dhûth 'n sho. Ata aid aig insi gur diuille air a bhônnagh, 'n darra mac aigi, Amir ul Omrah. Ata aid aig insi gun gêr è scornan a bhrâthâr, agus 'n shin scornan nan Sasganach. Innis sin do n'fher-dhûth.

'S diuilli nach rômh ussa 's mishi an 'n Tigh Chumant. Na bîägh, bhi t'ussa do Ghobharnair Madraish,"

The English translation of which is as follows: [1]

"Nothing has happened since I wrote you by Roebuck. I saw the Son of Coll. I do not know what it is he is doing. He is always going around, but I fear he will not succeed. A thing he would like to do now is to take Sulivan into the House [Court] of Directors. Robinson is against him. He will not hear a word from me. They are telling me that Gregory (one of the Directors) brought in a motion today to petition the King to expel Hastings. They did not vote on the motion; and I think that no good government was done. I lost the ear of North and Robinson about India since they heard I was a friend of the Son of Coll. They are of the opinion that he put in my head all I said about the Black Man and Hastings. ...

They would prefer misfortune should happen in India than that anything should pass their own hands; and, Oh they hate the intrigues of the Son of Coll. The Son of Coll is a good man, but hot is his head and wayward his thoughts. I still think he has done some good - but they will not admit that - for I have heard today that they will send an order to Pigot to do nothing about Tanjore. Tell that immediately to the Black Man, and tell him to pay no attention to the French, for they will be left out of the stock [the reckoning]. His Enemies are saying here that Law [de Lauriston] was in Pondicherry one day in his company, and that he promised to take a French garrison into Tanjore.

The King here thinks that much money will come to himself from India. Tell this to the Black Man, and that he should not think the King would forsake him when the Company Charters fall due. The King and the government will choose him.

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1. "Roebuck" was the son of Dr.John Roebuck (1718-1794), an English industrialist, who founded, among other factories, the Carron Iron Works at Falkirk and the Bridgeness Pottery near Bo'ness. At a time when Scottish roads were in a very bad condition he saw the importance of water transport and established many industrial plants along the Firth of Forth. His son, a protégé of the Duke of Hamilton, left England on 25 March 1776 as a Writer in the Company's service, and had with him private dispatches from James Macpherson for John Macpherson. He had been recommended to them by their friend, Dr.Adam Smith, the great economist, see S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 4/24, 25 March 1776.

The Black Man has many enemies here. They are saying that one devil on the Mount[1] is his second son, Amir-ul-Umara. They are saying that he will cut the throat of his brother and then the throats of the English. Tell that to the Black Man. ...

It is the devil that you and I are not in the House of Commons. If we were you would be the Governor of Madras."[2]

The news about Tanjore, if carried into effect, was a good omen; the motion of Gregory, although not voted upon, was a bad omen; the future proved them both to be misleading portents. The ever-current rumours of French ambitions in India were echoed by Henry Strachey,[3] Clive's former secretary, when he wrote to Francis on 1st April. After pleading with Francis to "keep peace in the East",[4] he said that it was believed that the French were massing their naval forces in Mauritius, and he hoped that if they fought they would go to Bengal so that Clavering could deal with them. In the tense period before the real storm the rumour signified little, except a paucity of real news from India. The next set of official dispatches was expected to bring the crisis to a head. Until then the election of Directors occupied people's minds. On 2nd April James Macpherson told his kinsman:

"Labhair mishi ri ceathar na cuic Votarin agus gheul aid a bhi air son 'n d'Shulibhanich. Bi-igh moran air a shon; ach ata beg tuil agum gun thic è 's tigh.

Ata moran cairdin aig è; ach 's lionar a nabhaidin. 'S barrail liomse mar thig 'n Sulibhanich a 's tigh, gun d'hêid MacChol mach air Tîr. Mo thig e 's tigh, furri e 'n shô; ach ata neil môr tuil agum gun dion è mâth. 'S diuillè na h'Olich 'n Tuach agus 'n Scâlac aigi. Ata mishi ga 'm faicin a huille lâ; ach o n'âm gun d'fhuair è fios gur carid mi do MhacChol cha labhair aid focul riom mo na h'Inchichan shios." 5

The English translation of which is as follows:

"I spoke to four or five voters and they promised to be for Sulivan. Many will be for him, but I have little hope that he will come in.

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1. The "Mount" was St.Thomas's Mount in Madras, where many of the Company's official residences were, and where many important people resided.
2. S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 4/25, James Macpherson to John Macpherson, 27 Mar.1776.
3. Henry Strachey (1737-1810), later (1801) created a Baronet. He was also appointed Master of the Household to George III.
4. I.O.L., MSS.EUR.E.13, f.533, H.Strachey to P.Francis, 1 April 1776.
5. S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 4/26, James Macpherson to John Macpherson, 2 April 1776

He has many friends, but numerous are his enemies. I think that if Sulivan does not come in,[1] that the Son of Coll will return to the Country [of India]. Should he come in he will stay here, but I have no great hope that he will do good. Devils are Olich [unidentified], North and his Servant [Robinson]. I see them everyday, but since they discovered I was a friend of the Son of Coll they will not speak to me about India."

The following day James Macpherson gave further news of the election:

"I am this moment informed that the Court of Directors, contrary to all expectations and to the wish of the government, have fixed on the 6 that went out last year for the House List."[2]

Sulivan had failed to get in, and Macleane faced another year of dealing with antipathetic Directors. The actual election was still a few days ahead, and Macleane worked hard for Sulivan up to the last minute, but with the decision on the House List announced the result was a foregone conclusion.

On 5th April, in the last of his letters to his kinsman of this period, James Macpherson reported the news which touched off the battle.

"Today," he wrote in English, "the Purser of the Northumberland arrived here from Lisbon, where the ship is put in, in distress. I have many letters from Bengal of the date of August [1775], which give a faithful detail of the disputes in Council, and their consequences, on the noted Nuncomar."[3]

On the charge of forgery, a conviction for which carried the mandatory penalty of execution, Nanda Kumar had been found guilty and hung.[4] The news of Nanda Kumar's accusations against Hastings had been stirring; the news of his execution was sensational. James Macpherson's reaction reflected the general view. Continuing his letter to John Macpherson of 5th April in Gaelic, he

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1. Sulivan's attitude to Macleane's agency for the Nabob was indicated in a letter he sent Hastings on 1 April 1776 - "Poor Mac may make his own terms, if he could forget that you are his friend." (quoted Feiling, p.174).
2. S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 4/27, James Macpherson to John Macpherson, 3 April 1776.
3. ibid., 4/28, James Macpherson to John Macpherson, 5 April 1776.
4. P.A., 11 April 1776 and 13 April 1776. Reports of Nanda Kumar's execution. He was hanged in Calcutta on 5 August 1775.

wrote:

" 'S mo bharrailse gun cuir aid amach 'n d'Hastinich, mus fhalbh a Phaicaid an a mios Chiune - 'S olc a fhuara 'n d'Impiach. 'S annigh dhôm 'n d'Olich. Bhà è na Ghille-roi aig 'n d'Shulibhanich agus aig Bhanshittartich deuch bliana roimh shô. Se mo bharrailse gun dion sho 'n diuille air do Charrid 'n d'Hastinich. Ata moran Solais air MacChol o' na nichinse. Cha neil aissa faicin cho fadda riomse; agus ata è cho tea agus chô Jealous, mo labhairse missi 'n aighai a bharrail, gun siolle è gur Nabhid mi. Thobhair ussa n'fhairra ort fein. Na Ceanghail u fein ris 'n Hastinich. Nuair thig è dhachi tuitis è sios an 'n Obscurity, mar thuit a Phredecessarrin; Olich gun suim uille gu lein. Ata MacChol dol mon cuairt cuir suas 'n d'Shulibhanich 'n aighai na Directarrin. Bher moran Votarin scroap dhâ; ach 's barrail liom nach tig è 's tigh. Thuair mi cuig na sè scrôpin do n'Olich.

Ata ministarrin 'n righ scriobha literchin do n'fher-dhû, gun n'fhocul air MacChol. Ata na Directarin a scriobha dhâ, gun chomunication bhi aigi ri duin air bi, ach 'n Ghobhornair agus 'n luichd Gliocas ('n Council) ân Madras; agus ata aid aig insi dhômse gun scriobh aid do na Ghobharnar duin air bĩ bhi-as 'n Servais na Cuidachd chuir amach as 'n d'Shervais, mo bhi-as e na charid na na fher-comharl do n'fher-Dhûth. San nal'aighse ata sho; ach cha neil t'ainm lietar. Ata MacChol aig insi dhômse gun deit è mach sa bhliana sho, mar dion aid ni air bĩ air son 'n fher-dhuith. Ach sè mo bhairrailse gun tig nichinin, o la gu la, mon cuairt a chum as è 'n sho."[1]

The English translation of which is as follows:

"It is my opinion that they will expel Hastings before the Packet leaves in the month of June - Impey is in trouble. I know Olich [unidentified]. He was Manager for Sulivan and [Henry] Vansittart ten years before this. It is my opinion that he will play the devil with your friend Hastings. The Son of Coll rejoices greatly about these things. He does not see ahead as I do, and he is so hot and Jealous if I speak against his views that he imagines I am an enemy. You take care of yourself. Do not tie yourself to Hastings. When he comes home he will fall into Obscurity like his predecessors; Olich is all together without influence. The Son of Coll is going round putting Sulivan up against the Directors. Many voters will give him their cross, but I think he will not come in. I got five or six crosses for Olich.

Ministers of the King are writing letters to the Black Man without a word about the Son of Coll. The Directors are writing to him [The Nabob] not to have any communication with anyone but the Governor and the wise people (in the Council) in Madras; and they are telling me that they have written to the Governor to expel anyone in the Service of the Company from the Service if he is a friend or adviser of the Black Man. This is against you, but your name is not in the letter. The Son of Coll tells me that he will go out this year

1. S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 4/28, James Macpherson to John Macpherson, 5 April 1776

if they will not do anything for the Black Man, but I am of the opinion that things will happen from day to day which will keep him here."

Lord Pigot, who had arrived in Madras on 9th December 1775 to begin his second tour as Governor, had anticipated the Directors' orders, and on 23rd January 1776[1] had already dismissed John Macpherson from the Company's Service on the flimsy charge of having represented the Nabob's interest in England, to the detriment of the Company, several years earlier; before in fact John Macpherson had been employed by the Company. It was, of course, an act of delayed revenge,[2] for a memorial written by Macpherson had, without naming Pigot, indirectly attacked the results of his first tour as Governor. Pigot had also reinstated Tuljaji as Rajah of Tanjore at the end of March 1776,[3] just as North and Robinson were writing to tell him to do nothing about the matter. This last act was to cause a violent eruption in the Council of Madras, and have an important effect on Macleane's negotiations on behalf of the Nabob.

Meanwhile, in Leadenhall Street, the news from Calcutta brought tempers to the boil. The story of Nanda Kumar's execution "flew like lightning through all the offices."[4] The Company Directors headed by John Roberts,[5] the newly elected Chairman, Robert Gregory, Nanda Kumar's agent, Edward Wheler,[6] an ex-Chairman who had been promised a seat in the Bengal Council, and George Wombwell,[7] a friend of Philip Francis, marshalled their forces to bring about the dismissal of Hastings and Barwell, or at least their recall.

Against them had been mustered the diverse elements of Hastings's supporters. The hard core of his 'party' had, since the General Court of 6th December 1775, been supplemented by extra groups, roused to action by friendship, anger or

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1. Love, iii, p.85.
2. ibid., loc.cit.
3. ibid., loc.cit.
4. Feiling, p.175.
5. John Roberts (1739-1810).
6. Edward Wheler (1732-1783), fourth son of Sir William Wheler, 5th Baronet.
7. George Wombwell (1734-1780), M.P. for Huntingdon 1774-80; created a Baronet in 1778.

imperilled interests, and now whipped into a coalition by Sulivan and Macleane. Frederick Stuart, a victim of the Bengal majority who had come home with Macleane, had promised the support of his father Lord Bute, who was unwilling to "produce himself in public"[1], but brought to Hastings's cause his influential connexions and probably some others who may "have been obliged to him when in power."[2] Alexander Elliot, now returned from Calcutta, and other members of his family, including his father Sir Gilbert Elliot, were to be counted on. The lawyers in the main closed their ranks behind Impey, and therefore Hastings as well; and Dunning, Impey's friend, "was thought to bring the Opposition interest headed by Lord Shelburne into line."[3] The rich 'Nabobs'[4], especially those who still had financial interests in India which could be threatened by the witch-hunting activities of the Bengal majority, swung over, almost to a man, behind Hastings; among them Richard Becher, a Director who normally supported the government. Some of the Directors had accepted ministerial gold, in the form of contracts, but they could not ignore the services Hastings had rendered, nor could they overlook his ability to produce profits for the Company. Disputes were not to be compared with the real power of hard cash.

Even the most unpredictable group, headed by Governor George Johnstone[5], a friend still of the Macphersons, threw their weight behind Hastings, although they had recently censured Hastings for his Rohilla War policy. With Johnstone, who was an opposition leader in the Company, came the Duke of Richmond and the Marquess of Rockingham[6]'s opposition group in Parliament. In the face of this extraordinary consortium, the chances of a ministerial victory began to look

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29137, f.5, F.Stuart to W.Hastings, 6 January 1776 (quoted Sutherland, p.306).
2. Sutherland, p.306, (n.2), quoting General Simon Fraser, The Master of Lovat.
3. ibid., p.306.
4. 'Nabob' was a name applied to any wealthy man who had made his fortune in India. For the 'Nabobs' of this period see The Nabobs in England, J.M.Holzman, New York, 1926.
5. George Johnstone (c.1730-1787), third son of Sir James Johnstone, 3rd Bart. of Westerhall, Dumfries; he was Governor of West Florida 1763-67.
6. Charles Lennox, 3rd Duke of Richmond and Lennox (1735-1806).

uncertain. On 9th May the vote for Hastings's removal was brought forward in the Court of Directors. Three Directors who usually supported the government found it convenient to be absent; other ministerial Directors, mostly 'Nabobs' or their friends, turned their coats for the occasion; and the result was a ministerial victory by the bare margin of 11 to 10, although later 11 swore that they had voted <u>against</u> the motion.[1] The motion had been put forward suddenly in the hope of catching Hastings's supporters unawares. It did, but by a lucky chance Macleane heard about it and rushed to India House, where he rounded up nine Proprietors to demand, in view of such a narrow majority, the calling of a General Court of Proprietors; and this demand was handed in the next morning in a letter,[2] before the Directors met to confirm their votes.

While playing for time, Macleane had discussed an "accomodation" with John Roberts, the Chairman of the Company.

"Mr.Hastings," said Macleane, "desires not to hold the Government of Bengal on account of its emoluments; he has acquired a moderate, a very moderate fortune, and he is content; but he will never part with his honour. This motion, couch it in what terms you will, is intended to fix a stigma upon him, and to deliver up his friends into the hands of his enemies. If fair play is meant, let some honour from the Crown be conferred upon him, and let the displaced servants be restored, and all hostilities cease."[3]

"My wishes," replied Roberts, "go along with you, but have you powers to answer for Mr.Hastings's compliance if the terms were granted ?"[4]

"I would," confirmed Macleane, "be responsible; and with more confidence, because I know Mr.Hastings would not hold the government if he did not receive the most cordial support; but I also know he would never relinquish it, but from violence, while any attempt was made to dishonour him."[5]

Here were broad hints of terms in exchange for Hastings's resignation, but

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1. <u>Davies</u>, p.213.
2. <u>Gleig</u>, ii, pp.58-70,(quoting B.M.Add.MSS.29137, f.249 et seq., L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 25 June 1776).
3. ibid., p.60.
4. ibid., p.60, loc.cit.
5. ibid., pp.60-61, loc.cit.

they had been countered by hints of a fight if pressures were not eased. The probe by Roberts to test Macleane's credentials as Hastings's agent was Macleane's first tentative recognition by the Company of his position, and he had quickly acknowledged it. But the conversation had settled nothing, and the issue was still either terms or a fight. In the prevailing climate of distrust there was no doubt of the choice, a fight.

The battle was fought on 16th May at a General Court of Proprietors, after a week of intense preparation. According to Macleane: "Forty-nine Privy Councillors, Peers, and men high in office attended on the part of the Administration; Treasury letters were sent to almost all the Proprietors, and Lord Sandwich[1] conducted the operations."[2] The debate started about noon, and a full house listened to fierce exchanges of oratory for nearly twelve hours. "Near midnight," reported Macleane to Hastings, "we divided on a question of 'adjournment till next day'; you will not be surprised that this shoal of Ministers rushing out of Court in the moment of division carried the question against us, at that late hour, 108 to 97."[3] With such a small margin in the ministry's favour, a mere 17 votes, a ballot was demanded, and was fixed for 18th May. This was held and brought about an overwhelming victory for Hastings - 377 votes against 271, a majority of 106; "and ministers had the mortification of finding the Directors' decision to recall Hastings and Barwell referred back to them for further consideration."[4]

The triumphant Hastings party, reflecting Hastings's own attitude, claimed it as a victory of unprejudiced and honest Proprietors over the 'managed' voters of the Court of Directors. The ministry, quite naturally, took a different view, and blamed their defeat on friendships, party connexions and fear of

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1. John Montagu, 4th Earl of Sandwich (1718-1792).
2. Gleig, ii, p.64.
3. ibid., p.65, loc.cit.
4. Sutherland, p.309.

government reform. In the authoritative view, Hastings as a symbol of the Company's independence won, by itself, a great deal of support, but the victory in the General Court "was the result of an organisation as complex as, though more ephemeral than, that of the Treasury, and Macleane, its chief architect, remarked himself on its miscellaneous and unstable character and the impossibility of keeping it together for any length of time."[1]

On two days, 16th and 18th May 1776, India House had been the scene of a battle that might as well have taken place in the Houses of Parliament, so important had been the party issues, and so involved had been the Parliamentary groups. Now, North, who had tried so hard to keep the matter out of Parliament, lost his temper and revised his ideas. In future, he would "have nothing to do with India out of Parliament."[2] The present session was, however, drawing to a close, and nothing could be done before October, when it re-assembled.

Macleane, in spite of the pessimists, had by sheer tenacity and organising ability helped to win a victory for Hastings, or so it seemed. In fact, the problem of solving the deadlock in the Bengal Council still remained, and North still held the whip hand.[3]

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1. Sutherland, p.310, (referring to B.M.Add.MSS.29137, f.448v., L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 10 November 1776; printed Gleig, ii, p.80).
2. ibid, p.310, (quoting B.M.Add.MSS.29137, f.254, L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 25 June 1776; printed Gleig, ii, p.65).
3. ibid.

CHAPTER 7 - Events leading to Hastings's Resignation: June to October 1776.

It was Macleane's duty as an agent to transmit confidence in his actions, and in the successful outcome of his manoeuvres, to his principals, whatever doubts he might have had himself. The long dispatch reporting the battles in India House in May which he sent Hastings on 22nd June gave this impression of confidence. Even in the case of the Chief Justice of Bengal he seemed optimistic. "Sir Elijah Impey," he wrote, "will expect a letter from me. Be good enough to assure him that I watch over his cause with the same unremitting care and zeal as over yours. Intentions were very hostile towards him at first. He is, I am pretty certain, in no danger."[1] Only "pretty certain", not convinced. It was a natural reservation to make, but it diminished the tone of confidence.

There was also the sad news about his co-agent. "Graham," he wrote, "is I fear beyond the chance of recovery. He is gone to Lisbon."[2] Macleane was out of date. Graham had in fact died two days earlier as his Lisbon-bound ship was passing Portmahon off the coast of Minorca.[3] For several weeks the gallant Graham had been travelling from one port to another in the hope that sea air would postpone his end, and during that time his duties as Macleane's co-agent had been assumed by Alexander Elliot, whose father, Sir Gilbert, another dying man, had helped to sway the ballot in May. A succession of deaths among the principal actors in the Bengal and Madras disputes in the ensuing months was to have far-reaching effects, though the tardiness of communications between England and India allowed the news of these deaths to come too late to solve some problems, and, conversely, not early enough to prevent the solution of

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1. Gleig, ii, p.69, quoting L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 25 June 1776, op.cit.
2. ibid., p.68.
3. P.A., 18 July 1776, Obituary: John Graham; and S.R.O., Kinross House Papers, MS.2065, John Routledge to George Graham, 29 June 1776. A letter from Routledge in Mahon telling George Graham about his brother's death "off Majorca". John Graham had been travelling from Marseilles (where he had last written to Macleane) after a short voyage around the Mediterranean.

others. Indian politics in the 18th century was a game played in the dark, with the participants in England and India working with information that was, at best, four-and-a-half months out of date. In all moves bluff was the trump card. Macleane' assurances, however, were more assumed than real, although in Leadenhall Street things appeared to go well.

At the Quarterly General Court on 19th June he acted with shrewdness and restraint. Governor Johnstone reminded the Directors that some weeks had passed since the General Court which had recommended a reconsideration of the resolution for addressing the King to remove Hastings and Barwell from office. The Directors replied "that until the Salisbury packet arrived from Ireland they could not with propriety go on with the reconsideration, as that ship brought many dispatches which would throw light in the affair."[1] Samuel Pechell countered this excuse by asking for a reasonable time for the reading of the dispatches to be fixed, which gave rise to a debate. When Hastings was attacked by Nathaniel Smith,[2] a former Director, Macleane was urged by his fellow supporters to object. Instead he "prayed that no interruption might be given to Mr.Smith; for as he seemed to condemn Mr.Hastings, his friends wished for nothing so much as a thorough investigation of every charge brought against him."[3] Having been permitted to continue, Smith allowed himself to get carried away emotionally, and "the more he floundered to get out of the mire the deeper he sunk."[4] Macleane's tactics became apparent when Smith was "most pointedly and clearly refuted in all his arguments by Governor Johnstone."[5] A concise rebuff from Johnstone, who was not associated with the hard core of

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1. P.A., 20 June 1776, Report of the Quarterly General Court held on the previous day.
2. Nathaniel Smith (1730-1794). He had been Lord Shelburne's contact through Isaac Barré with the East India Company after Macleane's financial downfall in 1769.
3. P.A., 20 July 1776, op.cit.
4. ibid., loc.cit.
5. ibid., loc.cit.

Hastings's party, was of much greater value to the cause than a stammering rejoinder from Macleane.

At the next General Court, on 17th July, "the Directors reported that they had reconsidered their Resolution for addressing the Crown to remove Messrs. Hastings and Barwell from their stations in Bengal, and that they had rescinded the Resolution. The Directors previous to their reconsideration of this question had taken the opinions of the Attorney and Solicitor General. ... The case and opinion were read, and turned out, the Attorney General's especially, in favour of Messrs. Hastings and Barwell."[1] The victory won at the May ballot was thereby consolidated. Again, in the debate that followed, Macleane spoke very briefly, and was not drawn into the arguments when Samuel Pechell, seconded by William Eliott, moved for the restoration to office of John Stewart, the Secretary of the Council of Bengal; a motion which was withdrawn when the Directors asked that the matter should be left to themselves.

Matters, however, no longer depended on what happened within the Company, but on what the ministry intended to do to reassert their power after their resounding defeat in the Company's May ballot. It was generally believed that something drastic would be done when Parliament re-assembled; ministers had threatened Parliamentary action, the King assumed it was inevitable, and, reluctant though North was normally to bring East Indian affairs before the House of Commons, it would be difficult for the ministry to avoid taking action there for the recall of Hastings and possibly Barwell and others, unless some compromise could be arrived at before Parliament met.[2] In the meantime a press

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1. P.A., 18 July 1776, Report of the General Court held on the previous day. See also Gleig, ii, p.70 for Macleane's comments in his letter to Hastings of 10 August 1776. Although by this date Macleane had been involved in negotiations for terms, he made no mention of this fact in this letter, but confined himself to an opinion of the proceedings in June and July at the General Courts.
2. Fortescue, iii, 392. Robinson spent the recess compiling a set of documents to be used as the basis of the ministry's case. These were printed. The King knew about Robinson's work, and because of it assumed that Parliamentary action against Hastings was inevitable.

campaign was opened up as a softening operation. On 19th July a letter signed "Indus"[1] defending John Stewart and attacking the Bengal majority appeared in the Public Advertiser, and this seems to have touched off a ministerial onslaught on Hastings, which Macleane interpreted as the preliminary to an attack in Parliament when it met. It was carried out, reported Macleane, "under the immediate orders of the Treasury"[2] by one of their pamphleteers, Hugh Kelly, "with the most illiberal scurrility. ... Mr.Macpherson (Fingal) was applied to on this occasion, but he positively refused to take any part against you."[3] This attack was countered by Macleane himself and Pechell, and at the end of July the former retired to his "little retreat in Essex, about eighteen miles from London"[4] to draft letters to the press and pamphlets in Hastings's defence.[5]

It was at this point that overtures began to be made to him from ministerial supporters to discover whether terms could be agreed upon for Hastings's resignation as a way out of the impasse.

Macleane's offer of Hastings's resignation afterwards became the subject of so much controversy, much of it confused and some of it disingenuous, that it is hard to form a judgment of the rights and wrongs of his actions. Hastings himself ended up by concentrating his condemnation of Macleane on the ground that he had acted without sanction, and devoted little attention to the

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1. A further letter by "Indus" appeared in the P.A. on 7 August 1776. The last known occasion on which "Indus" had been used as a pseudonym was in the Gazetteer & New Daily Advertiser on 3 July 1769, when the signature appeared under a letter attacking Lord Clive and the three Indian Supervisors (Scafton, Forde and Henry Vansittart). This letter had been immediately supported by a well written satirical pamphlet (known as the Berkeley Square Pamphlet), which was the work of Andrew Stuart and Lauchlin Macleane. As a guess, "Indus" was Jack Stewart of Buckingham Street, Colebrooke's man of business; he certainly wrote in the papers as "Philindus" and "Philo Indus".
2. Gleig, ii, p.71 (quoting B.M.Add.MSS.29137, L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 10 November 1776).
3. ibid., loc.cit.
4. ibid., p.72, loc.cit.
5. It was later revealed that Hastings "had cautioned him [Macleane] against publications." See B.M.Add.MSS.29143, f.70v., Robert Patton to W.Hastings, 12 February 1779.

examination of the terms which Macleane accepted or the circumstances which led him to do so. This meant that while Hastings severely blamed Macleane and those who had been there when Macleane and Graham were briefed in Calcutta, namely, George Vansittart and John Stewart, his censures did not extend to those who supported Macleane in his actions im England. This contention, however, except in the narrowest verbal sense, is difficult to maintain. Hastings had empowered his agents to announce that he would resign ~~under~~ *unless* certain conditions (all of which in the light of circumstances in England were quite impracticable) were obtained; all who were present at the briefing or heard of it from Hastings at the time believed that Macleane was acting in the spirit of his instructions. There were, nevertheless, more valid criticisms of Macleane's actions which could be, and some of which were, advanced. In the first place it could be asked whether it was necessary to come to terms with the ministry at all? The answer to this would certainly seem to be 'yes'. Macleane and Hastings's other friends were probably right to believe that if they stood fast on the General Court's vote of support, recall by Act of Parliament was well-nigh inevitable, given the sentiment of the time. In the second place, however, it could be asked, even if some negotiation was necessary, were the terms obtained the best that could be expected? Here it is much less easy to feel assurance, because the negotiations would seem to have been poorly handled. And, in the third place, it could be asked, was the bad handling of the negotiations the result solely of lack of skill (Macleane had a deservedly high reputation as a negotiator) or was it, as some began to suggest, the result of treachery - that Macleane saw his way to advantages to himself and his other patron, the Nabob of Arcot, by sacrificing the interests of Hastings?

The only was to reach a conclusion on these issues is to trace out in detail, so far as is possible, the course of the negotiations. The main source of

information is Macleane's own detailed account of them in his letter to Hastings,[1] but it can be checked at various points by the correspondence of others.

In the first week of August, while Macleane was still in Essex, Alexander Elliot, most beloved of Hastings's young friends, called unexpectedly with the news that an overture for negotiations had been "made directly from Lord North through the channel of Mr.Eden, the Under Secretary of the Northern Department."[2] The news justifiably puzzled Macleane. William Eden[3] was certainly in close touch with North, and had been considered as a successor to John Robinson at the Treasury when the latter had been ill; he was also on the point of marrying Alexander Elliot's sister Eleanor (and the Elliots were a very united family) and therefore had an easy channel for an informal approach; but it seemed odd that the approach should come through Eden and not through Robinson, and Macleane was suspicious of Eden's bona-fides. Nevertheless Macleane decided to encourage the approach.

"We agreed," he wrote, "that I should return with him [Elliot] directly to town; and that he should inform Mr.Eden that he still found there was an opening for negociation, but that a few days would preclude all possibility of compromise, because we were preparing materials, and calling to town our friends for a decided attack on the gentlemen [the members of the Bengal majority] who had been sent out from England."[4]

This was, of course, pure bluff. But while Macleane was still puzzling over these events another approach was made to him. He received a letter from Samuel Pechell, who was at Weymouth, enclosing a letter from John Woodhouse, one of the ministerial Directors, who was at Bath.

"This letter of Woodhouse's," wrote Macleane, "bore such strong marks of the

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1. Gleig, ii, pp.71-91, (quoting in full B.M.Add.MSS.29137, f.441 et seq., L. Macleane to W.Hastings, 10 November 1776).
2. ibid., p.72., loc.cit.
3. William Eden (1744-1814), later (1789) 1st Baron Auckland. He married Eleanor Elliot (d.1818) on 24 September 1776.
4. Gleig, ii, p.73, op.cit.

Treasury, that I was not a moment at a loss to guess who dictated it. It convinced me that Lord North had opened a battery against me through Woodhouse conducted by Robinson, at the same time that he opened another through Elliot conducted by Eden." [1]

In fact Robinson later admitted that he had inspired the approach through Woodhouse, [2] but it is possible that there was no connection with this approach and that of Eden's, and there is certainly no evidence to show that the two approaches were co-ordinated. The King complained to Robinson that North was listening to too many counsellors and would not make up his mind what to do, [3] and at a later stage of the negotiations Eden purported to fear that he would be "offending Robinson by meddling with a business of his department." [4] In view of the sequel it is, however, difficult to believe that Robinson was kept in ignorance of Eden's actions, and the line adopted by the two intermediaries was markedly similar. Both preyed upon "the danger of incurring the resentment of ministry..by pushing matters to the last extremity" [5] and "the indisposition of the House of Commons to all East Indians, and the necessity there would be of treating the subject rigorously but summarily there in case we proved obstinate." [6] There was, nevertheless, one important difference between them. Woodhouse held out the hope of an Irish peerage for Hastings (as had been suggested by Macleane and others before the meeting of the General Court in May) if an arrangement could be made for him to resign; Eden, on the other hand, was sure that this was impossible "on account of the acrimony and violence with which the contention had been carried on." [7]

Faced with these two approaches Macleane appears to have acted with much

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1. Gleig, ii, p.73, op.cit.
2. ibid., p.85.
3. B.M.Add.MSS.37833, f.28, George III to J.Robinson, 14 September 1776.
4. Gleig, ii, p.78, op.cit.
5. ibid., p.74.
6. ibid., p.74, loc.cit.
7. ibid., p.74, loc.cit.

less than his customary acumen. The mere fact that they had been made might have suggested that the ministry were as anxious as he was to come to an agreement. Yet he asked Elliot to express to Eden his fear "that a trap was laid to lull us into security, and spin out the time till the meeting of Parliament that we might be attacked to greater advantage;"[1] thereby showing only too clearly his own real anxiety for an early settlement. Nor is there any sign that he tried to play off one approach against the other; he evidently decided from the beginning (possibly because of Eden's personal relationship with Elliot) that Eden's was the more promising offer. Even more unwisely, it would seem, he accepted unconditionally Eden's assertion that no honour could be awarded by the government as a reward to Hastings himself. He even appeared to endorse whole-heartedly the undesirability of such an award. Before the decision of the General Court in May he said an honour or title "was the only mark that could be given that no stigma remained on Mr.Hastings for his resignation,"[2] but since the Court had acquitted him "the censorious world would construe it into a bribe for relinquishing his station."[3] Most unwisely of all, he gave up what must have been a big point to the ministry without ever seeing Eden to discuss it with him, sending it in a message by Elliot, who was young and inexperienced and, moreover, whatever his attachment to Hastings, likely to be a good deal under Eden's influence.

It was not surprising, therefore, that Eden was encouraged by this early success to carry the negotiations further and, for the first time, he, Elliot and Macleane had a meeting. At this meeting it was decided that Macleane should draw up a statement of the terms on which he would negotiate, and it

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1. Gleig, ii, p.74, op.cit.
2. ibid., p.75.
3. ibid., p.75, loc.cit.

was agreed that he should be at liberty to discuss these terms with his friends, provided that they were discreet.

On 16th August George Vansittart[1] and John Stewart arrived back in England, with news of how affairs had stood in Calcutta in January, and in Madras in February. Vansittart immediately went to Palk's home at Haldon Hall in South Devon, and Stewart went from Portsmouth to London, where he saw Macleane. From both Hastings's and the Nabob's points of view, matters had been far from favourable when Stewart had last seen them.[2] In spite of the victory in May, matters were not going well in England, but, wrote Macleane, "Stewart approved of all Elliot and I had done."[3] More important if surprising, in light of his great political experience, "Sulivan came up from Tunbridge and approved also."[4] Having gained this support for his previous moves, Macleane set out at the end of August for Haldon Hall to discuss terms for Hastings with his other leading supporters, Palk, Caillaud, Pechell and Vansittart. Sykes was missing, but he was usually at loggerheads with Hastings's friends and had been ignored on the advice of John Woodman,[5] Hastings's brother-in-law.

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1. Bod., Vansittart Papers, Dep.b.101, frontispiece, and Dep.b.103, p.92, G. Vansittart (on board the Hillsborough in the Madras Roads) to W.Hastings, 16 February 1776, in which the Nabob's confidence in Hastings was affirmed.
2. When Stewart left Calcutta the feelings in Council were still running high as a result of Nanda Kumar's execution. When Stewart arrived in Madras Pigot was on the point of dismissing John Macpherson. In fact, it was probably due to a midnight meeting between Stewart, Macpherson and the Nabob that Pigot finally decided to resurrect the evidence of Macpherson's activities in England in 1769 as a flimsy excuse not only for taking personal revenge on him, but also for removing him from the Company's service, in the hope of reducing his influence as one of the Nabob's supporters. In fact, as events were to prove, it had the opposite effect. Reporting back to the Governor General, Stewart was able to say that Madras was "a nest of Hastonians". See Feiling, p.167.
3. Gleig, ii, p.77, op.cit. The dating of Vansittart and Stewart's arrival in England has hitherto been given incorrectly; e.g. Davies, p.214, where Stewart, Vansittart and Graham (who was in the Mediterranean) are all given as Hastings's supporters at the May 1776 ballot. Apart from the Vansittart Papers, which give full details of Vansittart and Stewart's dates of departures and arrivals, Macleane himself commented on the latter's arrival time in England (see Gleig, ii, pp.74 and 77).
4. Gleig, ii, p.77, loc.cit.
5. John Woodman (d.1816), of Ewell in Surrey, was married to Warren Hastings's only sister Anne (d.1802). Macleane reported his actions to Woodman (see B.M. Add.MSS.29137, f.163, 11 Apr 1776; and 29193, f.282, 8 May [1776].).

Pechell collapsed with fever just before Macleane arrived, rendering him hors de combat for some time to come. The other three, committed to the course Macleane had accepted, settled with him the outlines of the terms for Hastings's resignation, "in which nothing was stipulated for Mr.Hastings, but everything for his friends."[1] Macleane had evidently imbued them with his own anxiety for a quick settlement, and after four days discussion he returned to London "with strict and unanimous injunctions to close the negociations on even worse terms than those agreed,"[2] if this should prove necessary.

These fears seemed at first not without grounds. When Macleane reached London he found that North was on holiday, that he was not expected back until 15th September,[3] and that nothing could be done in his absence. During this delay Macleane was softened up psychologically even more. He was firmly convinced that North was deliberately postponing the negotiations so that he could hold the matter over for Parliament's decision. Stewart, whose concern over his own affairs had prevented him from accompanying Macleane to Devon, and whose fate depended on the settlement, was also most uneasy. When Eden saw Macleane he talked about "indifferent matters",[4] and Elliot, whose reasons for not going to Devon were never explained, reported that Eden, for the first time, expressed the fear that his meddling in Robinson's department would not be welcome. On North's return from his holiday (incapacitated by a broken arm) on 16th September these fears seemed to be confirmed. On 18th September, "Elliot called," wrote Macleane, "..and desired me to take my own course, for Lord North evaded giving any answer."[5] Panicky last-minute attempts to get the Court of Directors at the Quarterly General Court to take steps for the

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1. Gleig, ii, p.76, op.cit.
2. ibid., pp.77-78.
3. ibid., p.78, loc.cit.
4. ibid., p.79, loc.cit.
5. ibid., p.79, loc.cit.

reinstatement of at least some of Hastings's followers were unsuccessful.[1]

But North's attitude was but an illustration of his customary indecision and inertia, and at this point Robinson moved in. Through the medium of James Macpherson he offered to "renew the overtures for a compromise."[2] Macpherson, who knew "of what had passed between Eden and Elliot, but very imperfectly,"[3] was once again, willingly or unwillingly, the mouthpiece of the ministry. On 21st September, Macleane went with Macpherson to Robinson's private residence at Sion Hill, and there the terms were agreed.[4] The agreement consisted of five propositions. The first, that men displaced from office for their attachment to Hastings (including John Stewart and Frederick Stuart) were to be restored, but not necessarily to their former offices - only <u>adequate</u> offices. Second, that some mark of favour would be conferred on natives who had been dismissed for the same cause. Third, that Hastings's friends would receive promotion adequate to their rank and merit in the Company's service, to be binding on the Bengal majority. Fourth, that all retrospective punishments and prosecutions prior to the Regulating Act (this covered the position of Barwell) would be quashed. Fifth, and only term asked for Hastings, that he would be well received on his return to England, and a vote of thanks promoted if moved for; which was virtually giving him nothing. Indeed, so far as Hastings himself was concerned, it was an acknowledgement of a humiliating surrender.

Robinson concluded the interview by asking Macleane to observe complete secrecy "lest Opposition should get hold of them [the terms], and attack Lord North in Parliament for collusion, and for stipulations which he could not come to legally."[5] To the public the resignation of Hastings was to appear

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1. <u>Gleig</u>, ii, p.79, op.cit.
2. ibid., p.81.
3. ibid., p.81, loc.cit.
4. ibid., p.81, loc.cit.
5. ibid., p.82.

voluntary and without terms. It is obvious that all the horse-trading which in fact accompanied the resignation was not suitable for public discussion, and that Macleane had to depend on Robinson's honour that the terms would be implemented. Macleane's stated reason for trusting Robinson's word was that a witness, James Macpherson, was present when it was given,[1] and Robinson heightened this trust by agreeing, with a show of generosity, to Macleane's condition that at least two of Hastings's supporters, Sykes and Sumner,[2] should be informed of what had passed. There was little danger for Robinson in this concession as both men named were unlikely to return from their vacations from London in time to cause trouble. With Robinson's assurance that he would take the responsibility of arranging a meeting with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Company, Macleane left Sion Hill.

On 24th September Robinson informed the King:

"An opening offering for a treaty relative to the Bengal business, Mr. Robinson, with Lord North's knowledge and approbation, has had a conversation with Mr.Macleane in the presence of Mr.James Macpherson. Mr.Robinson took down in writing Mr.Macleane's propositions, and in conversation delivered to him the purport of the answers in the enclosed paper [not found], which he afterwards put more explicitly into writing to lay before L.d North. The answers met with L.d N's approbation, but before they are read to Mr.Macleane as answers approved of, and terms agreed to, Mr.Robinson received L.d N's direction to transmit a copy of them for His Majesty's perusal and orders."[3]

The King promptly replied:

"The proposed answer to the friends of Mr.Hastings is quite safe and I hope will be eagerly embraced by them, as I know the getting that business off of our hands will greatly ease Lord North's mind."[4]

On 25th September full agreement was reached. All that remained to be done was to get Hastings's resignation (the only part of the agreement that was to

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1. Gleig, ii, p.82, op.cit.
2. W.B.Sumner had been Chief at Dacca in 1760, when Clive had disciplined him for allowing the existence of monopolies. He was a close friend of both Sykes and Hastings.
3. B.M.Add.MSS.37833, ff.36-36v., J.Robinson to George III, 24 Sept 1776,10 a.m.
4. ibid., f.38, George III to J.Robinson, 24 September 1776, 4.15 p.m.

be made public) submitted to Company's Court of Proprietors. At the General Court on 25th September the business was not brought up, but after the Court rose, John Roberts, the Chairman, told Macleane "that everything had been communicated to him and the Deputy [Chairman], and that they, Mr.Macpherson and myself [Macleane] were to meet on the Tuesday following at Mr.Robinson's house in the country to take our measures."[1] It was ironical that on the day of the General Court, when Macleane agreed to the complete surrender of initiative to both the Company and the ministry, George Monson died in Calcutta,[2] leaving only Clavering and Francis against Barwell and Hastings in the Bengal Council. And Hastings, with his castingvote as Governor General, had for the first time since the arrival of the 'new gentlemen' from England the commanding role; there was no longer a Bengal majority to impede him.

On 1st October, Macleane, Macpherson and Roberts met Robinson at Sion Hill. "It was then agreed," wrote Macleane, "that I should deliver in a letter signifying Mr.Hastings's wish to resign, to the Court of Directors on Wednesday the 9th October."[3] As Macleane found it difficult to draft this letter, the task was accepted by Robinson, whose final draft was as follows:

"Gentlemen, - Mr.Hastings, seeing the necessity of unanimity in the Supreme Council of Bengal, for conducting the affairs of the Company there, and for establishing any permanent system of Government for the good and prosperity of that country; and finding, from the unhappy divisions which have subsisted in the Supreme Council, that such union is not likely to subsist; and having anxiously on every occasion studied to promote the welfare of the Company, a conduct which he will ever continue, has from these motives authorized, empowered, and directed me to signify to you his desire to resign his office of Governor-General of Bengal, and to request your nomination of a successor to the vacancy which will be thereby occasioned in the Supreme Council.

I have the honour, &c. ... [L.Macleane]."[4]

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1. Gleig, ii, p.84, op.cit.
2. I.O.L., MSS.EUR.E.13, f.729, P.Francis to C.D'Oyly, 26 September 1776.
3. Gleig, ii, p.85, op.cit.
4. ibid., p.85, loc.cit.

In the period between 25th September and 8th October, Macleane broke his bond of secrecy and wrote to a dozen or more of Hastings's supporters, including Palk, Caillaud, Pechell, Vansittart, Du Pré and Sumner. Others, such as Sykes, Becher and Rumbold,[1] he tried to visit, but finding them away left letters for them as well. He even wrote to Woodhouse, the intermediary used by Robinson. Later, many of those who had been absent from London complained that they had not been properly informed about the resignation. Macleane himself admitted that after the meeting on the 1st October at Sion Hill "I was seized with an attack upon my lungs and sore throat, to which I am liable in this climate; it confined me to my chamber for some days and incapacitated me from making those visits I should have done, if I had been well and at liberty to communicate, prior to my delivering in the letter [of resignation]. The omission of these visits has given much offence, and has indisposed many of your pretended friends against me, and one or two of your real friends."[2]

On 9th October the letter of resignation was delivered to the Court of Directors. Macleane, impressed by the lack of fuss, told Hastings:

"How an affair of this consequence, and in so many hands, could have been kept secret for more than six weeks is extraordinary; only two Directors, exclusive of the Chairs [the Chairman and Deputy Chairman] knew it, (Harrison, to whom I asked liberty to mention it, as I had transacted so much of your business with him the preceding year; and Wheler, to whom the Chairs communicated it two days only before it took place); out of doors it was suspected by nobody."[3]

The ministry had achieved their ends, or very nearly. One last formality

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1. Thomas Rumbold (1736-1791), later (1779) created a Baronet. He entered the Company's service in 1752 and, after distinguishing himself at the retaking of Calcutta, he acted as Clive's A.D.C. at Plassey in 1757, when he was badly wounded. He was North's choice for Governor of Madras in 1775, but was passed over by the Company in favour of Pigot, much to the ministry's indignation. At the May 1776 ballot he had supported Hastings and had spoken on his behalf. See Gleig, ii, p.62.
2. Gleig, ii, p.86, op.cit.
3. ibid., p.87. Harrison and Wheler were the two Directors who had been mainly responsible for the appointment of Pigot as Governor of Madras in 1775.

remained, and that was to establish Macleane's authority to sign an instrument of resignation on behalf of Hastings. After handing in the letter of resignation on 9th October, Macleane was told by the Directors that it would be taken into consideration two days later. In his report to Hastings of the events on 11th October, Macleane wrote:

"The Chairman acquainted me the Court wished to ask me some questions relative to my instructions, and the nature of my powers. I answered that 'I hoped the Court knew me too well to suspect me capable of taking a step of the nature I had done without authority for it. That, however, if the Court would be satisfied with my explaining my authority to three of their body, I was ready to do it, but I did not hold myself at liberty to make a public official communication of the papers I had to show, as they contained among other things some confidential matters.' The Court unanimously agreed to this proposition. Mr.Becher was appointed to attend the two Chairs. I showed them in confidence the two papers in your hand; and told them the reasons why I had so long broken your instructions, and why I thought myself bound to obey them now. ...

Mr.Becher replied: 'Since the spirit of resigning is so strong in him, I am sure we have given him reason enough to put it in execution by our letters of last season. But,' said he, 'have you no instrument saying I, Warren Hastings, authorize you, &c'. I answered: 'No; I believe neither Mr.Hastings nor any of those who were present thought it a matter of so much formality; if certain things were not obtained, I was ordered not to make this signification. But these orders were so strict and positive, that I entreated and with some difficulty obtained some latitude as to the time and mode of notifying this intention. I have now notified to you Mr.Hastings's wish to have a successor appointed, and no blame can lie with me now but that of having ventured so long to delay it.' Mr.Becher asked who was present [at the Calcutta briefing]. I replied: 'Mr.Graham and Mr.Vansittart heard me receive my instructions; they were communicated to Mr.Stewart next morning.' I was desired to withdraw. In a few minutes I was called in, and told the Court of Directors wished to see Mr.Vansittart and Mr.Stewart on the Wednesday following, when I was requested to attend again. ...

On Wednesday, 16th October, Mr.Vansittart, Mr.Stewart and I again attended the Court of Directors. The Chairs and Mr.Becher, as at first, carried us into one of the committee-rooms, and after ascertaining what I had before related,

we withdrew till they drew up a paper containing the substance of what each had said. The paper was read to us, and we took our leave. The same day a letter to the Secretary of State signifying that Mr.Hastings, for the reasons contained in it, had intimated a desire to resign, and praying that His Majesty would be pleased to appoint Mr.Wheler to fill up the vacancy that would be occasioned in Council when Mr.Hastings resigned the Chair, &c. This letter was signed by all the Directors present, twenty-two."[1]

The Indian career of Warren Hastings was, it would seem, finished, and with it the bitter dispute in Bengal. Before the opening of the new session of Parliament, North and Robinson had achieved all their goals. Through the astuteness of Robinson, the storm that was bound to break, among those at India House who had been supporting Hastings, when the news of the resignation became public would be directed against the Company in general and Lauchlin Macleane in particular; and Parliament, freed from the unwanted intrusion of East Indian business, would be left clear in the next few months to deal with the pressing problems in North America.

The storm broke quickly. On 20th November, at a General Court of Proprietors called on Special Affairs, Governor Johnstone, one of the nine Proprietors at whose request the Court had been called, opened a fierce debate, challenged the validity of the resignation, and the appointment of Wheler in Hastings's place, accused the Directors of "yielding to the influence of the ministry, and

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1. Gleig, ii, pp.87-89 (quoting L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 10 November 1776). One of the two documents which Macleane handed to the Resignation Committee was undoubtedly Hastings's Instructions to his Agents (see APPENDIX 3). This document, which was discovered by Dr.L.S.Sutherland, settles the long dispute over the existence of Graham and Macleane's authority for resigning Hastings's office. Although Graham had died, Macleane as the remaining agent had every right to present this document as one of his credentials, and his explanation for his care in using it, which he repeated before a Special General Court of Proprietors on 20th November 1776, makes sense. He was undoubtedly telling the whole truth, and John Stewart and George Vansittart, when asked to corroborate the verbal instructions given by Hastings in Calcutta, were also undoubtedly telling the truth. The fact that Lauchlin Macleane had no specific instruction worded in the way outlined by Richard Becher did not invalidate his authority or powers of discretion, which had been given verbally. Later, it suited Hastings to use this loophole to disavow Macleane's act, and as Hastings has been given the benefit of the doubt by his biographers, it has nearly always been held that Macleane exceeded his powers. This view is no longer tenable.

predicted their utter ruin, as well as that of the nation, from the same cause, alleging that this late transaction now laid the Company absolutely at their feet."[1] In reply, the proceedings of the handing-in and acceptance of the resignation were read from the minutes of the Court of Directors, and it was announced that Edward Wheler's appointment had already been confirmed by the King under the Sign Manual. Next, "Mr.Macleane, in a concise and manly speech, explained to the Court the part he took in the business,"[2] and when the issue was taken to the vote, Governor Johnstone's motion for declaring the resignation illegal was defeated by 107 to 38. In Governor Johnstone, Macleane had found a new and dangerous enemy. Attitudes were bound to be extreme. A month earlier on 18th October, just after the resignation, Sulivan had written to Hastings:

"The battle is at last ended with the preservation of your honour and fame, your friends restored, and the Ministry and the Company disposed to receive you with every mark of respect. Much is due to Mr.Pechell, but the main spring has been Mr.Maclean [sic], the whole negotiation conducted by him alone, and so to his singular abilities and firmness we owe this happy issue."[3]

When John Stewart wrote to Hastings on 31st October he was even more lavish in his praises:

"The whole was in the hands of Macleane, who, I must own, has in the management shown an activity, address, boldness, perseverance, and knowledge of mankind, beyond even what I, partial as I am to him, could have conceived him to possess."[4]

Sykes and several more of Hastings's supporters thought quite differently. They ignored the fact that Macleane had tried to reach them either personally or by letter before he delivered the letter of resignation to the Directors, and they accused him of treachery. Neither the eulogies of Sulivan and Stewart

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1. P.A., 22 November 1776, Report of the Special General Court of Proprietors held on 20 November 1776.
2. ibid., loc.cit.
3. B.M.Add.MSS.29137, f.408, L.Sulivan to W.Hastings, 18 October 1776.
4. Gleig, ii, p.92 (quoting J.Stewart to W.Hastings, 31 October 1776).

nor the condemnation of Sykes appear to be wholly justified. Macleane obtained satisfactory terms for Hastings's supporters in India (ostentatiously excluding himself), but virtually nothing for Hastings himself. It is possible that no better terms could have been extracted, and that Macleane was right to accept Eden's assurance to this effect; but it must be admitted that he made no attempt to get better terms, that the ministry were more anxious for a settlement than he believed, and that those who negotiated with Lord North's Administration usually found that stiffness paid. Since, in fact, the resignation never took place, because Hastings refused to ratify Macleane's act, Hastings was no loser by these terms, nor was the ministry a gainer, but this did not excuse the half-hearted negotiations.

In view of Macleane's reputation for skill, nerve and also, it must be said, for dishonesty, it is not surprising that as time went on suspicions began to arise that his pliancy was explicable as treachery rather than incompetence; and some substance seemed to be given to these suspicions by the sudden improvement of his relations with Robinson over the Nabob of Arcot's affairs, and the success he began to enjoy in the field he now considered to hold out his own best prospects for the future. Nevertheless, although this new turn of events may have arisen as a result of his meetings with Robinson over the resignation question in September, the history of the negotiations as a whole does not suggest that the terms agreed on could have been appreciably affected by what went on at these meetings. For the terms were outlined before Robinson intervened in the negotiations, and even while Eden was managing them Macleane had so little personal contact with him that opportunities for bargaining were small. Moreover, the terms were discussed in detail with Hastings's closest friends, and though some of them (like John Stewart) had their personal futures at stake and others (like Alexander Elliot) may have been influenced by other personal considerations such as family relationships,

most of them were disinterested, and some of them were men of considerable experience.

Macleane told Hastings that the negotiation was "the most difficult and delicate transaction of my life." [1] There seems no reason to think that he did not believe that he had done all that was possible for Hastings.

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1. Gleig, ii, p.91, op.cit.

CHAPTER 8 - The Arcot Interest and the Pigot Scandal: Nov.1776 to June 1777.

As indicated at the end of the last chapter, although there can be little doubt that Macleane behaved honourably, if not always unwisely, in dealing with Hastings's resignation, the idea has persisted to the present day that he sacrificed Hastings's interests to those of the Nabob of Arcot. Many things seem to support this view, not least of all the emphasis which Macleane gave to the Nabob's affairs after November 1776. This was not, however, as sinister as it appeared. After the resignation had been accepted, and Wheler appointed to fill the vacancy left by Hastings's presumed departure from Bengal, there was not much to be done except to wait for the reactions from India, about which apprehension was felt, even by North and Robinson, soon after the negotiations were concluded.[1] But the impression which Macleane's activities for the Nabob gave the public did not reflect the whole truth. He did maintain his agency for Hastings, and watched over his interests when necessary.

Indeed, the incident of the resignation was by no means closed, and remained a preoccupation of Macleane's for the rest of his life. For, on the one hand, the resignation had the unintentional effect of prolonging Hastings's career in India, since he was able, though at the expense of a good deal of embarrassment, to repudiate it. On the other hand, the sudden collapse of his cause lost him much of the support he had gained in the Company in England and among the Parliamentary opposition when his friends had been struggling against the Administration; and his supporters soon became sharply divided. One of the first to turn against him was that loud-voiced and unreliable politician, Governor George Johnstone. Even before that, however, Macleane himself had reason to fear that the ministry had been cheating him.

On 9th November the London Gazette announced that General Clavering had

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1. Davies, pp.217-218.

been made a Knight of the Order of the Bath, which sent Lauchlin Macleane and John Stewart post-haste down to Portsmouth to catch the Rippon Indiaman before it sailed.[1] With them went William Macintosh, Macleane's former plantations manager in the West Indies, who was put on board with a secret dispatch for Hastings. It was a joint dispatch, and bore the date 13th November.

"I look," wrote Macleane in his section of the dispatch, "upon the honour conferred on General Clavering as so direct a breach of the spirit of the compromise, that unless an adequate honour is conferred on you you ought not to resign. And it is further my opinion, that your taking this step will be so far from reflecting dishonour on you or me, that it is the only measure which can save us both from appearing in the light of dupes."[2]

Stewart in his section said that they would

"treat it as a breach of engagement, and to demand for you an Irish peerage or a title of baronet as an equivalent. This will be managed as usual by your acting agent, L.M."[3]

Although the announcement of Clavering's knighthood was ill-timed, and open to misinterpretation, it did not have anything to do with the ministry showing a preference for Clavering over Hastings. When Hastings's friends remonstrated with North, he explained that the red ribband had long been promised for past military services, and had been awarded on the persistent representations of General Clavering's brother, Sir Thomas Clavering.[4] Nonetheless, the announcement had the effect of making Macleane reverse his opinion about the

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1. William Macintosh (fl.1745-1798), was born in the West Indies and was the son of a Highland Scottish father and a half-French half-Negro mother. He was an unprincipled scoundrel, an impostor, and an intriguer, but without the finesse or talents of his former employer, Lauchlin Macleane, (for his career see Maclean, passim). He was recommended to Hastings by several people, among them Macleane himself, Sulivan and John Macpherson, (see B.M.Add.MSS.29137, f. 459; B.M.Add.MSS.29139, f.248; and B.M.Add.MSS.29141, f.342). Macpherson had the audacity to tell Hastings that he had recommended Macintosh to Macleane, a lie he would not have told if he had had the slightest knowledge about Macintosh who had worked for Macleane's land syndicate in Dominica for several years. It was, in any case, a bad recommendation, because Macintosh lost no time in defecting to Francis when he reached India. His name is frequently but wrongly given as "Mackintosh".

2. Gleig, ii, p.97 (quoting B.M.Add.MSS.29137, f.459 et seq.)

3. ibid., p.96.

4. B.M.Add.MSS.29138, f.54, L.Sulivan to W.Hastings, 23 December 1776.

resignation, and his courier Macintosh (who changed ships at Madagascar) made such fast time that he arrived in Calcutta ahead of the Rippon, which was carrying the official dispatches concerning the resignation.[1] Thus, by another instance of Macleane's misjudgment of the ministry, Hastings was warned not to resign before Clavering and Francis even knew that his resignation had been arranged.

On 20th November, Macleane made no reference to his changed opinions on the resignation when he spoke at the Special General Court, but merely affirmed all he had done in October,[2] an indication that by this date he had been reassured that Clavering's knighthood was not intended as an insult to Hastings, and that he had been advised not to make an issue of the matter. In the next long dispatch to Hastings, which he again sent from Portsmouth, Macleane made a passing comment on the honour. The letter was written on 4th January 1777, following another severe bout of illness, caused by inflammation of the lungs.

"I have come down here," he said, "merely to put the copies of my last letters into safe hands. ... After our return from Portsmouth in November, Stewart and I wrote a short letter[3] by the Company dispatch overland, acquainting you of the state of the Courts that had been called to dispute the regularity of what had been done in your affairs. ... Since that time there has been a profound silence on the affairs of Bengal, as if nothing interesting to the publick had ever happened there. But I have every assurance from the Administration, who are highly pleased with your conduct, and that of your friends, that your reception will be as gracious as your most sanguine friends could wish."[4]

He went on to say that under the pressure of the opinion of Hastings's friends he had now modified his view that no honour should be conferred on Hastings himself. It is evident that he had started belatedly to press not for

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1. W.Hastings to L.Sulivan, 29 June 1777 (printed Gleig, ii, p.162).
2. P.A., 22 November 1776.
3. B.M.Add.MSS.29137, f.496, L.Macleane & J.Stewart to W.Hastings, 26 Nov.1776.
4. B.M.Add.MSS.29138, ff.96-99, L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 4 January 1777.

a peerage for Hastings but at least a baronetcy to offset the red ribband given to Clavering. But it was too late for him to exert any bargaining power, and though with his customary optimism he informed Hastings that "I think the ship which carries Wheler out will carry the baronetcy with him,"[1] he also indicated that the government were in no way committed to the step. "Woodhouse," he wrote, "has desired that the honour from the Crown,..as a counterbalance to the General's ribband, may be left to his solicitations."[2] Needless to say, no more was heard of it. On the other hand, the reinstatement of his friends under the terms of the late agreement[3] ~~still seemed possible.~~ was still going forward.

More important than the tail-end of the arrangements for the resignation were the negotiations into which Macleane now entered on behalf of his other patron, the Nabob of Arcot, and here it soon became abundantly clear that, with the question of Hastings's resignation for the time being out of the way, he was able, with the assistance of James Macpherson, to gain access to Robinson and through him indirect access to North and the King, which he had not been able to gain before. In achieving this he was also helped by the evidence reaching England of mounting tension in Madras as Lord Pigot began to implement his policy there.

The failure to face the problems of Madras at the time when the Regulating Act was passed, despite the fact that the government had for at least five years been alive to the unsatisfactory relations there between the Nabob and the Company's officials, and of the real danger that these might open up a

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29138, ff.96-99, op.cit.
2. ibid., loc.cit.
3. ibid., loc.cit. Macleane wrote: "The 22nd of this month [January 1777] is appointed for bringing on Stewart's question. I imagine he will go out Judge Advocate again, and a member of the Council of Commerce. Lord North seems averse to his getting the Secretaryship again." This statement does not make sense. By January 1777 John Stewart's hopes of being re-appointed Judge Advocate General had gone. On 23 November 1776 the P.A. had announced that "John Day, Esq., of the Middle Temple, is appointed by the India Company, Advocate General in Bengal, with a salary of 3000 l. per annum." Day was made a knight soon afterwards, and he left for Bengal in July 1777 (see I.O.L., Court Book 86, pp.194-196). John Stewart was appointed to the Board of Trade in 1777, but did not live to take up the position in India. He died in 1778.

field for French intervention, was one of the weakest spots in the ministry's East India policy. The appointment of Lord Pigot in 1775 as Governor of Madras in the teeth of the ministry's declared preference for Thomas Rumbold, instead of stimulating them to greater watchfulness, led them to an attitude of sullen pique, and they made no attempt to examine the reversal of Company policy as between the Nabob of Arcot and his feudatory the Rajah of Tanjore, which Pigot himself proposed and which the Directors accepted. The implementation of this policy caused, however, violent reactions in Madras from the Nabob, and the large body of Company servants in the Presidency who had relations with him, and who for the most part were his creditors with a strong interest in the maintenance of his power. Pigot's dismissal of John Macpherson on the grounds of (among other things) ~~of~~ improper relations with the Nabob was only one of the spectacular results of the controversy. These circumstances gave Macleane's position as spokesman for the Nabob in England a new importance. The open breach between Pigot and the majority of the Madras Council which led first to his (quite illegal) dismissal of them, and then to their (even more illegal) arrest and imprisonment of him, the so-called Pigot Scandal[1] which became known in England in March 1777, brought Macleane into the midst of one of the biggest controversies on East Indian affairs of this period.

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1. For the Pigot Scandal see Love, iii, pp.84-122 (the longest published account) but for a full picture this must be read in conjunction with information in the I.O.L., Madras Consultations 1776-1778; N.L.S., Stuart-Stevenson MSS; Sheffield City Library, The Diary of Sophia Pigot (Lord Pigot's illegitimate daughter); and Bod., Pamphlet: Defence of Lord Pigot, [John Lind], 1777. The members of the Madras majority were: George Stratton (Second in Council), Henry Brooke, Sir Robert Fletcher (C-in-C at Madras), Charles Floyer, Archdale Palmer, Francis Jourdan (Benfield's close friend), and George Mackay (Stratton's brother-in-law, Orme's close friend, and the oldest member of Council). The officers concerned in the arrest and imprisonment of Pigot were: Colonel James Stuart (Andrew Stuart's brother and Macleane's friend), Lt.Colonel James Edington (also called Eidingtoun, the Adjutant General of Madras), Captain Arthur Lysaght (C.O. of 7th Madras Sepoy Battn., and younger brother of 1st Lord Lisle), Sergeant George Shaw (Provost Sgt. of 7th Madras Sepoy Battn), and Major Matthew Horne (C.O. of the Corps of Madras Artillery), who acted as Pigot's jailer. The arrest was carried out under Col.James Stuart's supervision on 24th August 1776 and Pigot's supporters in Council, Claud Russell, Alexander Dalrymple and John Maxwell Stone, were suspended by the Madras majority on the following day.

The part which Macleane played in these events falls into two periods. In the first, before the news of the Madras coup d'état was received, he was occupied in negotiations with the government to persuade them to intervene in the Company on the Nabob's behalf, and in propaganda to make known the Nabob's grievances. Here he was on the verge of some success, when the startling news from Madras threw everything into confusion, and forced him to defend himself, the Nabob and also his other patron Warren Hastings against the violent accusations of those supporting the cause of Lord Pigot.

It is clear that from December 1776 at the latest the ministry were pressing measures on the Directors, which would modify the Company's policy with regard to Tanjore and which would re-establish some degree of goodwill in Madras until the question of its future settlement could be considered when the Regulating Act and the Company's Charter were due for revision. It was hoped to begin considering this re-organisation in the coming year. It is also clear that the majority of the Directors were unwilling to reverse their policy. As early as 17th December George Vansittart informed Hastings that Macleane was busy with negotiations on the Nabob's behalf "and has strong assurances that the Country of Tanjore shall be restored to him,"[1] and at about the same time Macleane sent North his long statement of the Nabob's case.[2] On 28th December Robert Palk, usually well-informed, reported that Macleane had won the support of "the King and Minister [North]"[3], but that the Directors were proving obdurate. Macleane's own characteristically optimistic view of the situation was expressed in the letter he sent Hastings on 4th January. He wrote:

"It will not, I am sure, be displeasing to you to hear that Administration

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29138, f.17v., G.Vansittart to W.Hastings, 17 December 1776.
2. See APPENDIX 2.
3. B.M.Add.MSS.29138, f.70, R.Palk to W.Hastings, 28 December 1776. The Nabob counted on Palk's support. Admiral Sir Edward Hughes, Harland's successor as Commodore of Royal Navy forces in Indian waters, told Palk in a letter he sent on 26 September 1776 "I am glad you assist Mr.Macleane. It is my opinion, had that gentleman been at home sooner, the orders respecting Tanjore had ne'er been obtained." (see H.M.C./Palk MSS., p.302). Palk did not, however, back up Macleane's efforts in 1777.

have at last taken up the cause of the Nabob of Arcot. It is determined to support him in the possession of Tanjore, and to annul the orders given to Lord Pigot, and everything he has done in consequence of them. He is exceedingly blamed here for having not only put his orders in execution after he found they were grounded on false information, but for having demeaned himself towards the Nabob with unprecedented severity and disrespect. It is thought his Lordship will be recalled. The King is much provoked at the attack upon Government by the dismission of Mr.[John] Macpherson."[1]

Nevertheless, the Directors remained unwilling to reverse their policy, and propositions brought forward by their Committee of Correspondence on 12th February 1777, with ministerial backing, were not accepted. The day before they came before the Court Macleane had also submitted his "Paper purporting to be a declaration in the name of the Nabob.. also a copy of the Treaty of 1762 between the Nabob of Arcot and the King of Tanjore, to which the Company was guarantee"[2], but this too was ignored. On 27th February George Vansittart reported that the majority of the Directors remained unconvinced[3], but that Macleane believed his own views had ministerial backing and, if so, he was sure to prevail in the end. By 10th March Laurence Sulivan, though still on the whole optimistic, expressed some uneasiness lest Macleane had been duped. Just before the receipt of the news of the <u>coup d'état</u>, however, all difficulties appeared to have been resolved. As Robinson told the King a few days later:

"Mr.Robinson, in consequence of the papers delivered by Mr.Macleane, after several meetings with the Directors, had suggested, for their consideration, a draught of a paragraph to be sent out to Madras, as a temporary expedient, until some final decision was made, & as a measure that might prevent further mischiefs, and enable the Company to go on during the continuance of their Charter. This underwent much discussion in the Court of Directors, and when there was a probability that the measure might take place, Mr.Dalrymple's letter [with the news of the upheaval in Madras] arrived, which again threw the business into confusion."[4]

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29138, ff.96-99, L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 4 January 1777.
2. I.O.L., Court Book 86, p.88.
3. Bod., Vansittart Papers, Dep.b.103 (Pt.2), p.4.
4. <u>Fortescue</u>, iii, p.433, J.Robinson to George III, 21 March 1777.

All that is known of Robinson's proposal is contained in Vansittart's letter[1] of 18th March, which informed Hastings that it involved the setting up of Commissioners[2] at Madras to deal with the topics under dispute, one of whom was to represent the Nabob's interests. If the Commissioner to represent the Nabob's interests was to be, as might seem likely, Macleane himself, it would show that his activity on behalf of the Nabob had not at this time seriously alienated the Directors. It might, however, well have done so, because Macleane assisted by James Macpherson had supported his representations to the ministry by a vigorously organised publicity campaign on behalf of the Nabob, in which he did not hesitate to attack both the Company's servants in Madras and the Directors. In January, a press campaign, mostly in the form of letters to the Public Advertiser[3] was launched, some, if not most, of which were written by personal friends of Lauchlin Macleane and James Macpherson, such as John Stuart of Hampstead and Hugh Macaulay-Boyd.[4] On 30th January a full-dress pamphlet,

1. B.M.Add.MSS.29138, f.249v., G.Vansittart to W.Hastings, 18 March 1777. It should be noted that Robinson's proposal did not contain a clear-cut measure for the restoration of Tanjore to the Nabob of Arcot.
2. Later, the Company considered the idea of a Commission. On 5th April 1777, John Manship, a Director and an outstanding supporter of the Company's rights, wrote to the Public Advertiser offering to serve as a member of a five-man Commission of Supervisors, which, he said, "seems now to be the mode likely to be adopted by the Court for restoring tranquility at Madras." Manship must have been an extremely callous man, for when he offered his services in India his wife was dying. She died on 6 May "after a very long and severe fit of illness" (obit., P.A., 7 May 1777). The idea of a Commission never came to anything.
3. The first pro-Nabob letter was unsigned (P.A., 31 December 1776), and was a general review of the Tanjore problem. Campbell, i, p.208, states that at the beginning of 1777 Hugh Macaulay-Boyd "at the desire of his friends Mr.Lauchlin Macleane..and Mr.[John] Stuart [of Hampstead] he wrote one or two letters relative to the dispute between the East India Company and Mohammed Ali Khan, the Nabob of Arcot,..which appeared in the Public Advertiser." Others in the same paper were the series of "Tanjore Letters" - No.1 (24 Jan.1777); No.2 (27 Jan.1777); No.3 (28 Jan.1777); No.4 (29 Jan.1777); and No.5 (30 Jan.1777); as well as those on 10 & 11 Feb.1777 by "Hindoostanus" (a former pseudonym of John Macpherson), and by "Pondicherry" (13 Feb.1777) and "Le Bourdonnais" (3 Mar.1777).
4. Hugh Macaulay-Boyd (1746-1794), second son of Dr.Alexander Macaulay, K.C., M.P. for Thomastown, an Ulster-Scot. He assumed the additional surname Boyd in 1765 on the death of his maternal grandfather, Col.Hugh Boyd of Ballycastle. He was a contemporary and friend of Henry Macleane at Trinity College, Dublin, with whom he re-established contact when he came to London in 1766 to study law at the Middle Temple. His elder brother, Alexander Macaulay, also of the Middle Temple, was a very close friend of both James and John Macpherson.

anonymous, but in fact written by James Macpherson on material supplied by Macleane came out, entitled A Letter from Mohammed Ali Chan, Nabob of Arcot, to the Court of Directors, to which is annexed a State of Facts relative to Tanjore, with an Appendix of Original Papers.[1] A still further pamphlet, entitled Original Papers relative to Tanjore,[2] also inspired by Macleane, and probably written by Hugh Macaulay-Boyd, was in the press when the news of Pigot's arrest arrived in England and came out, rather unfortunately for Macleane, on 22nd March. Both these pamphlets and other material were transmitted by Robinson to the King on Lord North's instructions.[3]

The receipt of the news of Pigot's arrest cut sharply across these activities The effects were immediate and varied. In the first place the news interrupted the ministerial negotiations with the Directors, and in the second place it immediately rallied the supporters of Lord Pigot in the Company and in the Parliamentary opposition; (his brother, Admiral Hugh Pigot,[4] was a member of the Rockingham group). In the third place it crystallised hostility to the Nabob of Arcot, who was throughout believed (probably correctly despite his denials) to have been privy to the actions of the rebellious Madras majority, and whose second son was, in the first reports received, accused of actually plotting Pigot's assassination - an accusation which was later dropped.[5] In the fourth

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1. Hereafter called State of Facts. It was printed by Thomas Cadell in the Strand for 3/-d, and he advertised it on the day of publication in P.A.
2. Hereafter called Original Papers. It was advertised in a letter from a writer signing himself "A Proprietor" in P.A., 25 March 1777 (Tuesday), and he gave the publication day as "Saturday last"; i.e. 22 March 1777. Campbell, i, p.208, states that in early 1777 Hugh Macaulay-Boyd "wrote a pamphlet explanatory of the conduct of the Nabob."
3. Fortescue, iii, p.433 et seq.
4. Hugh Pigot (1722-1792), was the youngest brother of George, Lord Pigot.
5. Capt.William Randall, the former A.D.C. to Amir-ul-Umara, who had been dismissed from his service, swore an affidavit before John Turing, Mayor of Madras on 19 September 1776, stating that Amir had proposed that he should kill Pigot personally. When this idea was rejected Amir had the idea of giving Pigot a tiger as a gift in the hope that the tiger would kill him, and when this ludicrous idea was dropped Amir suggested that Kumara (Paul Benfield's dubash or agent) should be employed to poison Pigot's food. (see Love, iii, p.101). There is no evidence to support Randall's accusations, but the Nabob did pay Brahmins to perform incantations with cobras for Pigot's death.

place there soon began to arrive the reports of the Bengal Supreme Council's decision on the Madras rebellion,[1] and particularly of the views of Hastings on the affair. The Council accepted the coup d'état as an accomplished fact, and their sympathies were on the whole unmistakably with the Madras majority rather than with Governor Pigot.[2] Thus, Bengal as well as Madras became involved in the controversy which followed, and Macleane as agent for the Nabob became open to attack, and also found himself once again concerned with Hastings's affairs.

The news of the Madras rebellion became generally known throughout London on 17th March, and two days later the Public Advertiser reported the contents of dispatches now en route from Marseilles (they had come on H.M.S. Swallow as far as Suez). When the Court of Directors met on 24th March to discuss the dispatches, Admiral Hugh Pigot, Governor George Johnstone and seven other Proprietors demanded a General Court to discuss this startling news.[3] On the same day a Committee of Directors was set up to consider both James Macpherson's State of Facts and the recently published Original Papers as attacks upon the Company. The General Court was called for 26th March, and before it met the Directors unanimously resolved that they had been very ill-treated in these pamphlets, and that they would ask the General Court to defer any judgment on their past actions until they should have made up their case against these anonymous publications.[4] Feeling against Macleane, to whom they were generally attributed, was already mounting high.

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1. Hastings told Admiral Sir Edward Hughes: "I feel a great repugnance to join in personal severities against any men while I suffer, and have long suffered, so much from persecutions and indignities offered me by others (the Bengal majority)." (quoted Feiling, p.168).
2. For once all the members of the Bengal Supreme Council were in agreement. On 10th September 1776 they upheld the constitutional right of the majority over the minority in Council at Madras, censured the "intemperate conduct of Lord Pigot," acknowledged the "title and authority" of Stratton as Governor, and promised to support his rule "by all the means which you may require from us." (Love, iii, p.102, quoting Bengal Supreme Council (all members signing) to The Hon. George Stratton, President of the Council of Madras, 10 September 1776; text of this letter first published in England in P.A., 29 March 1777). The Bengal Supreme Court, on 19 October 1776, refused to give a legal opinion.
3. I.O.L., Court Book 85, p.650 et seq.
4. ibid.

The General Court when it met was crowded and stormy. Great indignation was expressed at the pamphlets Macleane had inspired, and it was made clear that he was believed to be the author of the Original Papers which had so recently appeared. Keane Fitzgerald, an Irish Proprietor, demanded that he should be dismissed from the Company's service, and Governor Johnstone, already hostile to him for his part in Hastings's resignation, attacked him violently.[1] It was decided without a ballot to publish a condemnation in all the public newspapers of the two offending pamphlets. The main purpose of those calling the General Court was, however, to demand the immediate reinstatement of Lord Pigot, and an enquiry into the conduct of the Madras majority and the army officers who assisted them.[2] Though both George Wombwell, one of the leading ministerialist Directors, and Macleane, in a full and well argued speech, pleaded for further time for investigation before hasty measures were taken, the "party formed by Lord Pigot's friends were clamorous and noisy"[3] and the Court as a whole was obviously greatly in their favour. All the ministerial supporters could do was to demand a ballot to give time for more thought, and this was fixed for 31st March.

The interval before the ballot was filled with several developments. In

1. P.A., 28 March 1777, Report of the General Court held on 26 March 1777. The accuracy of this report was challenged by Governor Johnstone in the same paper on 31 March, but he was refuted on 4 April by "A Proprietor" and on 5 April by "A.B.", also in the P.A. "A.B." sent many Company reports to the P.A. in 1776 and 1777; it was a pseudonym associated with the notorious "Junius" several years earlier, (see Junius, ed:John Wade, London, 1850, ii, pp.277-280, 385-7). As both the refutations were partly defences of Lauchlin Macleane or Colonel James Stuart, they were probably the works of one of their friends.

2. Colonel James Stuart, who organised the arrest of Pigot, wrote to his brother Andrew Stuart on 2nd October 1776, and asked: "If Macleane or Whiteford [sic] are in town I beg you to secure them to assist in the Department of the Newspapers to guard against Dalrymple's pen, who is Pigot's envoy."(see N.L.S., Stuart-Stevenson MSS., 5387, f.23). Caleb Whitefoord was a political writer, and Alexander Dalrymple, one of Pigot's supporters on the Madras Council, had come to England as Pigot's agent. James Stuart insisted on a court-martial (ibid., 5387/73/63), and was defended by his brother Andrew in a pamphlet in 1778 called simply A Letter to the Honourable Directors of the East India Coy.

3. B.M.Add.MSS.37833, f.186v., J.Robinson to George III, 26 March 1777.

the first place Macleane himself burned his boats with the Company. The Directors' condemnation of the two pamphlets appeared in the newspapers on 28th March.[1] The day after Macleane retorted by publishing in the same papers a long advertisement[2] challenging the condemnation, and admitting his part in their production. "The pamphlets," he asserted, "can no longer be considered as anonymous; for I avow having furnished all the materials of which they are composed,"[3] and for the first time he publicly signed himself "L.Macleane, Agent for the Nabob of Arcot", giving his address as 'Poland Street".[4] On 31st March he notified the Directors that he abandoned all claim to reinstatement as a Company servant.[5]

This was a declaration of war on the Nabob's account and his own. More significant, however, was the action of the ministry. Robinson, though no doubt disturbed by the upsetting of his plans, did not give up the attempt to get through the Court of Directors some settlement of the now more urgent than ever Madras troubles.[6] He began before the General Court met. His letter to George III, written at 11 p.m. on 21st March, makes it clear that he lost no time in renewing his negotiations with the Directors. After talks with several individuals,[7] he had a meeting with "several of the leaders", and, subject to the approval of North (who was ill) and the King, it was agreed to put before the Court as a whole a proposition, which probably combined part of his earlier plans with new ones made necessary by the change in circumstances.

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1. See APPENDIX 4 (A).
2. See APPENDIX 4 (B).
3. ibid.
4. ibid. It was rare for Macleane to make a public disclosure of his address, because he was afraid of being located by some of his creditors. Poland Street was a slum. Shortly before this time he had been living in Berkeley Street, a very elegant thoroughfare, which indicated that he was getting very short of money. Even in the very bad period after the 1769 stock crash he had managed to keep up appearances.
5. I.O.L., Court Book 85, p.675, 31 March 1777.
6. B.M.Add.MSS.37833, f.180, J.Robinson to George III, 21 March 1777.
7. ibid., f.180v., loc.cit.

It was proposed to put the affairs of Madras under the direct control of the Governor General and Council of Bengal (it was still believed that this Governor General would be Clavering) and to send a special messenger overland to notify them. It was also agreed to deal with the immediate crisis by making an attempt after the General Court of 26th March (if it could be agreed at the Court) to recall both Pigot and his opponents, and that Rumbold, who was about to sail as Second in Council at Madras and ultimate successor of Pigot, should "be assisted with a council of four persons totally unconnected with the settlement of Madras, or interested in the disputes there; two of such council to be taken from the Board of Trade at Bengal, and two from the Council at Bombay."[1] Colonel Hector Munro[2] was to take over military command at Madras; "by these means, if possible, to re-establish the Company's government there during the continuance of their present Charter, and to prevent the fatal consequences which must arise not only to the Company but to the publick, if such distractions should continue, and if the French should be in force to take advantage of such dissensions."[3] It may be noted that there was no reference to any role for Macleane in these arrangements, but in view of what happened later, this need not mean that he saw no place for himself there. The King and North warmly endorsed these proposals, and Robinson proceeded to try to bring them into operation.

Here, however, he ran into the same difficulties as he had met in his earlier negotiations; the Directors were divided, the news of the attitude taken by the Bengal Supreme Council made it difficult to place Madras under the Council's direct authority, and by the time the General Court met on 26th March the

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.37833, f.181v., J.Robinson to George III, 21 March 1777.
2. Hector Munro (1726-1805), a Highland soldier whose early career was marked by success and courage. He joined the Company's army in 1761 as a Major, after serving for several years in Loudon's Highlanders in the British army. He was in command of the victorious troops at Buxar in 1764, and he was knighted in 1779 for his part in the taking of Pondicherry, but although he rose to be Major General his later career was blighted by inertia. He was M.P., Inverness.
3. B.M.Add.MSS.37833, f.181v., op.cit.

Directors had rejected that part of Robinson's plan, and had not finally accepted any other part of it. Consequently, the Directors adopted no firm line at the General Court, and though the ministerial supporters demanded a ballot, Robinson himself was so dispirited at the end of the debate that he was not prepared to make a stand against the Court's decision.[1] It was not altogether surprising therefore that at the ballot the supporters of Lord Pigot won a resounding victory by 382 to 140 votes.

If Robinson was disheartened, however, Macleane was not. After the result of the ballot was declared he made a spirited objection in the General Court that "whether the removal or arrest of Lord Pigot was legal or illegal, the determination of the Court by ballot was equally irregular and invalid. .. The Act of Parliament required three-fourths of the Proprietors, as well as three-fourths of the Directors, to carry his Lordship's restoration; which number had not been gained."[2]

This somewhat doubtful interpretation of the legal position was clearly an individual effort, and he obtained no support. The rest of the debate then degenerated into a wrangle between the supporters of Pigot and those of the Madras majority, in which the attitude of the Governor General and Council of Bengal was also brought up. In the course of this Governor Johnstone launched a vehement attack on Hastings, the opposition in the Company for the first time turning against him, and Macleane did even more harm by springing to his patron's defence by stressing the fact that "Mr.Hastings had not only given his approbation, but the highest applause to the Council of Madras."[3] The link between the cause of Hastings and that of the Nabob of Arcot was thereby firmly forged, to the serious disadvantage of Hastings for many years to come.

After the ballot, the Directors returned to the business of working out a policy for the future, and for implementing the orders of the General Court.

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.37833, f.186, J.Robinson to George III, 26 March 1777.
2. P.A., 4 April 1777, Report of "A Proprietor".
3. ibid., loc.cit.

On 1st April they agreed to meet daily for the purpose. Robinson also renewed his activities. There was talk of direct government intervention if no agreement was reached, and the King enthusiastically supported the plan for recalling both parties to the Madras dispute. "I have not the smallest doubt," he wrote, "but both parties have been stimulated by motives alone of private interest"[1]; and he approved, only because of the uncertainty of East Indian ballots, and "the passive part taken by Administration on the over-hasty step of the General Court of Proprietors to reinstate Lord Pigot."[2] By the time the next General Court met on 11th April, the majority of the Directors had rejected Robinson's plan to set up Commissioners in Madras (by 11 votes to 10), but they had come to no other fixed conclusions. When the Court met all the resolutions[3] put before it were advanced by the friends of Lord Pigot, led by Governor Johnstone and George Rous.[4]

But the inertia of the Directors did not mean that no attempts had been made by the various opponents of Lord Pigot, or that the inertia of the ministerial supporters had continued. This was shown in two ways. Firstly, though the resolutions advanced by Pigot's supporters had as their prime aim his restoration, the punishment of his opponents on the Madras Council, and the establishment of a new Madras Council made up of Pigot's supporters, they also sought to placate the Nabob's friends by the promise "that this Court will consider of proper and effectual measures for supporting the just rights and claims of the Nabob, and the authority of his Government"[5] -(of this promise a supporter of the Nabob wrote: "It would have been better for His Highness had they done it instead of resolving to do it")[6]. Secondly, to meet the views of

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.37833, f.189, George III to J.Robinson, 29 March 1777.
2. ibid., f.191, George III to J.Robinson, 31 March 1777.
3. P.A., 15 April 1777, Report of the General Court held on 11 April 1777; report repeated but without comment or opinion, ibid., 19 April 1777.
4. George Rous (c.1744-1802), M.P., Shaftesbury, and friend of Francis Sykes.
5. P.A., 15 April 1777, Report, op.cit.
6. ibid., anonymous comment on General Court held on 11 April 1777.

the friends of the Madras majority, it was admitted that Pigot's actions had in several cases been "reprehensible".[1] The resolutions themselves, therefore, contained some element of compromise. But much more significant was the fact that, when they were put to the vote, the numbers for and against their adoption were equal, and they passed only by the traditional resource of the Company in such cases, the drawing of lots.

Such a result was obviously not likely to stand, and, after the annual election of Directors five days later, work began again on a further attempt at a settlement.[2] By the time of the Quarterly General Court on 23rd April, an agreement had been hammered out in the Court of Directors which conformed in general terms with the ministry's proposals as Robinson had worked them out in March,[3] though Robinson's plan for a local commission had to be dropped (ten Directors, including the Chairman, however, registering their votes for it). Pigot was to be restored,[4] as voted previously, but was to be recalled by the first ship together with his opponents.[5] When the Court met it was it was unanimously adjourned until 7th May to give time for the propositions to be printed and digested.

The General Court of 7th May provided the battleground between the parties. Great efforts were made on both sides, and more than 700 Proprietors were brought together at India House. The supporters of Pigot both in the Company and the House of Commons exerted all their influence, and they collected their friends from every quarter of the Kingdom. On the other side, the ministry

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1. P.A., 15 April 1777, report, op.cit.
2. A full Report of the Quarterly General Court held on 23 April 1777, printed in P.A., 25 April 1777.
3. B.M.Add.MSS.29138, ff.342-343, G.Vansittart to W.Hastings, 21 April 1777.
4. P.A., 2 April 1777, Report of Ballot held on 31 March 1777, when at the General Court held that day Pigot's supporters won a victory by 382 to 140 votes.
5. P.A., 15 April 1777, report, op.cit. For the final form which the resolutions of 11 April 1777 took, see Love, iii, pp.103-105, where the orders of 11 June 1777 are printed in full.

called up its troops, their enemies said "from the most distant parts of the Kingdom, from the dockyards of Portsmouth, Chatham and Plymouth; from Bristol, Liverpool, Newcastle and the County of Huntingdon."[1] They were supported by the Directors' 'Household Troops', by the opposition party in the Company who followed Laurence Sulivan,[2] and by those connected with the Arcot Interest whom Macleane brought into action. They also seem to have been followed by the supporters of the Madras majority, who could obviously make no junction with those of Pigot. On the other hand, Macleane's attempts to rally Hastings's friends was less successful.[3] Though some of them, including Sulivan, went the whole way, among others the ill-feeling that had accompanied the resignation reinforced their judgment (a sound one) that it was against Hastings's true interests to identify his cause with that of the Nabob or the Madras majority.

Nevertheless, the General Court of 7th May was one of the biggest and most stirring in the Company's history.[4] Sir Herbert Mackworth,[5] a strong supporter of Administration, led off, and among those speaking in support of him were Lauchlin Macleane and his friends John Stewart, the former Secretary of the Bengal Council, John Stuart of Hampstead, and Hugh Macaulay-Boyd. After prolonged debates a vote was taken by show of hands, and it seemed that the propositions had been defeated; but nine supporters of the ministry and the Directors demanded a ballot, and on 9th May the propositions were carried at the ballot by 414 to 317 votes.[6] It was a decisive victory, comparable to that

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1. Parl.Hist., xix, p.276.
2. Examination of the Arcot Interest is the subject of a D.Phil thesis by Mr. J.D.Gurney of St.Edmund Hall, Oxford.
3. Gleig, ii, p.103 (quoting B.M.Add.MSS.29138, f.401 et seq., L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 12 May 1777) - "It gave me much uneasiness that I could not persuade many of your friends to give their assistance, or to think that they were anywise concerned in the issue. I cannot account for this.."
4. P.A., 9 May 1777, Report of the General Court held on 7 May 1777. See also I.O.L., Court Book 86, pp.73-75.
5. Sir Herbert Mackworth (1737-1791), a Baronet, and M.P. for Cardiff.
6. P.A., 10 May 1777, Report of Ballot held on previous day. See also I.O.L., Court Book 86, pp.77-80.

won for Hastings against the Administration the year before, but this time won by the Administration assisted by many of those who had opposed it twelve months earlier. The King expressed his delight at the result, and did so in much the same terms as he used in welcoming the news of the arrangements for Hastings's resignation. The result he said "must give pleasure to Lord North as it very fairly gives him ground to keep that unpleasant business out of Parliament."[1]

In this, however, he was over-optimistic, and on this occasion North had to face a full-scale Parliamentary debate. Led by Admiral Pigot and Governor Johnstone the Parliamentary opposition demanded that, Lord Pigot being a Member of Parliament, the papers concerning his arrest and recall be brought before the House of Commons.[2] Suggestions began to appear in the press that the King had become "a pensioner to a foreign power"[3] (the Nabob), and on 22nd May the Commons went into a committee of the whole House on the consideration of the papers. The opposition were mustered in force. Hugh Pigot, George Johnstone, George Rous, Edmund Burke (in two speeches) and Thomas Townshend[4] and Charles James Fox[5] made passionate speeches in defence of Pigot and in condemnation of his opponents, the ministry, the Nabob and his agents, and Hastings and his supporters.[6] Of the agents, Macleane was particularly singled out. "One of them," said George Rous,

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.37833, f.198, George III to J.Robinson, 9 May 1777.
2. On 13 May 1777 George Johnstone notified the Directors "that a motion will be this day made in the House of Commons that the papers relative to the late commotions at Madras may be laid before that House." (I.O.L., Court Book 86, p. 82). These included the ones Macleane had delivered in February.(ibid., p.88).
3. P.A., 15 May 1777, Letter of "An Old Jacobite". This was a sardonic attack on both Lauchlin Macleane and William Markham (1719-1807), Archbishop of York, a friend of Edmund Burke, and a controversial preacher who earlier in the year had attacked the opposition's support for the American cause. The writer was the very reverse of an old Jacobite, a description he had assumed to heighten his satire. His coupling of the names of Macleane and Markham - "Bishop M. and Col. M. are indeed an host, at once the ornament and prop of the throne" - was a way of combining the issues of America and India in two persons who symbolised ministerial policy.
4. Thomas Townshend (1733-1800), later (1783) 1st Viscount Sydney.
5. Charles James Fox, (1749-1806), second son of Henry Fox, 1st Baron Holland.
6. P.A., 23 May 1777, Report of Debate in House of Commons held on previous day. See also: Parl.Hist., xix, p.276 et seq.

"announces himself as the agent of Mr.Hastings. He acts for them, but suddenly throws off the mask and declares himself the agent or ambassador for the Nabob of Arcot. Thus a faction is formed, fomented and nourished in India."[1]

Thomas Townshend went yet further. The Nabob, he said:

"had an Ambassador here, not indeed with any pompous titles, state and parade, but a gentleman of abilities, a Mr.Macleane, who he heard, as soon as he had effected the Nabob's business by the destruction of Lord Pigot, was to return back as Ambassador from the King of Great Britain to the Nabob. It seemed likewise that he had a third master, Mr.Hastings, the avowed enemy of Lord Pigot, tho' once the firm friend; that Mr.Hastings had recommended Mr.Macleane to the Nabob; and it might be fairly concluded from all this, that His Highness and Mr.Hastings were the contrivers of the arrest and imprisonment of Lord Pigot."[2]

The report continued:

"Mr.Townshend was very severe on the ambitious views of the Nabob, and on the supineness of the Company's servants at home; and the influence of the Minister (North) over them; in short, he represented the Majority to have been collected by the Minister's industry for the second resolution of recalling Lord Pigot, adding, that he should not be surprised to see Mr.Macleane, and one Gentleman of the Council who subverted the Government of Madras by the most daring act of violence, brought into Parliament hereafter as Borough Members. So far from thinking Parliament should not interfere, or that the Committee should be broke up on account of the late season, he thought Parliament had not a moment to lose to prevent a Civil War, and the arbitrary power of the Nabob. He had always voted for the Bill for regulating the East India Company, and always should. He thought them competent to manage their trading business, but not to govern large territories independent of the Parliament of Great Britain; and the moment they became influenced by the King's Ministers, which it was evident they were, it was time to interfere."[3]

Edmund Burke, carrying on the same line of argument, suggested that Hastings was preserved from recall because he had:

"the Nabob of Arcot for his friend; a most powerful friend in the Court and Ministry of England; so powerful that for himself, if he wanted any favour of

1. Parl.Hist., xix, pp.276-279.
2. ibid., and P.A., 23 May 1777. This speech printed Sutherland, p.325.
3. ibid., and P.A., 23 May 1777.

great magnitude, he knew of no canvasser he would so much wish for as that Nabob." [1]

Lord North, in reply, scouted these allegations about "the power of the Nabob of Arcot, his intrigues in India and England, and the arts of his agents and ambassadors, as the..ill-founded suggestions of ill-informed or designing men," [2] and other ministerial speakers, including George Wombwell, the recently elected Chairman of the Company, supported him. The debate ended at 1 a.m., and though the weight of oratory was on the opposition side, the motion was defeated by 67 to 90. There were threats of reviving the controversy during the next session, but the issue was, in fact, closed.

Macleane had not done all he wanted, and the status quo in Tanjore had not been re-established; but he had triumphed over the Nabob's most obvious enemies. It was, however, a triumph won at considerable cost to himself and others. The cost to himself was that he had now made a permanent breach with the Company. Eight months later the Directors were paying George Rous 400 guineas for his book refuting the two pamphlets Macleane had inspired, and one he had written himself after 31st March. [3] His hopes of employment in the future now had to depend on either the Nabob or the ministry. The cost to others was different. The activities of Macleane had done much to create the myth which the Parliamentary opposition was to exploit for many years; that of the corrupt influence of the Nabob over the Administration, and they had made it certain that Hastings's name was associated with this myth. [4]

Macleane's personal situation, even at the moment of triumph, was moreover by no means altogether satisfactory. His health was poor. He told Hastings

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1. Parl.Hist., xix, pp.276-279.
2. ibid., loc.cit.
3. Macleane's own composition, Present Disputes, was published after 31 March 1777 and before 14 June 1777. Rous, in his work, refuted Macpherson's State of Facts, Macaulay-Boyd's Original Papers and Macleane's Present Disputes. Rous finished his work by 9 July 1777 (see I.O.L., Court Book 86, p.201.), but was not paid for it until early 1778.
4. Sutherland, p.323.

in a letter he sent on 12th May: "I write under the accumulated torture of rheumatism in all my joints, and a severe sore throat, with pains in my breast, which have worn me to a shadow by the fever attending them."[1] And, in addition to being suspected of smuggling,[2] his financial position was very uneasy.[3] Contrary to the Opposition beliefs, he drew no regular salary from the Nabob, whose lack of financial support for his agents in England was bitterly complained of by both James and John Macpherson. On 15th October 1776, John Macpherson had told his kinsman:

"Chuir M.cChol mishi auni triblaid vore i hive Ergid. Na abbir focul ye sho. Glac ussi mo Litrichin ga uisi me hanic i er falve. They are directed to you. ... Bi ro chairdic ri M.cCholla. Duine math math è. Innis gha Robsonach gur is ma i hachir gha misshi vi na mo Duini Honorach. Feir missi nar air Honair is Robsonach. Is beg i ha issa egi gu dè ghroich bu va leis in Patersonach i ghianive le anim agus carrid in Patersonich - in Benfildich i ha sho. Chollig-tin Robsonach ati agus sma ghiti Chain mar in bein auni sho. Is fuasich in navid gha in Pigaidich. Ach hug missi in norri va. Cha do Chuir in Duini Dù present riave in ghuinsi in Robsonach. - foni sho ghutsi ghratin ris."[4]

The English translation of which is as follows:

"The Son of Coll [Macleane] put me in great trouble regarding money. Do not say a word about this. You get hold of my letters to him before they disappear. They are directed to you. ... Be very friendly towards the Son of Coll. He is a good,good man. Tell Robinson I am an honourable man. I will take care of

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1. Gleig, ii, p.104, op.cit.
2. On 30 April 1777, the P.A. contained a belated report of the arrival in London of the Grenville Indiaman, which brought many important dispatches and parcels from Madras. Among the parcels were two boxes addressed to Macleane from the Nabob, one containing a letter for Palk, but they were not forwarded to their rightful owner. (see H.M.C./Palk.MSS., p.275, The Nabob of Arcot to R.Palk, 20 June 1776, which was endorsed: "Detained till 9th June [1777] having been enclosed in a packet directed to Colonel Macleane by the Grenville - LM."). The Directors had decided to obstruct Macleane as much as they could, and had ordered the Clerks of the Company Warehouse to impound his property, on the suspicion that the boxes contained smuggled diamonds. They then used every tactic to delay his gaining possession of the boxes. Eventually, on 28 May, when they were opened in the presence of John Manship (the Director who offered to serve on a Commission, see P.A., 12 April 1777), several clerks and two customs officers, they were found to contain no diamonds. In the interim malicious rumours had been circulated, which obliged Macleane to publish a rebuttal in the press, see P.A., 30 May 1777.
3. I.O.L./Orme, O.V.202(33F), f.125, R.Orme to Lt.Col.J.Neil Parker, 6 March 1777. This letter gives some idea of Macleane's debts at this time, especially of his debts in India to Louis Monneron of Chandernagore, who was a leading French Freemason and a leader in the Encyclopédie movement. For the last detail I am indebted to Mr.Robert Shackleton of Brasenose College, Oxford.
4. S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 39/12, John Macpherson to James Macpherson, 15 Oct.1776.

Robinson's honour. Little does he know what business Paterson [the former Secretary to the Plenipotentiaries] would like to have done in his name and [in the name of] Paterson's friend, Benfield - who is here. Robinson would lose his place and perhaps the Khan [would lose his place] if I were not here. Terrible the enemy to him [the Khan, i.e. the Nabob] is Pigot. But I have taken good care the Black Man [the Nabob] never sent a present to Robinson. - it will suffice to say this to him." [1]

Later, John Macpherson told Hastings: "Not a rupee has he [the Nabob] ever sent to England since I supplyed Macleane at my own expence in a manner when I was at Madras." [2] Indeed, Macleane's only recourse was to draw bills on John Macpherson, leaving him to extract payment from the Nabob. The system, though unsatisfactory as far as Macpherson was concerned, did not work out too badly for Macleane; he drew on Macpherson twice during this period for sums totalling £9,000, and the Nabob eventually honoured them both. [3] It is not known how much of this money went towards the costs of the very expensive journey by the overland route which he was soon to undertake, but at least he was not penniless. Moreover, the situation was not quite what it appeared. On 12th May, three days after the decisive General Court, Macleane informed Hastings:

"It is very probable, as the Nabob of Arcot's concurrence will form a principal part in support of whatever system shall be adopted, that I shall be sent over to negotiate with him on the spot, and to return immediately. I have had more than one conversation with Mr.Robinson on the system at large.." [4]

When Thomas Townshend asserted in the Commons on 22nd May that Macleane "was to return back as Ambassador from the King of Great Britain to the Nabob" this

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1. John Macpherson's construction in Gaelic in this passage was rather clumsy, and extra words have been included in parentheses to make the sense clear.
2. B.M.Add.MSS.29143, f.79, John Macpherson to W.Hastings, 13 February 1779.
3. S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 175/26, "Memorandum relative to Col.Macleane's Bills" by John Macpherson. The Nabob accepted Macleane's bills for 14,109 Pagodas on 24 July 1777, and also accepted a further bill for 9,108 Pagodas on 25 August 1777. At the 1777 exchange rate of 8 shillings for 1 Pagoda, the total of the bills, 23,217 Pagodas, would have equalled £9,286.16.0d. In John Macpherson's Account Book (ibid., 82/1 - "No.2", p.1) the item numbered "11" has the local wording: "Sealed paper containing Colonel Maclean's Persian Chops, John Stewart's, James Johnson and Mrs.James Johnson's." It is under a list of bonds, bills and papers left with John Macpherson's attorneys on 7 January 1777.
4. Gleig, ii, p.100, op.cit.

was not denied. As early as 14th May Sulivan, who knew much of his plans, told Hastings: "Maclean [sic] sets off via Suez in a few days - the Nabob owes him much."[1]

There is no doubt that, justifiably or unjustifiably, Macleane at this time was in a state of exultation. He not only saw himself triumphant over his enemies, but a man at the threshhold of a great future. This was because, with the Company's Charter and the Regulating Act due for revision in a couple of years, he believed that he was to be in at the beginning of a new system to be devised by the ministry for the government of India. His fertile imagination showed him a future in which he could serve both his patrons, Hastings and the Nabob of Arcot, and himself fill a unique situation. Uncertain whether or not Hastings would resign, in view of the advice he had sent out to him after the award of Clavering's red ribband, of the changed circumstances in India brought about by Monson's death, and having regard to the stories of Clavering's ill health, he was prepared to believe that in any event Hastings, under the new system, would be Governor General.[2] Indeed, he told Hastings:

"Whether Clavering's recovery [from a plague of boils] deprives you of the Government of Bengal, or whether the reins continue in your hands by his death or leaving the country, I venture to prophesy that something like your plan will take place before the expiration of two years, and I trust that you will be called forth to execute it."[3]

He even maintained, admittedly with no evidence to support him, that North "dreads the consequence of your return from India in the present critical state of affairs."[4] The friendship for the Nabob of Arcot, which he attributed to Hastings, had he said "recommended you in the strongest manner to the King and Ministry, particularly Lord North,"[5] and he congratulated himself on joining

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29138, f.409, L.Sulivan to W.Hastings, 14 May 1777.
2. Gleig, ii, pp.98-104, op.cit.
3. ibid., pp.99-100.
4. ibid., pp.100-101.
5. ibid., p.103.

their two interests, despite the lack of co-operation of many of Hastings's friends.

At Lord North's last levee, Macleane reported, "he asked me what change I thought General Monson's death would make in your conduct, or way of thinking ? My answer was: 'My Lord, Mr.Hastings is a man of the strictest honour, and one of the warmest friends of the King's Government; if your Lordship will honour me with the confidential communication of your wishes on this occasion, I will pledge myself to you that, barring unforeseen accident, your desire shall be conveyed to Mr.Hastings in three months, and that he will cheerfully comply with it."[1] Not surprisingly, Lord North omitted to take up the offer. Of himself, Macleane wrote exultantly:

"Elliot..can divert you at a leisure hour with the oddity of my situation, prescribed and caressed at the same time by the same men. Refused everything, and held at the same time not unworthy of anything. The India House is become a riddle not worth the trouble of solving. The Company, says the Public Advertiser is 'a corporation of madmen, entrusting the management of their affairs to fools.'"[2]

Macleane did not leave for India as soon as either he or Sulivan expected, because the resolutions which passed the General Court on 9th May did not include the detailed plans for dealing with the complicated problem of first reinstating and then recalling Pigot; and the Directors had added to those recalled the names of other Company servants implicated in the scandal, in particular Paul Benfield. John Whitehill[3], who had been appointed Fourth in the new Madras Council, was sent overland on 13th June to get there with the resolutions before Rumbold could reach the new government. These arrangements aroused some suspicions among the supporters of Lord Pigot, and on 4th June

1. Gleig, ii, p.102, op.cit.
2. ibid., pp.103-104.
3. Love, iii, p.105. John Whitehill had joined the Company's service as a Writer at Madras in 1752, and had been Chief at Masulipatam in 1773. The details of his birth and death are not known.

Admiral Pigot and Governor Johnstone asked for permission to send out copies of the orders for Lord Pigot's release overland by a nominee of their own. By 6th June it was agreed that William Burke, Macleane's one-time friend, should be the nominee. On Saturday, 14th June, the day after Whitehill left and just before Burke set out, Macleane left London unexpectedly for the overland route; and there was obviously something of a race between them.

"On Sunday morning," reported the Public Advertiser, "Mr.Macleane arrived at Calais. In the evening he set out for Marseilles, accompanied by Messrs. Lundus and [James] Johnson.[1] They will embark at Marseilles for Alexandria in Egypt, from thence will go to Grand Cairo and Suez, and from the latter place to Madras. The departure of Mr.Macleane was very sudden. A friend was previously dispatched to Dover to prepare a vessel for his reception; and the wind was so favourable, that in two hours and forty minutes the passage from Dover to Calais was performed."[2] Macleane just forestalled Burke in hiring the only packet boat.[3]

With Alexander Elliot already on his way, though unaware of Whitehill's orders, to Calcutta by way of Suez, and Edward Wheler heading in the same direction by sea round the Cape, the routes to India were thronged with travellers carrying conflicting and disturbing news. Coming the other way was John Macpherson,[4] who had left Madras in the Lion Indiaman on 8th February, before the most important happening in the Pigot Scandal. Whitehill, Macleane and Burke, racing neck and neck across Europe and Asia, were soon to discover what this was.

At home there were protests in the General Court on 18th June by the

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1. unidentified.
2. P.A., 21 June 1777.
3. I.O.L., MSS.EUR.D.18, f.493, C.D'Oyly to P.Francis, 9 July 1777.
4. S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 82/1.

supporters of the Madras majority over the interim arrangements the Directors had made, arrangements which in fact were never to take effect, but the debate was desultory, apart from one fiery outburst on the part of Keane Fitzgerald,[1] and the adjournment was moved and carried unanimously.

Not far away, in two different parts of London, two women of different social backgrounds, Lady Mary Walker,[2] the daughter of a Scottish earl, and Jane Satterthwaite,[3] a childrens' nurse, were waiting for the births of their illegitimate babies, and both were pregnant by Lauchlin Macleane,[4] whom they would never see again.

For the time being Indian affairs and men in India ceased to trouble the London scene.

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1. P.A., 20 June 1777, Report of the General Court held on 18 June 1777.
2. Lady Mary Walker (née Leslie) (1733-1821), daughter of Alexander Leslie, 5th Earl of Leven, and the estranged wife of Dr.James Walker of Inverdovat, Fife, whom she had married in 1762 and left in 1776, when she became Lauchlin Macleane's mistress. The child she had by Macleane has not been traced. After Macleane's death she became the mistress of George Robinson Hamilton, and was known until her death as Lady Mary Hamilton.
3. Jane Satterthwaite (fl.1750-1827). She was first employed, with her sister Margaret Satterthwaite, in Macleane's household in 1770 to nurse the illegitimate son, John, he had by Penelope Agnew, and was kept on permanently when Penelope Agnew died giving birth to Macleane's illegitimate daughter, Harriot, in 1773. Jane was still living on an annuity provided by Colonel Mark Wilks, Macleane's son-in-law, and Harriot's husband, as late as 1827, when she was residing at Cockermouth, Cumberland. The child she had by Macleane has not been traced. Jane was the sister of Daniel Satterthwaite of Cockermouth, and Edward Satterthwaite of Futty Gur, Bengal, see I.O.L., Bengal Wills/154-60-121/ dated 1778/proved 1779.
4. See the Will of Lauchlin Macleane (printed in full in Maclean, pp.446-449).

CHAPTER 9 - The Last Journey: June 1777 to Feb.1778; Aftermath and Summary.

On the day Macleane left London for India, 14th June, Hastings in Calcutta received[1] from William Macintosh the secret dispatch telling him not to resign. Clavering, who was away in the country, and Francis received no mail by the same ship, but Francis discovered, through the mysterious channels of Calcutta intelligence, the drift of the message received by Hastings and sent an urgent note to Clavering recalling him to town. By the time the Rippon arrived four days later,[2] bringing the official news of the resignation and of Wheler's appointment to fill the vacancy, the atmosphere in the Council Chamber was very tense. The dispatches were read and the Council adjourned.

When Hastings, now determined not to resign, summoned his Council the next morning, 20th June, as though nothing had happened, Barwell alone obeyed. Clavering, as Second of Council, regarded himself as the new Governor General, and called his own Council meeting in an adjoining room, which Francis alone attended. After taking the oath, Clavering sent a note to Hastings demanding the key of Fort William, to which the latter returned a point-blank refusal. Hastings followed this by issuing orders to the officers of the Company's forces demanding their support for him as Governor General. And so began what Hastings called "the convulsion of four days, which might have shaken the very foundation of the national power and interest in India."[3] At the end of this period, when the advice of the Supreme Court judges had been taken, the warring parties agreed to refer their respective claims to London. Meanwhile, the status quo prevailed; Hastings was still the Governor General.

On 28th June Clavering, now a knight (having invested himself with the red ribband of the Order of the Bath on the day he tried to assume power as Governor

1. Gleig, ii, p.162, quoting W.Hastings to L.Sulivan, 29 June 1777.
2. ibid., p.151, quoting W.Hastings to F.Sykes, 29 June 1777.
3. Davies, p.226, (quoting from B.P. & P., i, "Governor General of a Day" by A.P.N.Muddiman).

General), received a letter from John Robinson thanking God for Hastings's resignation, and anticipating a bright future for Bengal under Clavering's leadership.[1] By precipitating a crisis Clavering had been forced to relinquish his claim until the matter had been settled in London, and Hastings had been given the loophole to free himself from the commitment of resignation. Clavering probably wished that he had not capitulated so soon or so easily, but he had nothing to blame except his own impulsive nature and his indecent haste to lord it over his rival. His triumph, in any event, would have been short-lived. On 30th August, worn out with sickness and painful boils, he died.[2] Wheler was on his way, but for a short time Francis found himself without any supporters in Council, the sole survivor of the former Bengal majority. Reports of Clavering's death were immediately sent to London and Madras.

The day following Clavering's death, Macleane and Whitehill arrived at Madras in the same ship.[3] Macleane had caught up Whitehill at Suez, and had made the journey from London to Madras in the record time of 78 days, beating by three weeks his boast to North that he could get a dispatch to India in three months. Here too death had altered the situation. Pigot was dead, and as Rumbold and Munro, the Second and Third in the new Madras Council, were only on the first stage of their voyage from England,[4] Whitehill, as Fourth in Council, found himself the Provisional Governor of Madras, with a host of problems to settle, most of them concerned with the Pigot Scandal.

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1. See Weitzman, p.320.
2. See Feiling, p.189.
3. I.O.L., MSS.EUR.E.23, f.28, Philip Francis's Diary, entry for 18 Sept.1777.
4. I.O.L., Court Book 86, pp.194-196, 4 July 1777 - Rumbold, Munro and Day took leave of the Court of Directors before sailing. The P.A., 21 June 1777, had reported: "The Advocate General of Bengal, now Sir John Day, has got orders from the Directors of the East India Company to touch at Madras, and assist the new Council with his advice for prosecuting in the Mayor's Court all such persons who shall appear to be improperly concerned in the late disturbance of that Presidency, who are ordered home, and for which the temporary President and Council are instructed to pay him such pecuniary compliments as they think proper." Day's services were not required; he arrived after the charges arising out of the Pigot Scandal had been settled by the Bengal Supreme Court.

Pigot had fallen ill on 5th March 1777, as a result of over-exposing himself to the sun while gardening.[1] On 26th March, Major Horne, his jailer, on the advice of Dr.Gilbert Pasley, informed George Stratton, the leader of the Madras majority who was acting as Governor, that Pigot's condition was deteriorating and that he should be moved to the Company's Garden House near the sea, as the air there might help to improve his health.[2] It only postponed the end. On 10th May Pigot became moribund, and he died the following morning. At the inquest held on the afternoon of his death, Pasley announced that the cause was bilious fever and liver congestion, and that an autopsy was unnecessary.[3] The inquest was adjourned until the next day, when the examination of witnesses was begun. At the conclusion of this lengthy process, on 30th July, the Coroner directed the jury's attention to the following points: first, had Lord Pigot died in confinement; second, had his death been occasioned by rigorous treatment; third, if so, what persons were responsible; and fourth, was his confinement legal or illegal.[4] The jury returned a verdict of 'Wilful Murder' against Stratton,[5]

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1. Gilbert Pasley (d.1781), fourth son of James Pasley of Craig, Langholm, in Dumfries, and a cousin of Alexander Elliot. He had been a friend & fellow-student of Macleane at Edinburgh in the early 1750's, and went to Madras in 1754.
2. Love, iii, p.105.
3. ibid., pp.106 and 110.
4. ibid., p.115.
5. ibid., pp.116-119. The Coroner did not send Whitehill the verdict until 24th Sept.1777, three days after Macleane left Madras. With the verdict went the warrants for the arrest of the men indicted for 'Wilful Murder'. The following evening the accused surrendered to Whitehill and were taken into custody, where they were held until 5th October, when they were released on bail. Their trial had started on 30th September, but Whitehill, who presided, had immediately sent to the Bengal Supreme Court for advice. On 26th November the decision of the Bengal judges was read out in the Madras Court. In their opinion there was no legally appointed Coroner in Madras, and "that if there had been, the materials of the inquest were insufficient for an indictment of either murder or manslaughter." The proceedings were quashed, and all the accused discharged. There were some repercussions for a few of them. In 1779 the House of Commons, on the motion of Admiral Hugh Pigot, resolved on an address to the Crown, praying for the prosecution of four members of the Madras majority - Stratton, Brooke, Floyer and Mackay, who had returned to England. They were ultimately convicted of misdemeanour, and each fined £1,000. Col.James Stuart elected to go for court martial, on the grounds that he had been carrying out the orders of his superior officer, Sir Robert Fletcher. He cleared his name, was found not guilty, and returned to Madras as Second in Command, with the rank of Brigadier General. He was later advanced to the rank of Major General.

Brooke, Floyer, Palmer, Jourdan, Mackay, Fletcher (who had left Madras for his health's sake and, though the news had not reached Madras, was already dead), Stuart, Edington, Lysaght and Horne - all the members of the Madras majority, and all the officers concerned in Pigot's arrest and imprisonment.[1] The Coroner accepted the verdict, but it was not published until after the arrival of Whitehill, whose first action was to summon Stratton and the rest of the Madras majority, and lay before them the Directors' orders of 11th June, to which they at once submitted.[2]

Macleane stayed in Madras for three weeks only. It is not known for certain under whose auspices he went, ~~though it is known roughly what he did while he was there.~~ As stated in the last chapter Macleane claimed, and the claim was not denied, that he was going out to Madras, in some degree at least, as the ministry's representative to the Nabob. It seems difficult not to believe that he received some support from members of the ministry, though it is certain that he held no official position under them, and there is no evidence that he had financial assistance from them. It is perhaps significant that he was extremely secretive about his status at this point, and none of his friends or associates seemed to know what it was. Laurence Sulivan, to his embarrassment, had to admit to his son Stephen, when the latter left for India early in the following year, that he had not been in Macleane's confidence:

"The secrets he carried with him," he wrote,"were too deep for any but himself and the Crow [John Robinson] - though drop nothing of this to the Nabob, but when anything appears to you hid from me say I must have been absent at Bath, as Macleane and your father have but one mind."[3]

It is also certain that Macleane had intended to go back to Madras about that time in any case. John Macpherson's letters from Madras in the latter part of

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1. Love, iiii, p.115.
2. ibid., pp.103-105 (Orders of 11 June 1777 printed in full).
3. Bod., MS.Eng.Hist., C.269, L.Sulivan's Letter-book.

1776 refer to the fact that Macleane was expected back in Madras in June 1777,[1] and this influenced to some extent the plans which Macpherson made after his dismissal for his own future. The arrangements for the Nabob's agency were somewhat complex; James Macpherson had already been promised a salary by the Nabob since, apparently, 1775, presumably for his work behind the scenes and for his pamphleteering. So too, it would seem, had Stephen Sulivan, doubtless in lieu of his father, though it is unlikely if either had received it.[2] Also, at an earlier date, the worthless Frederick Stuart, son of the Earl of Bute, had worked himself into a position on the agency, apparently on the grounds of the alleged usefulness of the Bute family's influence. On 16th October 1776, John Macpherson had told his kinsman James:

"Cha borrin M.^c^Chaul Rahid elli ghavail ach M.^c^Eorli Rhuid. Er son sho cha neil misshi in naigh i ghroich. Ach nuair i hig misshi ghachi Chi ussa Groich elli. Na abbir focul er son sho."[3]

The English translation of which is as follows:

"The Son of Coll [Macleane] could not take another road but that of the cocky son of the Earl [of Bute]. Because of this I am not against the matter. But when I come home you will see another thing. Do not say a word about this."

When Macleane left for Madras, Frederick Stuart was at least nominally the Nabob's agent in England, though he appears to have been quite inactive, and the arrival of John Macpherson in early 1778 was to push him into the background. It was not until after John Macpherson's arrival in England that Sulivan, who for personal reasons was extremely anxious to know how things stood, obtained what he considered an authoritative account of the composition of the team, possibly from John Macpherson himself. At the end of a monumental letter he wrote to his son Stephen before the latter sailed for Madras, Laurence Sulivan commented on the subject.

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29138, f.5v., John Macpherson to W.Hastings, 3 December 1776 - "Our friend McL. is to be here [Madras] in June next."
2. Bod., MS.Eng.Hist., C.270, pp.39-42, L.Sulivan to S.Sulivan, 28 December 1778
3. S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 39/12, John Macpherson to James Macpherson, 15 Oct.1776.

"I have this moment (in confidence)," said Laurence Sulivan, "learned the exact scheme of the Flints [Agency] as settled by Jacques [Lauchlin Macleane] with Cautious [James Stuart-Mackenzie] and now confirmed by Little [John Macpherson] and Job's [The Nabob of Arcot's] authority; to wit Double [Frederick Stuart] Flint [Agent] (or Embassador if practicable) thro' whom all intercourse with the Friends [The Company] or the Carcase [The Government] is to pass, with a Measure [Salary] of Twenty-two Shirts [Four thousand Pounds]; Sharp [James Macpherson] is the Noddy [Official Confidential Secretary] with a Measure [Salary] of Twenty Shirts [Two thousand Pounds]." [1]

In this account there is no reference to North or Robinson, and James Stuart-Mackenzie, [2] though still sought after for patronage to some extent, had no influence within the ministry. It would seem possible that North and Robinson saw some advantage in contact with the Nabob's agent when he went out to see his principal, but not very likely that they gave him more than general encouragement. Indian affairs occupied little attention at this period in the minds of ministers preoccupied by the American war; Robinson, in whose hands they were left, was chiefly concerned in keeping them quiet and out of Parliament as a short-term measure; and, although he talked freely of the long-term changes which must accompany the renewal of the Company's Charter and the replacement of the Regulating Act, there is no evidence to show that he began to consider these changes seriously until the summer of 1778. [3] Macleane's belief that great moves were in sight was, as things turned out, an illusion.

In 1782-83, when Macleane had been dead for some four years, and the excitement had abated, a fiery sea captain named Joseph Price (who usually had

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1. Bod., MS.Eng.Hist., C.269, f.31, L.Sulivan to S.Sulivan [Jan.1778]. In this letter-book the code to all the names, objects, money, &c, is given on ff.1-3, but in the majority of cases Laurence Sulivan left the originals visible with a thin line through them and the code-word written above them. In the passage quoted all the original names are clearly visible. Lauchlin Macleane had three code-names - "The Meteor", "Jacques" and Jonas (ibid., f.3).
2. James Stuart-Mackenzie (c.1718-1800), a younger brother of John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute. He assumed the additional name of Mackenzie on succeeding to the estates of his great-grandfather, George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh. He was Lord Privy Seal for Scotland.
3. Sutherland, p.330.

some private information, though often of a jumbled kind) wrote:

"Macleane returned to India overland to obtain more information from the Nabob, and a little more oil to move the wheels which he declared had been clogged in this cold [English] climate, for want of that necessary ingredient to set them in motion. That he obtained what he wanted is a fact well known in Madras, and to some people in Europe; but he and his instructions, and the oil pot, went all to the bottom together in his passage home, in His Majesty's Ship the Swallow." [1]

This was probably a fairly accurate and objective account of a situation, which Macleane and those in contact with him had built up into something much more dramatic. While the reasons for his journey to Madras remain somewhat uncertain, it is known, to some extent, what he did during his stay there. He was chiefly occupied in agreeing with the Nabob a petition to the King and Parliament, which he intended to present on his arrival in England. The original of the petition sank with him when his ship went down, but a copy of it was sent home by Admiral Sir Edward Hughes. [2] In a letter of 10th June 1778 Laurence Sulivan told Hastings:

"The Nabob sent by Macleane a Petition to the King and Parliament against the Company; he sent a duplicate by Sir Edward Hughes who delivered it to Lord North, who having it several days in his possession presented the Petition the morning Parliament was prorogued, and therefore cannot be discussed until next session, the very time our Charter is to be prolonged or more probably renewed. The Nabob complains in strong terms of the Company, says they have forfeited the Jaghir he gave them, presses the King and Parliament to take him and the country under their protection, and that he will assign funds for all expenses. ... I have not a doubt but that the whole of the plan was fabricated in London, but the Nabob should have tryed the Company in the first instance, before he attempted an eternal, perhaps a fatal separation from his natural

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1. Some Observations and Remarks on a late Publication entitled 'Travels in Europe, Asia and Africa', Joseph Price, London, 1782/83, pp.4-5.
2. For the Petition see Sixth Report from the Committee of Secrecy appointed to enquire into the Causes of the War in the Carnatic and of the Condition of of British Possessions in those Parts, Appendix 376 B ("The Requests of the Nabob Walla Jah"), 1782.

friends. The Petition should have come to his Agent here with power to keep it back if the Company consented to do him justice." [1]

Philip Francis, in a letter from his friend in Madras, Charles Goring,[2] was given some further particulars about Macleane's mission:

"His orders [from the Nabob] are to obtain Tanjore at any rate, and I understand he has pledged himself to compass this matter by the month of May next [1778] when he is expected back again. He is likewise directed to obtain orders for the evacuation of our garrisons to the southward of the River Cauvery, which are to be given to the Nabob to be disposed of as he pleases. ... The countries they command would go to the second son." [3]

Goring also referred to Macleane's interest in satisfying the Nabob's wish to have this second son, Amir-ul-Umara, succeed him.

There was nothing particularly original in the demands included in the petition. They were based on propositions outlined in a letter from Hastings to North of 1st September 1776, in which he had advanced his suggestions for the future government of India. It had been sent under cover to Macleane, who was given discretionary powers to present it or not as he thought fit. He had not presented it,[4] but he had discussed with Robinson the principles it incorporated. Among them were two affecting the Nabob of Arcot, viz:

"No.4 - Let the alliance with the Nabob of Arcot be confirmed by Treaty, and on the conditions recommended in my letter of the 1st of September, and let the Nabob be put in full possession of the zemindarry of Tanjour [sic]. Let him pay a monthly subsidy for the British troops and sepoys on that establishment;" and "No.6 - Let every Treaty be executed in the name of the King of Great Britain, expressing the reciprocal conditions of protection and fidelity, and with his express sanction." [5]

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29141, ff.35v-36, L.Sulivan to W.Hastings, 10 June 1778.
2. Charles Goring was a Company servant at Madras. He had promised Lord North that he would support Clavering against Hastings, and he remained an enemy of Hastings for many years.
3. I.O.L., MSS.EUR.F.5., f.625, C.Goring to P.Francis, 15 February 1778.
4. It was not presented until 1780.
5. Gleig, ii, p.145, quoting an enclosure in a letter from W.Hastings to Alexander Elliot, 10 February 1777.

When John Macpherson reached England, he put forward similar proposals, and in 1778 when Laurence Sulivan, infected by Macleane's optimism about the future of the Nabob's agency, made an abortive attempt to muscle in on it through his son Stephen, he propounded identical principles of action. In so far as Macleane added to these principles it would seem to have been in relation to the claims of the Nabob's second son to the succession, an issue to which he had already contributed at an earlier stage of his agency.[1]

Macleane evidently believed that no time was to be lost in bringing the Nabob's petition back to England, and he hoped to return to Madras soon afterwards with a complete scheme. Hence the shortness of his stay in Madras. There was no chance of a visit to Bengal to renew his links with Hastings. He knew that Hastings had not resigned, but the tactful and friendly letters about his part in the resignation, which Hastings sent to him in Madras, arrived after he had sailed, and they did not reach him before his death.[2] Although Hastings had already taken up the line which he was to pursue with an increasing sense of grievance in the future; that his agent in proposing the resignation had overstepped his powers (and indeed wrote to John Dunning on 20th November 1777 that he could"find no trace either among my private papers or in my memory of any authority given him to use my name in so desperate a purpose");[3] his friendly feelings towards Macleane were not as yet affected, and he was much concerned not to damage Macleane's reputation by disavowing him.

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1. S.O.A.S./Macpherson, 4/18, James Macpherson to John Macpherson, 14 Dec.1775.
2. I.O.L., Cleveland (Ohio) Public Library MSS., Microfilm Roll 6, Wg 091.92 - H2791T (in Microfilm Index EUR.26 the film is given a Wq prefix), W.Hastings to L.Macleane, 15 October 1777. This according to Hastings was a copy or a near copy of his letter on the resignation which he had sent to Macleane earlier, but the whereabouts of the original, never received by Macleane, is not known. Other copies or near copies of this letter are to be found in B.M.Add.MSS.29139, ff.332-334, dated 20 November 1777; and B.M.Add.MSS.29128, ff.158-160v, dated 20 November 1777 (with, ff.160-160v, repeat of Postscript of 1 September 1777).
3. B.M.Add.MSS.29128, f.152, W.Hastings to J.Dunning, 20 November 1777. Hastings asked Dunning not to show this letter to others, as it went further in disavowing Macleane than he had gone elsewhere.

Just before Macleane sailed the news of Clavering's death reached Madras. On its receipt he wrote two letters to Hastings. In the first, written on 20th September 1777, he said:

"I was very happy in the receipt of your letter here, which was directed to me in London, and as I shall carry the first news of General Clavering's death to Administration, for I mean to outrun the dispatches, you may depend on every exertion in my power. I believe we shall embark either this evening or tomorrow, and I leave a hundred things undone which were very necessary. ... If I can reach Lord North before the publick dispatches, I hope to be of essential service, and the courier must travel very fast if he gets before me. ... I am just going to the Durbar to announce Sir John Clavering's death. I am therefore obliged to break off abruptly." [1]

In the second letter, written the next day, just before the ship he was returning on, H.M.S. Swallow, sailed, he continued:

"I pledge myself to see Lord North, if I have life and health, some hours before the dispatches by the Swallow can reach him. I have had a long conversation with H[is] H[ighness] here on the subject of General Clavering's death. Both he and Amir ul Omrah [sic] consider it a happy event for India in general, as well as for the Carnatic. ... They cannot hide their joy that the affairs of India are now fallen so completely into your hands. Mr.Oakley [sic] is the person now in their confidence since Macpherson and Sulivan went to England; they have opened their political concerns to nobody but him, and I have earnestly recommended to them to trust no other. The ensuing winter will determine the system of England for the Carnatic, and I have not the smallest doubt that it will be on the most liberal and advantageous footing for both parties. ... Let me, I entreat you, recommend Amir ul Omrah [sic] to your favour and good opinion. I vow to God that I do no believe any Moorish prince

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29139, ff.161-161v., L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 20 September 1777.
2. Charles Oakeley (1751-1826), later (1790) a Baronet, and Governor of Madras. He was a noted financial administrator, and John Macpherson's attorney.
3. John Sulivan (1749-1839), the second son of Benjamin Sulivan of Dromeragh, Co.Cork; and brother of Sir Benjamin Sulivan (1747-1810) and Sir Richard Joseph Sulivan (1752-1806); the descendants of the brothers spell their name Sullivan. According to Francis Sykes (B.M.Add.MSS.29143, f.251, 16 May 1779) John Sulivan was the nephew of Laurence Sulivan, but the latter (Bod., MS.Eng.Hist., C.269) inferred in a letter to Stephen Sulivan that although John and his brothers were kinsmen they belonged to "other lines of Sulivans." The origins of Laurence Sulivan therefore remain obscure.

will possess a better heart, and his abilities astonish me. ... Both his father and he were anxious to hear that you have received a copy of H.H's Will, as His Majesty has been acquainted that it is sent to you.

If my kinsman Stephen Macleane[1] goes to Bengal I hope he will merit your favour. ... (Copy of the letter to the King accompanies this)."[2]

Macleane left Madras in the Swallow on 21st September, and reached the Cape of Good Hope in the third week of November. In his last letter to Hastings (and probably anyone else) he reported that:

"we came in here with our main-mast only fit for sea, but we have got new fore- and main-masts and are again very fit for the winter sea we must expect in the [English] Channel."[3]

He was, nevertheless, apprehensive about the voyage ahead, and on 22nd November he had taken the precaution on making his very remarkable will, "considering," as he wrote in it, "the perils of the sea."[4] On 28th November, the Bessborough and Lord North Indiamen arrived together at the Cape from England, and on the former were Thomas Rumbold and Hector Munro on their way to Madras to take up their posts on the new Council, Rumbold as Governor. Macleane talked with them, and assured Hastings "that their opinion of the utility of keeping you at Bengal, now more than ever, is uniform. ... I hope to be the bearer of good tidings next autumn."[5]

In February 1778 Rumbold reached Madras and wrote to Hastings, informing him of his meeting with Macleane. "The Swallow," he said, "sailed [from the Cape] the 30th November, and as the Captain did not intend to touch at St.Helena I imagine she is by this time in England."[6] Macleane himself had said that he

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1. Stephen Macleane (c.1735-1779), was the first cousin of Lauchlin Macleane. He entered the Company's Maritime Service in 1767, and obtained his first full command in 1773. He was appointed Captain of the Swallow Indiaman (which has been frequently confused with H.M.S. Swallow) in December 1777, and was succeeded in this command by Captain Joseph Price in 1779, when he died.
2. B.M.Add.MSS.29139, ff.163-163v., L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 21 September 1777.
3. ibid., f.365, L.Macleane to W.Hastings, 28 November 1777.
4. Lauchlin Macleane's Will, see Maclean, p.446.
5. B.M.Add.MSS.29139, f.365, op.cit.
6. B.M.Add.MSS.29140, ff.114-115, Sir T.Rumbold to W.Hastings, 12 February 1778.

hoped to arrive home "about the middle or end of January,"[1] but after leaving the Cape nobody ever saw him or the Swallow[2] - a "crazy ship" according to Hastings - again. He was presumed to have drowned in the great storm in the Bay of Biscay in February 1778.[3] The only official record of his death, the certificate issued by the probate court, accepted this date.[4]

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The realisation that Macleane had been lost was gradual, as was usual in those days of slow communication. Before it was accepted as certain, John Macpherson was firmly entrenched in London and Laurence Sulivan, standing against an unpopular candidate backed by the Administration, had once more,[5] after a long time out of office, won a place as an East India Company Director.[6] By 20th April 1778, however, grave fears for Macleane's safety began to be expressed. "Poor Macleane," wrote Sulivan, "we have reason to fear is no more."[7] Five days later both George Vansittart and John Macpherson echoed the alarms.[8] By 5th May Sulivan reported with some assurance: "Poor Macleane is no more."[9]

No man can die in the midst of unfinished and complex activities without

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29139, f.365, op.cit.
2. B.M.Add.MSS.16261, f.114, W.Hastings to Sir E.Impey, 10 August 1778.
3. ibid., loc.cit.
4. Printed Maclean, p.449.
5. Macpherson first heard about Hastings's resignation at the Cape on his way to England (see John Macpherson to W.Hastings, 13 April 1777, printed Dodwell, p.56). As soon as he arrived in England Macpherson "set about to prepare people's minds for Hastings's refusal to accept" and arranged for the publication of "Remonstrance" prepared by Macleane in 1776 for the ministry (ibid., p.43), but suppressed, Macpherson told Hastings "in consequence of McLeane's arrangement for you and the proposed resignation" (John Macpherson to W. Hastings, 16 June 1778, ibid., p.60).
6. John Macpherson, in his usual bumptious way, claimed the credit for Sulivan's victory, see John Macpherson to W.Hastings, 17 April 1778, B.M.Add.MSS.29140, f.279, "By an extraordinary effort I got Sulivan into the Direction."
7. B.M.Add.MSS.29140, f.286, L.Sulivan to W.Hastings, 20 April 1778. See also Bod., MS.Eng.Hist., C.270, p.1, L.Sulivan to R.J.Sulivan, u.d. (but c.April 1778) - "We are amazingly anxious for Macleane's return, concluding he carried out something, and will hurry him more." Macleane, said Sulivan, was charged with "very important commissions." (ibid.)
8. B.M.Add.MSS.29140, f.291, John Macpherson to W.Hastings, and ibid., f.295, G.Vansittart to W.Hastings, both dated 22 April 1778.
9. ibid., ff.350-351, L.Sulivan to W.Hastings, 5 May 1778.

leaving a trail of disorder, and even controversy, behind him; least of all a man such as Macleane. On 10th June the disreputable Frederick Stuart made a cryptic remark in a letter to Hastings. Macleane's death, he wrote, was "a happy event for himself though very distressing for his friends."[1]

The first part of this comment is probably true enough: Macleane could not have failed to be disappointment in his expectations had he lived, for no radical re-organisation of East Indian affairs was in fact carried out by the feeble North Administration. On the contrary, after they had renewed the existing arrangements for two twelve-month periods in 1779 and 1780, an Act renewing the Company's Charter for ten years was passed in 1781 without any attempt to reform the administration of British India. It was not until the passing of Pitt's India Act of 1784 that the affairs of either Bengal or Madras were taken up, and then many of the issues, particularly in Madras, had greatly changed. Inadequately supported by money, as the Nabob's agents always were, and without support from the Administration, Macleane could hardly have hoped to survive in England. He would have fallen victim to his creditors, who were only holding off because they believed in the glittering prospects which he had made them see before him; and in India his lot would hardly have been happier.

The second part of Frederick Stuart's comment is perhaps less accurate. John Macpherson, it is true, felt compunction for Macleane's illegitimate children. "Macleane has left two fine children I support, and they are the best trouble he has left me. I will most faithfully take care of them."[2] These were the two children Macleane had had by Penelope Agnew, and had been his pride and joy - "a fine boy, a genuine son, being his own picture, and likewise a fine little girl."[3][4][5]

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29141, f.37v., F.Stuart to W.Hastings, 10 June 1778.
2. B.M.Add.MSS.29143, f.275, John Macpherson to W.Hastings, 17 May 1779.
3. John Maclean (born Macleane) (1770-1806). He became a Major in the 5th Madras Native Cavalry. He died without issue.
4. Harriot Maclean (born Macleane) (1773-1806), married in 1793 Colonel Mark Wilks (1758-1831), the historian of Southern India. Her line is extinct.
5. B.M.Add.MSS.29143, ff.82-82v., John Macpherson to W.Hastings, 13 Feb.1779.

Such kindnesses were not uncommon when men died suddenly in the Indian service, though the beneficiaries were usually in India and not in England. James Macpherson, more unexpectedly, made a push for Macleane's neglected and destitute wife, Elizabeth Hewitt,[1] and tried to prove that she had "a clear right of dower"[2] in the West Indian estates, which were her husband's one remaining asset, but Orme had foreseen this move years earlier and had blocked her claims.[3] To add insult to injury, the Company refused to grant her a pension from Lord Clive's Military Fund, when she applied in October 1781.[4] Finally, Orme, who had done so much to cope with Macleane's disastrous financial affairs ever since they fell into disorder after the stock crash of 1769, rendered a further service, and acted as his dead friend's executor.

For the most part Macleane's friends were also his creditors, and their chief concern was to save what they could from the wreck, and, although he died virtually penniless, they had hopes that the Nabob would prove to be under an obligation to him, and that they could take advantage of the fact. Sulivan, one of the most hard hit of his creditors, was earliest in the field. On 5th May 1778 he wrote to his son Stephen as follows:

"Macleane was bound in honour, but not legally, to pay me £14,000."[5]

He continued by saying that the Nabob had probably rewarded Macleane liberally during his stay in Madras, and had perhaps "realized all" his financial expectations, and that the Nabob should pay Stephen what was due to the Sulivan family.[6] Six months later Sulivan again wrote to his son, reminding

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1. She died on 12th July 1791 in Wardour Street, Piccadilly, leaving £300.
2. See North British Review, x, p.140 (published Edinburgh, 1849).
3. I.O.L./Orme, O.V.202(33F), ff.98-100, R.Orme to T.A.Vanderdussen, 24 Jan. 1774. Thomas Arthur Vanderdussen was the land syndicate's manager.
4. I.O.L., Range 3, Shelf 5, Military Records 203 (Lord Clive's Military Fund, ii, p.40). The Committee of the Fund ruled quite wrongly that "Lauchlin Macleane did not actually hold a military commission." He certainly did, and his widow was entitled to a pension, but there were reasons why the Company did not want to recognise either Macleane or his widow's claim.
5. Bod., MS.Eng.Hist., C.270, pp.22-25, L.Sulivan to S.Sulivan, 5 May 1778.
6. ibid., loc.cit.

him that "your own salary as settled formerly at the Durbar by Macleane so long ago as 1775 will amount to a considerable sum."[1] He went on to say that as Oakeley's influence was waning at the Durbar, there seemed little chance of compensation, as it was Oakeley who held Macleane's money in bonds. At this point Sulivan must have been interrupted by a visitor bringing news, because his letter continued in a different vein, from no hope to a remote hope of reimbursement. He wrote:

"I am this moment informed from indisputable authority that one hundred thousand Pagodas [£40,000] is funded to Col.Macleane upon the assignments of Call[2], Majendie[3], etc., (this is exclusive of large sums in Paper as has already been noticed to you) and carrying an interest of 12 p.ct. will be a large sum; the Umer ul Umrah (Amir-ul-Umara] had the transacting of this business and from him you will have full information. // As this circumstance is yet a secret in England, the bonds should be transferred to some other name without delay, or the executors will claim the whole & which they will be obliged to divide to Macleane's gambling creditors, to the prejudice of those that have far more just and honourable demands."[4] Sulivan went on to say that the Nabob, on hearing of Macleane's death, would recall all his grants and gifts to Macleane, so Stephen must state his father's claim as £22,000. He must also press the claim of John Stuart of Hampstead, who should be paid £10,000 as a gift. // "Macleane's claims in Paper (exclusive of the 100,000 Pagodas funded) amount to a large sum; this the Nabob will certainly recall as it was for services to be performed, but as I am a creditor of above £20,000, he grants me a part as a gift from himself."[5]

Thus wrote Laurence Sulivan, who, although he purported to know nothing of Macleane's reasons for going to Madras, did know that Macleane was expecting to[6]

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1. Bod.,MS.Eng.Hist., C.270, pp.39-42, L.Sulivan to S.Sulivan, 28 December 1778.
2. John Call, one of the Nabob's principal private creditors.
3. Andrew Majendie, another of the Nabob's private creditors.
4. Bod.,MS.Eng.Hist., C.270, pp.39-42, L.Sulivan to S.Sulivan, 28 December 1778.
5. ibid., loc.cit. The passage between lines (//) was crossed out in the draft.
6. The impression Sulivan gave publicly to acquaintances did not agree with the statement he made to his son, see Bod., MS.Eng.Hist., C.269, f.26, L.Sulivan to S.Sulivan, [January 1778], - "I have hitherto held it improper to stand forth avowing any declared connections with the Nabob, conceiving it might hurt him and me if I became a Director. Macleane knew this, and I must suppose was the single reason that my name was not brought forward in the agency in the first instance, but circumstances are now changed."

receive payment "for services to be performed" when he was there. Neither Laurence Sulivan nor John Stuart apparently realised their expectations. From Stuart's[1] will the extent of his actual receipts from the Nabob were summed up in the following legacy:

"I give and bequeath to my beloved friend Robert Mackenzie[2] Esq. .. my diamond ring, which was a present from His late Highness the Nabob of Arcot, as a token of the sense I entertain of his [Mackenzie's] friendly loan of money to me, when I was involved in some trying difficulties through the untimely fate of the late Lauchlin Macleane."[3]

The publication of Macleane's extraordinary will in February 1779, with its long list of bequests, some of them highly indiscreet, did nothing to satisfy his creditors or improve his reputation.[4] It named Robert Orme, John Motteux, and Andrew Stuart, the Douglas Cause lawyer, as executors,[5] but there was not a penny-piece to meet the bequests, and Orme alone was prepared to take his duty seriously.

The appearance of an active executor raised new fears. Laurence Sulivan had already shown alarm at the "many letters and papers of mine"[6] likely to be among Macleane's effects, and now Francis Sykes, informed of this "most shame-full and wicked will,"[7] warned Hastings that Orme (whom he wrongly stated to be "nearly a stranger" to Macleane) would be in possession "of all your private

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1. In a speech on 30 May 1806 (Bod., MS.Eng.Hist., B.190, f.60 et seq) John Sulivan said that John Stuart as (a later) agent of the Nabob recommended his patron to meet Macleane's debt to Laurence Sulivan, and he received a bond from the Nabob on 3 Feb.1785. Laurence Sulivan wished to repudiate, but on his death his executors thought they ought to take it. John Sulivan's speech was in a Committee of the House of Commons arising out of the publication of An Account of the Several Debts and Claims now made or demanded as due from the Nabobs of the Carnatic respectively, by the subscribing parties to the Deed of Agreement of 1805 with the East India Company (see Reports from the Committees of the House of Commons, 1806, ii, pp.199-223). The total was over 5½-million pounds, and they included a total of £13,581.4.10 for the "Heirs of the late John Stuart Esq" and £32,355 for Stephen Sulivan (ibid., p.217).
2. Robert Mackenzie, a former army Captain, and Oilman of Bishopsgate.Street.
3. G.R.O., P.P.R.(Literary Dept), Howe Cal., Mddx., Jan.1799, f.71.
4. John Motteux, a Merchant of Walbrook, and a former Director of the Company.
5. See Maclean, pp.446-449.
6. B.M.Add.MSS.29142, f.238v., L.Sulivan to W.Hastings, 26 December 1778.
7. B.M.Add.MSS.29143, f.334, F.Sykes to W.Hastings, 29 May 1779.

letters and correspondence with Mr.Macclean [sic]. I hope there is nothing to be apprehensive therefrom."[1]

After Sulivan other creditors tried the Nabob of Arcot, including Orme and Lord Shelburne. The latter asked Thomas Pelling and John de Fries, attorneys of Madras, to approach the Nabob, but in a letter they wrote to Palk on 1st November 1778, they said:

"We have desired Lord Shelburne to send us directions about the bills we have in our hands belonging to him. There is no likelyhood [sic] of its [sic] being paid in India now that poor Mr.McLeane [sic] is lost."[2]

And in a further letter to Palk on 4th February 1780, John de Fries wrote:

"Colonel McLeane's [sic] executors sent out powers of attorney to Mr.Oakeley, Mr.Pelling and myself, which we refused, and would have nothing to say to it."[3]

With this avenue closed to them, Shelburne, Orme and his fellow executor Motteux had to think again. Shelburne was furious and told Hastings that Macleane's conduct had been "such as ought to be forgot for the sake of the human species"[4], but resigned himself to a loss of £12,000. Orme, however, decided to have one last try, and with Motteux's agreement appointed new attorneys in Madras, Lt.Colonel Henry Cosby and Dr.Gilbert Pasley.[5] On 18th July 1781 Orme sent Cosby the instructions:

"By the conveyance, whatsoever it may be, that brings this to your hands, will come a pacquet directed to yourself and Mr.Pasley, which is of much concern, being a power of attorney from Mr.Motteux and myself with a letter of

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29143, f.334, op.cit. It is not known what happened to Lauchlin Macleane's papers. They are not among the extensive collection of Orme MSS. at the I.O.L. which belonged to his executor Robert Orme. It is possible that they ended up in the keeping of Orme's wife Ann, or Nancy as she was called by the select few who knew that Orme was married. Macleane was one of these, and he was on good terms with her (see I.O.L./Orme, O.V.202(33F), ff.43-46, R.Orme to L.Macleane, 16 Feb.1775 - "Nancy desires her love to you"). Ann Orme (1738-1818) was buried beside Macleane's mistress, Penelope Agnew, in St.Mary's Parish Church, Lambeth (see The History & Antiquities of the Parish of Lambeth, ed: Thomas Allen, London, 1826, p.120).
2. H.M.C./Palk MSS., p.326.
3. ibid., p.331.
4. B.M.Add.MSS.29149, ff.380-380v., Lord Shelburne to W.Hastings, 8 July 1781.
5. Henry Augustus Montague Cosby (d.1787). He was Adjutant General of the Army at Madras from 1774 to 1780.

instructions empowering you to act for us, who are the executors of the late Mr.Lauchlin Macleane. ... Let me entreat of you to go through with it. The Nabob cannot be offended with either you or Mr.Pasley. ... Sir Thomas Rumbold has recommended this business to Mr.Pasley, and I enclose to you the letter, which please to deliver to him." [1]

Rumbold, however, was on his way back to England, and Pasley, though once the Nabob's doctor, had later acted as Pigot's physician and was not in the Nabob's favour. The matter therefore came to nothing, and Orme made the best of a bad job by distributing money from the sale of West Indian estates to Macleane's most needy dependents, excluding, of course, his wife Elizabeth.

None of his creditors received anything. The total of his debts and the full list of his creditors are/not likely ever to be known; Mary Barwell, for instance, never recovered the £10,000 she lent Macleane. With this burden on his reputation the memory of Macleane as a man began to fade. He was little lamented as a friend, but he suffered in reputation still more as a public figure. Posthumous attacks upon him began almost at once, focussed for the main part on his two major activities in his last years. He was blamed, in the first place, for his actions as agent of the Nabob of Arcot. This line of attack was opened by Sulivan as early as 10th June 1778 in a letter to Hastings.

"All hopes of Macleane," he wrote, "are now at an end, as we have heard from the Brazils and all parts of America and the West Indies, but no account of the Swallow. At first I lamented his loss as a heavy misfortune, to myself particularly. I have now some reason to change that opinion, and perhaps his death has saved me an increase of misery. He caused me all I feel, and I built too much on his remembering what he owed me.

I was ignorant of his plan for the Nabob, and being at Bath when he left England was the reason assigned. Had I known it, my hearty dissent would have been given to a measure which has put the Nabob and the Company at the mercy of the Minister [North]. I conclude the whole plan has been made known to you." [2]

Sulivan continued by outlining the details of the Nabob's petition to the

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1. I.O.L./Orme, O.V.202(33F), ff.149-150, R.Orme to H.A.M.Cosby, 18 July 1781.
2. B.M.Add.MSS.29141, ff.35v.-36, L.Sulivan to W.Hastings, 10 June 1778.

King and Parliament which Lauchlin Macleane had hoped to deliver himself, but was actually sent in after his death by Admiral Hughes, who had a duplicate copy. When Sulivan wrote this letter to Hastings he was once again a Director and rapidly regaining his position as a power in the Company, but his criticism was disingenuous; [redacted] Hastings, who received and did not challenge the letter, had not only known of Macleane's proposals, but knew that they were based on proposals of his own. And Sulivan, a few months earlier (when he shared Macleane's optimism about the future, and was anxious about his own future) had not only tried to supplant Macleane in his agency, but had sought to do so by offering the Nabob the very terms Macleane himself advanced. In any case, the issue was a dead one and of no practical importance; the major issues of the future in Madras - the rival claims of the Nabob's private creditors and the Company as public creditor, and the disorganisation caused by them - were left untouched.

More general and more topical were the accusations which began to be advanced against Macleane when it became clear in England that Hastings had no intention of resigning[1] and his friends had to justify his and their position. These attacks took various forms. Those who knew least about the circumstances of the resignation were most sweeping in their condemnations. "The conduct of poor Macleane," wrote John Macpherson to Hastings on 23rd May 1778, "was both

1. As shown before (p.185, n.5 above) John Macpherson busied himself on Hastings's account as soon as he arrived in England, and was helped by his kinsman James. Sulivan told Hastings on 26 Dec.1778: "The Macphersons are here among your most zealous friends. Fingall [sic], in particular, has much Cabinet knowledge and influence. Let me add that the pen and abilitys [sic] of Fingall are equal to an Host - he is a prize worth your holding." (B.M.Add.MSS.29142, f.238v.). James "Fingal" Macpherson told Hastings on 20 Jan.1779: "The unhappy fate of poor Macleane has thrown the labouring oar, with regard to the affairs of the Carnatic, into the hands of the gentleman already mentioned - Mr. S[ulivan] - together with those of Mr.John Macpherson and mine. We have toiled in different lines, with more perseverance than success." (B.M.Add.MSS.29142, ff.400-401). Samuel Pechell confirmed to Hastings on 3 Feb.1779: "There is a man who has no despicable pen, his name [John] Macpherson, who has succeeded Macleane in the Agency of the Nabob of Arcot." (B.M.Add.MSS.29143, f.11). The eventual agent of Warren Hastings was the ineffectual John Scott-M[illegible] [1747

weak and unaccountable. To vacate for a man [Clavering] of so impracticable a soul, and whose sole pursuit on earth was to seek your destruction, was folly."[1] Francis Sykes, who had never approved of Macleane or the resignation, about which he was not consulted, told Hastings on 7th June 1778:

"He must be lost. ... Your connection with him, at present I shall say nothing of, only that it surprises me much and I cannot help but being much rejoiced that Clavering's imprudent conduct gave you so fair an opportunity of evading Mr.Maclean's resignation for you."[2]

Six months later when he wrote again to Hastings, Sykes was more caustic:

"As to your new friends Macclean [sic], G.Vansittart, Graham and C$^{y}_{o}$ and the part they took in making a resignation for you, in doing which some or most of them capitulated your resignation for themselves; such conduct you are the best judge off [sic]. For my part I refused to have anything to do with it, nor did I give them any meetings when I found such was there [sic] plan, and am extremely rejoiced at your not abiding by their decision. ... The large sums of money, which we have paid by your orders to particular persons, was [sic] entirely thrown away."[3]

Alexander Elliot and George Vansittart, who had vouched for the powers given by Hastings to Macleane in India, began to say that had they been in Macleane's position they would not have used them in the way he did.[4] Of those more closely connected in England with the resignation, Samuel Pechell suspected ill-faith, though he put the accusation moderately:

"I fear the interest of the Nabob of Arcot may in some instance have occasioned more hurry than there should have been in such a transaction; this thought of mine I communicated to Mr.Elliot, who seemed of another opinion. I yet think so, and besides that, they with whom Col^{l}. M^{c}.Clean [sic] treated kept not their word strictly with him, but those things are passed."[5]

Only the gentle Caillaud tried to put a fair case for Macleane. In a letter

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29140, f.424v., John Macpherson to W.Hastings, 23 May 1778.
2. B.M.Add.MSS.29141, ff.19-21, F.Sykes to W.Hastings, 7 June 1778.
3. B.M.Add.MSS.29142, ff.166v-167, F.Sykes to W.Hastings, 15 December 1778.
4. See Feiling, pp.177-178.
5. B.M.Add.MSS.29141, ff.17-18, S.Pechell to W.Hastings, 7 June 1778.

he sent Hastings on 24th May 1778 he wrote:

"The part he acted by you with regard to the resignation was not his act alone. Your best and warmest friends concurred in the measure: and you know enough of the matter to be satisfied that it was a matter of necessity, not choice. ...

Poor Macleane..you know how zealous a friend and how active and intelligent an agent he was. After having exerted himself to the utmost in your cause, the Nabob's affairs were his next great object. There, I believe, he met with some disappointment, at least what appeared as such to one of his sanguine turn of mind, and I know he left England much dissatisfied that Mr.Palk himself, and others, had not taken up the matter with as much zeal as perhaps we showed on other occasions." [1]

Even before Macleane's death Alexander Elliot had noted the way in which those whom he had consulted abandoned him when criticisms of his actions began to arise. Writing from India on 15th November 1777 to his brother Gilbert Elliot, [2] he said:

"Before Macleane delivered in the resignation every one of Mr.Hasting's friends who were consulted encouraged the measure because they found themselves engaged in the defence of an unpleasant question, and in opposition to power. When it was completed and Johnstone raised the odium against the measure..there were but three or four persons who avowed their having advised it." [3]

But Alexander Elliot himself in the same letter entirely omitted from the account of his own activities any reference to the role he had played in the negotiations preceding the resignation. Macleane, dead and gone, provided a natural scapegoat for a number of embarrassed men, and for others anxious to tell Hastings the things he wanted to hear.

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1. B.M.Add.MSS.29140, ff.440-443, J.Caillaud to W.Hastings, 24 May 1778.
2. Gilbert Elliot (1751-1814), later (1813) 1st Earl of Minto, was the eldest son and successor (in 1777 as baronet) of Sir Gilbert Elliot, 3rd Baronet of Minto. He was Governor General of Bengal from 1807 to 1813.
3. N.L.S., Minto MSS., M.14, A.Elliot to G.Elliot, 15 November 1777.

It is not easy to summarise Macleane's career between 1773 and 1778. He was deeply concerned in the two major Indian controversies of the period, and into both he threw all his energy, organising ability and powers of intrigue, and for a time he dazzled those who came into contact with him, as he had done others in the years before financial disaster had hit him. But in fact he achieved little for himself or others, and the odds against him were so heavy that it is difficult to see how he could. Burdened with enormous debts, handicapped by his reputation, his stutter, his Irish birth and Scottish names, necessarily involved in party struggles within the Company, past his youth and in very poor health, his only hope of survival was the achievement of some great coup; gallant gambler that he was, he was prepared to go all out for it, and he neither could nor wanted to wait for lesser but safer gains. Other brother gamblers, lesser men than he, such as William Burke, went under in India without a struggle. Macleane fought to the end, but only accident - his death - saved him from the same fate.

So far as others were concerned, he had always dragged down his associates with him, and there was truth in this view. John Macpherson said of him: "If he involved others he only did to them what he did without mercy to himself."[1] It was probably Warren Hastings who suffered most from his association with Macleane, if only because he was by far the greatest of those who had put their trust in him. He suffered both in loss of reputation from his employment of an agent who was so discredited, and from the political enmities which his agent stirred up. He had trusted and admired Macleane, as more experienced politicians had done before him, and Macleane, according to his own lights, probably served him as well as he could. But, in fact, it was the Indian climate that proved the best agent for those Macleane had tried to serve: it killed Monson, Clavering and Pigot, and ended almost automatically the cycle of

1. B.M.Add.MSS.29141, f.65, John Macpherson to W.Hastings, 13 June 1778.

disputes in which they were involved.

No newspaper carried Lauchlin Macleane's obituary, but a number of those who had known him well tried their hands at one informally. Laurence Sulivan gave the best summary of his character while he was alive, and Samuel Pechell, after his death, put in a few words the best comment on his reputation. Early in 1778 Sulivan warned his son Stephen that when he was in Madras he must remember "that you must not take all that Macleane has said, done or promised to do for for gospel. We know him a man of Mercury, and that he will fight upon his stumps." [1]

Pechell, in his letter to Hastings of 8th January 1781, wrote:

"Upon the whole, my dear friend, the best line to follow is to forget everything relating to that unfortunate transaction in which Macleane was the dupe of his warmth and double views. For I remember his shewing me a letter which I understood was in Robinson's writing, which said that his zeal for you hurt his other friend's [the Nabob's] interest. At the same time your enemies here were powerfull and indefatigable; whatever blame there is may without injury to Macleane's memory be thrown upon him - HABEAT SECUM SERVETQUE SEPULCHRO." [2]

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1. Bod., MS.Eng.Hist., C.269, Laurence Sulivan's Letter-book.
2. B.M.Add.MSS.29147, ff.26-26v., S.Pechell to W.Hastings, 8 January 1781.

Typed and checked by
James N.M. Maclean
at 14 Steele's Road,
Hampstead, London, N.W.3.
from: 28th July 1964
to: 22nd September 1964.
C O P Y R I G H T

APPENDIX 1.

Narrative of the Reasons which induced Colonel Macleane to resign the Service; dated London 13th February 1776; received in Court the next day.

Source: IOL: Home Misc. Series 286, No.14, ff.39-65.

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Narrative of the Reasons which induced me to resign the Service, that I might submit my case and conduct to the Honourable Court of Directors. .....

f.39/ Soon after my arrival in Bengal I was attacked by a very dangerous disorder under which I continued for more than three months without prospect of recovery in that climate. This induced Doctor Handcock (sic) and the other physicians of Calcutta to prescribe a sea voyage as the only chance of restoring me to health. Accordingly I left Bengal at /f.40/ the end of the Monsoon, that I might return by the beginning of the next. We were a month at sea, and before the ship's arrival at Madras I had perfectly got the better of my indisposition.

The Nabob of Arcot is of an inquisitive and curious disposition; he wishes to see, and actually sees, all strangers of any rank that arrive at Madras. He had learnt that I had been Under Secretary of the Southern Department, that I had been in Parliament and that I held an office of trust in Bengal. I was introduced to His Highness by the Governor, Mr.Wynch, who carried me from his country house to Chepauk in his chariot. As we passed along Mr.Wynch told me the /f.41/ Nabob would ask me many questions. I replied that he might depend upon it, no answer should escape from me, but what became a faithful servant of the Company to make, and I solemnly protest that I never made a reply or gave an advice to the Nabob that did not flow from my duty to the State and to the Company. I found His Highness very inquisitive, particularly to know what was thought of him in England; how he stood with the King, with the Company, with the Parliament, with the People ? I answered that in general the Nabob of Arcot stood well with the Nation of England; but that some of his measures had given umbrage to the Court of Directors. He seemed surprized. The Governor, says he, often does me the favor to breakfast /f.42/ with me at my house on the sea. I shall expect to see you often if the Governor's leisure permits him to come; I expect you will accompany him but I shall expect to see you often. I bowed and accompanied the Governor back. After this, for more than a month, I had frequent interviews with the Nabob. He seemed particularly uneasy at hearing he did not stand well with the Court of

Directors. The phrase I made use of was that he was in bad odour with the Court; that some of his measures gave them room to suspect he was aiming at an Independeney not consistent with the welfare of the Company, and that he ought to take measures to remove those impressions. He declared that he /f.43/ never entertained such a thought, that if he had erred it was without design, that he was not so weak as not to know the height and importanee to which his family had risen amongst the Musselmen of Hindostan were owing to his connections with the English, that he had invariably in the worst of times been their best ally: and that he looked on himself as embarked in the same ship as his friends, the English, and that they must sink or swim together.

He was anxious to know what in particular had given offence. I named some things and told him that unless he permitted me to see his correspondence I could not give him the sound advice he required. He ordered his Secretary to let me have his correspondence. I then pointed out many things(x) that could not

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f/n by L.Macleane (x) The manner in which he talked of his being neutrally situated with France on account of the Treaty of Paris - Expressions that had escaped him rather disrespectful to the Company - His desire to garrison Trichinopoly with his own troops - Not admitting an English garrison into Tanjore &c. &c.

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but give umbrage. /f.44/ He protested his innocence; entered into a long detail of his services to prove it and concluded with asking what he must do to remove these unfavorable impressions. I told him that England was a generous nation, which never attacked or broke faith with its allies till they either entered or were inclined to enter into hostilities against it. That his best way was to throw himself upon the generosity of England and they would give him a lasting and honourable constitution. That his error had been in separating the Company from the Nation. That whoever had told him that the King, the Nation and the Company were /f.45/ not one and the same had misinformed him. That it was his duty to look up to the King as the head of the whole; but in looking at His Majesty he should look through and not over the Company. Many conversations passed to this purpose, the result of which was a desire to know what he ought to do in his present situation. I advised him to throw himself entirely on the Nation and the Company, and to send some person he could rely upon home with full powers to settle all differences. He said he should consider the matter. At the next interview he told me he had considered my advice and found it good; that he had often been solicited for powers similar to those I had advised, but he could never

his Dominions with the stroke of his pen. He now found it necessary for him to vest those powers in somebody. "And where," he was pleased to say, "can I vest them so safely as in the person who has given me good advice." "If you," added His Highness, "will enter into my service I will send you to England, and give you full power to settle all my affairs." I protest to this Honourable Court that I did not entertain the smallest idea that such an offer would be made to me; I was consequently very much surprized at it. I replied that His Highness had many friends in /f.47/ England more capable of serving him than me, that he had also servants in Madras whom he might trust; But that I was a servant of the Company and could not accept the honour he intended me. I held besides an office of trust and consequence in Bengal and had privileges of trade which were very considerable; therefore both in point of duty and my own interest I was precluded from accepting His Highness's offer. Laying his hand upon my shoulder he replied: "My friend, the best trade you can follow is my trade. The Company I hope will not refuse me one servant, especially as I mean to employ him for mutual service. I therefore entreat you not to refuse me." In answer I told His Highness that exclusive of the reasons I /f.48/ had urged already I had the honour to live on terms of friendship with Mr.Hastings (x) now placed in political concerns at the head of all the Settlements in India, and therefore I could on no account accept the offer without his approbation and concurrence. His Highness replied: "I will write to my friend Mr.Hastings who I hope will not refuse me the service of one friend." On these terms we parted and I returned to Bengal.

(x) f/n by L.Macleane (x) May 1774, the Swallow Sloop had brought authentic accounts from Bombay of the Act of Parliament constituting the Supreme Council.

From the conversations I had with the Nabob the matters he wished to transact were these:

(1) "I wish," said he, "to deposit one copy of my Will with /f.49/ the King, a copy with the Company, and a copy with the Council of Madras, that after my decease the wisdom of the Nation may be exercised in respect of the succession. By the Musselman Law the father has the right to chuse his successor from among his children; by keeping his choice secret he is enabled to preserve harmony and peace in his family. Should I die, my children may each become competitor and bid for the succession, and if there should not at the time be a good Governor in Madras, the highest bidder might be t[illegible]n but

succession to my Dominions in my family, no immediate step would be taken /f.50/ to my detriment on my decease, and I should die in peace." "The World," added he, "imagines that I have preference for my children. They are mistaken; I love all my children and wish to provide for them. I wish to leave my Arcot Dominions to my heir and my other countries to my children as Fiefs tributary to Arcot. Should this be guaranteed to me I would enter into a treaty, offensive and defensive, to last as long as our united power should endure.

(2) I would allow my army to be regulated.

(3) I would maintain a stipulated body of horse and no more.

(4) I would maintain a stipulated body of sepoys.

(5) I would /f.51/ regulate my finances and when out of debt lend my treasure if wanted by the Company or remit it till I should want it as a resource for my family in England. By such a plan both the Company and I would be enabled to make large savings; and all that I would ask in return would be the guaranty of my Dominions and assurances that the English gentlemen would not interfere in the interior management of my countries, but that I might be allowed to govern them by my own laws and my own customs; and to convince them that I do not mean or wish for independency.

(6) I would build or agree to the building of cantonments and magazines in proper places that the Company's forces might be kept in a body fit for action to crush me if I failed in my engagements to them or in my stipulated payments.

/f.52/ When I returned to Bengal I found Mr.Hastings very much agitated by the animosities and dissentions which had arisen in the Rohilla Country between the Vizier and the Commander in Chief, and between the Commander in Chief, the officers of the Brigade and the Governor and Council relative to Prize Money; the Brigade being discontent that the Vizier's troops had received contributions and booty from the conquered country while they had been allowed none. Mr.Hastings said these things made him very uneasy lest the public service might suffer. He was afraid of a mutiny or that the war might spin out into a length he did not expect and therefore he had come to a resolution to send /f.53/ some person of conciliatory disposition to heal all these differences. "If," he was pleased to say, "your health will allow you to go I had thought of asking you to undertake this commission." I answered that I should esteem myself honored in the trust, and that my health was perfectly re-established; But I took the resolution not to mention anything of what had passed at Madras, knowing that if Mr.Hastings approved

of the Nabob's design, and thought it advantageous for me, his delicacy would have thrown his choice on some other person; and I was anxious to serve him and to execute so important a commission. I soon after set off for the Army which I reached with as much expedition as was expected, but I found the task assigned to me very difficult. I found it /f.54/ utterly impracticable to heal the breach between the Vizier and the Commander in Chief; but what related to the officers of the Brigade I perfectly succeeded in, for they were easily convinced that they had blamed the Governor and Council without cause, as they had not the power of complying with their wishes on account of a clause in the late Act of Parliament; but that it was their duty to submit their case to the Court of Directors for relief. As I am conscious that in every part of my conduct in India I strictly adhered to my duty, and as I wish most ardently to stand high in the opinion of this Honourable Court I beg leave to be a little more particular in /f.55/ my recital relative to my interviews with the Vizier, because it has come to my knowledge that General Clavering suspected me of having "fabricated the Vizier's letter against Colonel Champion." I solemnly declare that his suspicion is highly injurious to me; that I acted on principles diametrically opposite; that friendship to Colonel Champion was one of the motives Mr.Hastings assigned for sending me to the Army; and that I used every argument furnished me by Mr.Hastings and every argument I could think of myself to effect a reconciliation between the Vizier and the Commander in Chief, but in vain; for the breach was so wide between them, and the charges brought by the Vizier of such a nature, that everything I could urge proved ineffectual. Mr.Middleton, who was present /f.56/ and acted as interpreter at every interview I had with the Vizier, will bear witness[1] to the truth of this; for I was particularly careful out of delicacy towards Mr.Middleton never to go near the Vizier but in his company, and never to have intercourse with him either by letter or message. And I solemnly declare upon my honor that I never received either directly or indirectly by myself or others any present or emolument from the Vizier or any other prince or person while in India or since I left it (the Nabob ✕ of Arcot excepted)

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f/n by L.Macleane (✕) - who allows me £4,300 p. annum

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1. Nathaniel Middleton died in August 1775 (see Bodl. Lib. Vansittart Papers, Dep.b.97, p.120, G.Vansittart (in Calcutta) to R.Palk (in England), 7 Sep 1775 -"Mr Middleton died a fortnight ago after a long illness"). Lauchlin Macleane was in close touch with Palk. When he presented the above memorial in Feb 1776 he must have known of Middleton's death, and his reference to the dead Middleton as a witness was, therefore, either bluff or hypocrisy

except the usual presents of introduction, a Dress and a Horse, within the limits of my covenants; /f.57/ and I further solemnly declare that by my service in Bengal I am and must continue to be a great sufferer; unless this Honourable Court shall be pleased to take my case into consideration and grant me relief. The uneasiness consequent of a groundless suspicion will I hope plead in my excuse for this short digression, which I will conclude by saying that I was so far from fomenting the differences subsisting between the Vizier and Colonel Champion that when His Excellency pressed me to lay his complaints before the Governor and Council, I told him in the plainest language I could chuse "that he totally misunderstood the purport of my Mission; that I had been sent as the Messenger of peace and friendship but that he endeavoured to make me the Messenger of discord", and I positively refused /f.58/ to prefer his complaints. Exclusive of what I have said, I have written documents to prove that private friendship for Colonel Champion was one of the reasons which induced Mr.Hastings to send me to the Vizier.

Having returned to Calcutta I found one of the Nabob of Arcot's secretaries - Mr.Johnson - (who has since accompanied me here [to London]) sent to solicit me in consequence of what had passed at the Coast [of Coromandel] to enter into His Highness's service. On taking the advice of my friends, and being clear in point of the legality of the measure, having consulted the Chief Justice, I for the first time acquainted Mr.Hastings with what had passed and came to the /f.59/ following resolution. That if the office I held should be put on the footing I had a right to expect I would prefer it to that offered by the Nabob, which was in its nature precarious. But no notice having been taken for or against me in the late Act of Parliament, nor in the Instructions of the Court of Directors, I consequently stood upon the words of my first appointment which were, that I should "enjoy the privileges of recording dissents on Military expences in the proceedings of Council; and that I should receive the salary and emoluments of the youngest member of Council." The office I held was of great magnitude, trust and utility, and therefore deserved being put above corruption. On these grounds I moved for what I conceived, and still conceive, to have been my right; but not succeeding, I resigned my /f.60/ office and accepted of the Nabob's offer as the means of laying my case before this Honourable Court, hoping that as everything I have done has been within the line of my duty and much for the benefit of the Company and of the Nation they will be pleased to look upon me as still in their service, the light in which I have all along considered myself. As such it is my duty to

submit the ultimate decision of this matter entirely to this Honourable Court. I can venture to pledge myself that the Nabob of Arcot will ratify everything that I have set forth. If the Court declines receiving the letter, which I am charged with for them by /f.61/ the Nabob, I am ready to furnish any necessary information from and to the Nabob as a private confidential friend entrusted by him, and, if neither of these modes shall be found eligible by this Honourable Court, then I hope they will employ me in whatever manner they may judge my talents or my endeavours useful; it being my ambition to devote the remainder of the active part of my life to the service of the Company.

It may be proper for me to mention that since my arrival in England I have heard many reports which have been circulated as written from Madras and some published in the Papers assigning different motives for the commission with which the Nabob has honored me; but I /f.62/ thought it right never to make the least reply to any rumours of this nature, knowing that as soon as this Honourable Court should be pleased to hear what I had to say everything of that kind must fall to the ground. I also thought it my duty not to solicit the favor of the Directors individually before I laid my case before the Court, sensible that a matter of such importance must be determined by its own weight; and that it would be presumption in me to expect that any personal interest could be obtained when the public advantage was so materially concerned. /f.63/ It may further be not improper for me just to observe that the advice I ventured to give the Nabob has already had its weight with him, and prevented his taking some steps that might have given umbrage to the Court of Directors. I beg leave to mention three: The Nabob had determined to blow up the fort of Vellum, situated within 15 miles of Tanjore, as being needless expence to him; to resent Hyder Ally's having hostilely entered and raised contributions in his districts of Cudapa and Kinnoul; and to take a frontier country into his protection which complained of ill-treatment from the Nizam. I represented to His Highness that nothing could tend more to confirm the Court of Directors in the opinion they might entertain of his aiming at independency than his entering into measures /f.64/ of such magnitude without their knowledge or participation. That although the fort of Vellum became a needless expence now that Tanjore was in his possession, yet being a key to Tanjore it would be suspected that policy and not expence was the true reason which induced His Highness to demolish it. In respect of Hyder Ally's eruption I entreated His Highness not to think of retaliation on any account without the knowledge of the Company at home, as it might lead to a very

serious war. That while he placed his confidence in the Company they would never suffer either insult or injustice to be done to him, but would take such measures /f.65/ as wisdom and sound policy dictated. And in regard of the country claiming protection against the Nizam, I gave the same advice. His Highness approved of the whole, and took no other measure on these occasions than directing me to lay them in his name before the Court of Directors.

L. Macleane

London: 13th February 1776

APPENDIX 2.

The Memorial of Lauchlin Macleane, Agent of the Nabob of Arcot, to Lord North.

undated, but from internal evidence it must have been written between mid-1776 and mid-1777.

endorsed: "N.B. This memorial first shewn to L.d N. and then officially laid before the Secretary of State."

Source: B.M.Add.MSS.29193, ff.273-280

f.273/ My Lord,

The Nabob of Arcot having honoured me with a Commission, the purport of which is to lay himself, his family and Dominions at the foot of the Throne, I cannot without being wanting to the trust reposed in me, delay imploring your Lordship to consider the perilous situation into which that Prince, the most faithful ally that England has, or can have, in India, is brought by the orders given to Lord Pigot and the powers vested in him by the East India Company.

It is my duty to state to your Lordship on the part of the Nabob, the violence and injustice of the Company in these orders, and to reclaim the protection of the Crown that they may not be carried into execution; or if they have been executed that such redress may be given as the nature of the case requires.

Whatever reasons may have induced the Company to change their intention of supporting the Nabob in his just rights in the Carnatic and to deprive him of territories acquired with the consent of the Company, and by the aid of British arms, on stipulations made /f.273v/ prior to the Conquest and faithfully performed by him, I can venture to affirm that these reasons cannot be maintained on the grounds of justice, policy or expediency; but on the contrary that they are diametrically opposite to each.

1. In point of justice so many arguments occur that it is difficult to select

them, while the case itself is so plain that there is a danger of weakening it by using any arguments at all. No words can explain a self evident proposition. As a straight line is the shortest that can be drawn between two given points, so has the conduct of the Nabob of Arcot been the directest that could be held towards England. It has been free from warp or deviation, his blood and treasure have flowed in a full stream in the channels of Great Britain, and there cannot be a clearer proof of the rectitude of his intentions than the resolution to which he immediately came of reposing himself entirely on the honour of the Crown, upon being informed that the Crown entertained groundless apprehensions of his aiming at Independency. It has been acknowledged, and his possessions guaranteed to him by the Treaty of Paris - he has made no conquests that were not truly equitable by the laws of Hindostan, for as Soubah of the Carnatic he has a right to oblige his Feudatories to pay their tributes and perform their feudal services, or to take /f.274/ their territories from them.

The Company wrote to the Governor and Council to aid him in these cases, particularly in bringing the Rajah of Tanjour[1] to obedience. In consequence of these orders the Rajah of Tanjour was twice attacked before he could be reduced. Very valuable acquisitions of treasure and force occurred to the Company from this Conquest. Four hundred thousand pounds were paid into their cash, a donation of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds were given to the army, and three battalions of sepoys in the Company's service taken into the pay of the Nabob for ever, making the number maintained by him under the command of the Presidency ten battalions. Besides this the Nabob has paid off or taken upon himself immense debts due by the Rajah of Tanjore[1] to the Dutch and to individuals, and he has kept up a large force for the security of that country. On what plea then can the Company wrest these possessions from him ? The people of Tanjore are governed by him with moderation and justice. They acknowledge themselves perfectly happy under his government. Indeed, it has been his policy to gain their hearts by surpassing the late Rajah in his treatment of them, by employing the same servants and by making no innovations in their government but what were manifestly to their advantage. To the Rajah himself /f.274v/ he has behaved with a laxity scarcely known from the conqueror to the conquered in Hindostan; liberty and power are the only blessings of which he deprived him, and these he had forfeited by the laws.

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1. Lauchlin Macleane's spelling of Indian place-names is haphazard and inconsistent; e.g. Tanjour and Tanjore. He gave the nearest phonetic in most cases.

The only reason carrying the appearance of weight that I have heard assigned for the orders given to Lord Pigot is that the Nabob ought to have placed an English garrison in Tanjour. To this I answer that the Governor and Council were to blame, and not the Nabob, for not only omitting to make this one of the stipulations but for absolutely agreeing to the contrary. They best know why this was omitted. They best know why this was not properly negotiated afterwards. But it becomes my duty to declare, and I have the powers to perform it, that the Nabob is not only ready to admit an English officer to command in Tanjour but an English garrison also, in case the reasons which induced him to garrison that country with black troops only shall be disapproved. Nay, /Further, it is my duty to declare that I am authorised on the part of the Nabob to agree to any other regulations that His Majesty in his wisdom thinks right to form for the better government and security of the Carnatic in alliance with Great Britain.

2. In point of policy there can be nothing so prejudicial to Great Britain in India as a rupture with the Nabob of Arcot /f.275/ and it is certain that nothing can prevent a rupture in consequence of the Company's orders to Lord Pigot but the rivetted attachment which the Nabob bears to England, and his reliance on the justice and protection of the King. These will undoubtedly induce him to declare to Lord Pigot that he has prostrated himself at the foot of the Throne, and to beg a respite 'till His Majesty's pleasure be known. Perhaps his entreaties on this occasion, and the conviction which Lord Pigot must have of the Nabob's fidelity to his engagements, may incline his Lordship to wait for further orders, but should these entreaties prove ineffectual I tremble for the consequences. I fear the Nabob will not submit without violence to this infraction of our treaties with him, and I further fear that if violence is used he will stand on his defence, and by so doing give a mortal blow to the English influence and interest in India.

The French, My Lord, have not been wanting in every endeavour to raise distrust in the breast of the Nabob. They have insinuated that the English East India Company mean by degrees to reduce all the powers with whom they are connected in Hindostan to the nominal rank and insignificancy of the Nabob of Bengal. They have insinuated that possibly this may not be his own case but that it will infallibly happen to his sons on his demise, and they have gone so far as to desire him to call upon France /f.275v/ for aid when this happens as guarantee of his Dominions by Treaty. These repeated insinuations and artifices have not failed to raise his apprehensions to the highest pitch;

therefore it is that he shews so ready a disposition to gain a sanctuary for his family under the shelter of the Throne. If this sanctuary is refused him despair will dictate the measures left to him to pursue, and in desperate measures he has amazing advantages and resources. Our army on the Coast [of Coromandel] is scattered in small bodies at an immense distance from each other. Our supplies and provisions are drawn entirely from the Nabob. We have but one troop of horse in our pay, no water carriage in the country, and all beasts of burden and coolies belong to the Nabob. I do not say that the power of the Nabob would in the end prove too much for that of the English, but it would give their arms such a blow as they would never recover; for the princes of Hindostan seeing that even the fidelity and attachment of the Nabob of Arcot could not save him from total subjection, seeing also the manner in which the successor[1] of Soujah ul Doulah is stript of his power and provinces, though also in alliance with Great Britain, a universal distrust and abhorrence would at first take place, and as soon as any European power of consequence should enter the lists against us, a combination would immediately be entered into, to the hazard if not to the total loss of all the advantages we have acquired in that country. Supposing even that we were justifiable in coming to extremities with the Nabob of Arcot, the time we have /f.276/ pitched upon for its execution is peculiarly ill chosen. It is confessed on all sides that Hyder Aly, profiting of the Marratta troubles, has put his army into a very formidable condition; he has not only received the Serai Country from the Marrattas but he has made great encroachments on the Malabar Coast, having reduced the power of the Samorin [?] to the most abject insignificancy, and even hostilely entered into the districts of Cudapa and Kinnoul [sic Cuddapah and Kurnul], both within the limits of the Carnatic and consequently under the protection of the Nabob; matters which I have in instructions from the Nabob to lay before His Majesty's ministers, when they shall be pleased to receive them.

The Portuguese have also at this very hour a larger land and sea armament at Goa than they have had in those parts for two centuries back. This armament is under the command of a very enterprising genius, and is much too large for the purposes of defence. [It is a] strange time to depress and

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1. On the death of Shuja-ud-Daulah, Nabob and Vizier of Oudh, the hostile majority on Hastings's Council forced the new ruler, Asaf-ud-Daulah, by the Treaty of Faizabad (1775), to surrender in full sovereignty to the Company the wealthy zemindari of Chait Singh comprising Benares and Ghazipur (see An Historical Atlas of the Indian Peninsula, C.Collin Davies, 2nd edn., 1959, p.52).

and alienate the only natural and powerful ally we have on the Coast; a strange time to restore to the Rajah of Tanjour (who has never been our friend, but on the contrary in constant intelligence with our enemies) the only spot on which a foreign enemy could find support, provisions, or even footing, to make an invasion of the Carnatic.

The manner in which it is proposed that Lord Pigot shall execute his orders not only carries with it /f.276v/ something unworthy of the Company, but leaves an indellible stain on the honor of the Nation. Is it consistent with the dignity of the Crown of Great Britain that a Prince who reposes unlimited trust in the national justice shall not only be attacked by surprise but lulled into security, by letters written in commendation of his virtues and moderation, at the very time when orders were given for stripping him of his Dominions ? Is it consistent with the honor of the Crown to give its ally up to the wrath of a man irritated by the complaints which he apprehended the Nabob had brought against him for grievances which he supposed he had suffered during his Lordship's former administration ? And granting it were absolutely necessary to put [? restraints] on the Nabob, is Lord Pigot the proper person to execute them ? It is natural to man to be carried away by resentment, and his Lordship may be harried beyond the bounds of prudence or discretion by the opinions which he may entertain on account of the Nabob's complaints against him. There is indeed reason to believe that he has been actuated by his resentment; for the Resolution to strip the Nabob of Tanjour was not adopted 'till after his Lordship's appointment. It was with great difficulty and after much delay that a sufficient number of Directors, for giving validity to the orders, could be prevailed upon to sign them. Nine Directors who were present (much to their honor) refused to sign the letter, and one solemnly entered his protest against the measure. But /f.277/ the Nabob has the strongest of all pleas to reclaim the protection of the Crown against the violence which threatens him. He has the Royal word pledged to him. When His Majesty honored him with an Envoy he was desired to credit the words of the Plenipotentiary as if spoken by His Majesty. From that moment the advice of the British minister was a law to the Nabob, and he thought himself secure in the Royal Asylum. When it was thought expedient by His Majesty to withdraw his Plenipotentiary's powers, the Nabob was given to understand that they were no longer necessary, the Legislature of Great Britain having appointed a Governor and Supreme Council for transacting the political concerns of all India.

What then can the Nabob think of the national faith, when he finds himself

abandoned to the wrath of Lord Pigot ? if not to the resentment of the Company, who took amiss the attention which the Nabob thought it his duty to His Majesty's representative ? What can he think of the assurances he has received, when he finds that he is deprived of the benefit of the Act which vests the political management of all India in the Supreme Council, and that though all the other princes of India may appeal to them for justice he, who alone had a specific promise, is exempted ?

3. In considering the question of expediency I shall confine myself /f.277v/ entirely to the commerce and finance of the Company. Indeed it is unnecessary, after what has been said, to enter into this head at large, for if a measure is neither just nor politic it can never be expedient. It may be laid down as an axiom that the best mode of managing the British concerns in India is that which derives the greatest mercantile and national advantages with the least risque and greatest chance of permanency.

The orders given to Lord Pigot are point blank against this axiom, for the very ~~existence~~ essence of these advantages in the Carnatic is at stake the moment a war commences, whereas by receiving the Nabob into our cordial protection we ensure a permanent enjoyment of them as long as our united force endures.

The orders of the Company carry destruction to their trade and finances on their very face. The Governor and Council are directed to encrease their military establishment as far as possible, after providing for the investment; that is, put yourself into an expensive state of war to carry on your trade. It is easy to foresee after such an order what will be the fate of future investments from the Coast. But the evil, My Lord, does not stop here. Before the Company can let their forces loose /f.278/ upon an ally of England, protected by a national Treaty, on pretence of Tanjour, they must repay him the £400,000 granted by him on account of his conquest; they must restore him the £250,000 army donation; they must release him from the demands of individuals on account of debts due by the late Rajah of Tanjour; and they must repay him the £200,000 which the Dutch have received from him on account of their mortgages of Nagore----- (illegible ? Negapatam). They must relieve him from the payment of three additional battalions of sepoys, the expense of which he has agreed to bear for ever. And what is still more serious, they must persuade him to continue the payment of the other seven battalions, entertained by him prior to the Tanjour Expedition. When all this is done where is the fund for any investment, much less for encrease of forces.

There has never, My Lord, occurred so serious a crisis of British affairs in

India as this, wantonly brought on by an impolitic change of system, founded on no cause, impracticable in the execution, and tending to no advantage. For the sake of a much injured ally; for the sake of the national faith pledged to that ally; for the sake of the commerce and prosperity of this country imposes your good offices with His Majesty to avert the evils impending from so expedient a measure. /f.278v/ The remedy, My Lord, is easy. An assurance of protection from the Crown, a countermand of Lord Pigot's orders, and the final regulation of the Nabob's concerns either by the powers delegated in this country, or by the Supreme Council in India, will restore peace and confidence to his breast and rivet him in that predilection which he always entertained for this country.

I have heard it alledged that the debt paid by the Nabob to the Dutch need not be repaid him by the Company "because the Nabob has had the revenues of Tanjour long enough in his hands to indemnifie him for that expence." This opinion will be found defective in every respect. The Nabob's expences have exceeded his receipts on the Tanjour Account. The remissions of rent, and forces kept up for the defence of the country, will clearly prove this. Besides, we must take upon ourselves to subvert the constitution by which the Eastern princes govern before we can establish this principle, for if we do not allow our allies their constitutional rights over their Feudatories we weaken the very cement which binds those allies to us. But why do I trouble your Lordship with this argument ? When the policy of the Directors preposterously strikes at the existence of our allies themselves, it cannot be extraordinary that they should adopt measures which tend to diminish their influence. I shall therefore only say on this head that I imagine the courts /f.279/ of law in this country will compel the Company to afford to the Nabob as an ally of England every loss he shall sustain by the measures they are now about to pursue in the Carnatic.

Permit me, My Lord, to take a view of the benefits which would arise from contrary measures, from embracing the offer of the Nabob to leave the regulation of his Dominions to the Crown of Great Britain, provided they would guaranty the permanency of them in his family agreeable to the customs of Hindostan.

The Nabob of Arcot, fearful of the power of the Governor and Council, has been induced (by false reasoning I will allow) to adopt the ruinous measure of borrowing their money at high interest, as well as the money of individuals, thinking that while he retained their property in his hands it would be a check

upon their designs against him. The Company saw that this practice was unworthy of both parties and took measures to prevent it, but the only effect of their interposition was to encrease the interest in proportion to the risque and penalties to which the lenders became liable. Covert and evasive methods have been, and are now, shamefully practiced, and while the interest appears nominally to be ten p.cent the Nabob in reality pays more than twenty, which by accumulation sinks the whole capital /f.279v/ in four years. Hence the source of the Nabob's distress. Hence the greatest source of the fortunes got by individuals on the Coast. Hence the cause of the eternal emptiness of the Company's Treasury at Madrass, for the money (I must speak out) is lent at terrible usury to the Nabob.

Take away the cause and the effect will cease. Remove the Nabob's apprehensions, and this evil will no longer exist. He will discontinue a useless rabble of sepoys, now entertained at great expence; he will maintain only a stipulated body of useful horse; he will borrow no money; he will have an overflowing Treasury; and that overflowing he will vest in the funds of this country, as a mark of his own fidelity and as a security for his family in case of accidents.

The Company, seeing a well regulated and united army of horse and foot at their devotion, will not be necessitated to stint their investments, to augment their troops, but with prudence may improve their possessions in the Carnatic, and vie with Bengal in promoting the opulence, the commerce and the power of Great Britain.

Can an ally who offers these advantages be too well treated ? Can his offers be rejected ? Above all, can they be repaid with injustice and destruction ?

An attentive consideration of our extended powers /f.280/ in India carries conviction with it; -that we cannot maintain that power long without alliances. To the faith of our treaties with these allies and by the protection we afford them they will be retained in their duty; and the influence which they must derive from our support will enable them to give law to the lesser states around them, while great resources in point of tribute may be drawn from them without risque. This policy seems to be lost sight of at present. Our natural and best allies are oppressed. A remedy cannot be too soon applied, for the smallest delay may prove fatal. Should the Nabob, thinking he played for his last stake, cede some districts to the Marrattas, or to Hyder Ally, for their assistance, nothing but a miracle could save us from being reduced to the

single fortress of Madrass.

I have the honor to be with the utmost Deference and Respect, My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,

L.Macleane

APPENDIX 3.

Warren Hastings's Instructions to his agents John Graham and Lauchlin Macleane

undated, but probably written in late 1774 or early 1775.
endorsed: "Copy of my Instructions to Graham & McLeane"
Source: B.M.Add.MSS.29204, ff.279-282v

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f.279/ 1. The Governor General shall have the Privilege of acting by his own Separate Authority, on such urgent and extraordinary Cases, as shall in his Judgement require it, notwithstanding any Decision of the Council passed thereon. On every such occasion the Presidency shall record his Resolution to act in the Manner above specified, in Virtue of the Power thus vested in him, and shall expressly declare that he charges himself with the whole Responsibility.

2. All Civil Appointments within the Provinces shall be made by the Board at large, but the Governor General shall be empowered, of his own Authority, to prevent any particular Appointment, and to recall any Person from his Station, even without a Reason assigned. All Civil Appointments beyond the Provinces shall be made by the Board at the Recommendation of the/Governor General, and the Correspondence with the Person holding those Appointments carried on with him only.

3. The Governor General shall be the sole Channel of Correspondence with the Princes, Powers and Chiefs of India, and a discretional Power shall be allowed him to conduct it in any Manner he shall think fit, and to withold such Parts of his Correspondence as he shall judge to require an absolute /f.279v/ Secrecy; but all his other Letters shall be constantly produced at the Board; nor shall he enter into Engagements without the Resolution of the Board previously obtained.

4. Military Rank, Authority and Command shall be regulated and distinguished in the following Manner:

1. The supreme and absolute Command and Controul of the Army, and of all military Operations and Affairs, shall be lodged in the Governor General and Council collectively.

2. The Governor General shall be proclaimed Governor General of all the

Civil and Military Establishments in India, and all ostensible Marks of Military as well as Civil Superiority shall be shown to him in all Situations and on all Occasions. The Military Commander in Chief shall present to him separately, as well as to the Board collectively, General Returns of the Forces of this and of the other Military Establishments under his Command. But the Governor General's separate and independent Command shall only extend to the Troops at the Presidency, where it shall at all times exist in full Force; and to all Detachments, not exceeding in Strength two Sepoy Battalions and four Field pieces of Artillery, employed in aid of the Collection of the Revenues, or for the internal Defence and Protection of /f.280/ the Company's Provinces. The Commanding Officers of which shall receive their Instructions and Orders relative to their Conduct and Operations from him; but they shall at all times be liable to the Interference of the Authority of the Board; and the military Commander in Chief's Orders respecting their Discipline and Matters of mere Regimental Detail shall be absolute to them, as well as to other Military Corps.

Such military Commands as include in them a charge of the Collections shall be appointed by the Board, at the Recommendation of the Governor General. The Correspondence of every such Military Officer respecting the Collections under his Charge shall be carried on immediately with the Board, and his Accounts and Revenue Proceedings transmitted to them. But he shall receive Orders respecting his Military Operations from the Governor General; except when the Board think it necessary to interfere. The State of the Discipline of the Corps he commands, and matters relating merely to the Military Art, must depend intirely on the military Commander in Chief.

The Order of Military Superiority and Command shall be pointed out in the Form of Commissions to the Officers of the Army; by enjoining them to obey all Orders they shall receive from the Governor General and Council, the Governor General, the Commander in Chief of the Forces, /f.280v/ or any other Commanding Officer.

3. The Commander in Chief shall have an absolute and uncontrouled Power of directing the Discipline of the Forces, and all Matters of Regimental Detail, as well as this as at the other Presidencies; and all Responsibility on these Heads shall rest with him. He shall receive General Returns of the Troops from the different Presidencies, and deliver a General Return of the Forces of this Establishment, both to the Governor General and Council, and to the Governor General separately, at least every three months; and in the same Manner General Returns of the Forces of the other Establishments, as often as

he receives them from thence. When the Army is in the Field, or employed on actual service, and the Commander in Chief present with it, he shall of his own Authority make all Appointments and fill up all Vacancies that may happen, or which he shall deem necessary, and they shall remain valid during the Time the Troops are in the Field, or until the Service on which they are employed is concluded; after which Time it will rest with the Governor General and Council to fill up such Vacancies, or disannul such Appointments; and even if the same Persons are nominated to the same Appointments it shall be by a new Order, in the name of the Governor General and Council. /f.281/ The Commander in Chief shall recommend to the Governor General and Council all Officers for the Staff, and those which shall be appointed to fill Vacancies in the Sepoy Corps; excepting in such Cases as are expressly left to the Governor General's Appointment and Recommendation.

Detachments employed for the internal Defence of the Country, which shall exceed the limit strength of two Battalions of Sepoys and [four] Field pieces, shall receive their Orders from the Supreme Council only.

Memor[anda][1].

1. An entire approbation of my Conduct and a condemnation of that of the Majority.
2. The Recall of General Clavering and Mr.Francis. I shall be well satisfied with the continuance of Mr.Monson.
3. To fill up the Council with my Friends J[ohn] S[tewart][2] and G[eorge] V[ansittart] and if it can be L[auchlin] M[acleane].
4. To constitute the Powers of Government in the Manner I have recommended in the above Paper.

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1. The above "Memoranda" is printed in my Reward is Secondary, p.528.
2. In the original it is difficult to judge if the initials are "J:S" or "J:G", as the second initial is badly written. If it is "J.G." then the person Hastings had in mind was undoubtedly John Graham. He trusted both John Graham and John Stewart, the latter replacing Graham as agent after Graham died, and either choice would make sense.

APPENDIX 4.

Two Newspaper Advertisements concerning Pamphlets published on behalf of the Nabob of Arcot.

(A) From the PUBLIC ADVERTISER of 28 March 1777.

East India House, Mar 26 1777. At a General Court of the United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies, held Thursday at their House in Leadenhall-street, the Court of Directors laid before this Court the following Resolution passed by them this Day

"Resolved unanimously,

That the Gentlemen in the Direction finding themselves very injuriously treated in two Pamphlets lately published, one entitled A Letter from Mohammed Ali Chan, Nabob of Arcot, to the Court of Directors, to which is annexed a State of Facts relative to Tanjore, with an Appendix of Original Papers[1]. The other entitled Original Papers relative to Tanjore[2]; both printed for T[homas] Cadell, in the Strand, 1777: They therefore very earnestly entreat this Court, and all Proprietors, to suspend their Judgment on the Conduct of their Directors thus indecently attacked by an anonymous and insidious Publication, until they shall have fully and satisfactorily justified themselves to their Constituents and to the Public; for which they have already made considerable Preparations, and are bold to assure this Court, from the Materials before them, that they have not the least Doubt of refuting those heavy charges which, could they be proved, would not only render them unfit to conduct the Affairs of this Company, but utterly unworthy of every Degree of public Trust or Confidence.

The Court of Directors feel the Impropriety of noticing and thereby giving Consequence to Publications of this Nature, but as they conceive the Abuse therein contained is unparalleled, the Design and Tendency extremely dangerous, and that the Author has it in View to depreciate the Company in the Eyes of the Government and the Nation, and thereby to embarrass their Affairs, the Court of Directors hope their Constituents will not in this Instance think the formal Examination of an anonymous Pamphlet an Indignity offered to the Company."

And this Court having duly considered of the said Resolution, resolved unanimously, That this Court doth approve of the Resolution taken by the Court of Directors This Day, and desire that the same be printed in all the public Newspapers.

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1. This pamphlet was the work of James Macpherson. Both he and his kinsman John Macpherson used the spelling "Chan" for "Khan", the "Ch" in Gaelic being the exact equivalent for the "Kh" in Persian. It is listed as 10th in his works under his entry in the Dictionary of National Biography.
2. This second pamphlet may have been by James Macpherson, but has never been claimed for him, and no prove has been found to justify ascribing it to him. It could have been written by Hugh Macaulay Boyd on information supplied by Lauchlin Macleane (see Miscellaneous Works of Hugh Boyd, L.D.Campbell, London, 1800, Vol.1, pp.208-210).

(B) From the PUBLIC ADVERTISER of 29 Mar 1777

The Advertisement published in all the Newspapers, by the Directors of the East India Company, relative to two Pamphlets, stating their injustice to the Nabob of Arcot, renders this public Reply necessary.

They represent the Publications complained of "as anonymous, insidious and dangerous"; owning at the same Time, that "if the Charges contained in them could be proved they would not only render them (the Directors) unfit to conduct the Affairs of the Company, but utterly unworthy of every Degree of public Trust and Confidence."

This public and hasty Declaration leaves the Question between the Company and the Nabob of Arcot in a very delicate Situation; but it cannot with Justice be attributed to the Nabob who sought Redress from the Court of Directors with Moderation, with Patience, with Respect, nay, with Humility; and who did not apply to the Nation at large until he had lost every Hope of obtaining Justice from the Court of Directors - from the Company.

The Truth of these Assertions will be made to appear from the Records of the Company.

The Pamphlets can no longer be considered as anonymous; for I avow having furnished all the Materials of which they are composed. I assert and will prove their Authenticity; and if I fail in this Respect, I am ready to have my Name consigned to Disgrace and Infamy. They never were insidious; for their Purpose is honest, and their Publication was never disavowed; on the contrary it was known by those who complain that the second and principal Publication would appear unless their doing Justice to the Nabob prevented it. Dangerous they certainly are; but the Danger remains for those who dare to infringe the public Faith, and oppress an Ally of Great Britain; and not for those, who, being injured, sue for Redress.

To whom shall the Allies of Great Britain complain, if oppressed, but to the King, the Parliament, and the Nation ? The Nabob, before he made this Appeal, offered to leave the Decision of his Rights to the Company; depositing the Revenues of the Country, of which he has been unjustly deprived in the Company's Treasury, and agreeing that the Administration should be placed in the Hands of three Commissioners, one to be named by the Company, one by the Rajah of Tanjore, and one by himself, 'till the Question of Right should be decided. He requested, he supplicated that the Court of Directors would reconsider the Orders which deprived him of his Rights contrary to the Faith of Treaties, the National Interest and the National Honour; but his repeated Entreaties, his Supplications, were rejected. Could a stronger Proof of his unalterable Attachment be given ? One only could, and that I am commanded to give. The Nabob of Arcot trusting implicitly to the Justice and Honour of this Nation, waves his independent and sovereign Rights and submits his Cause to the Decision of the Laws of Great Britain. L.MACLEANE Agent for the Nabob of Arcot.

nd-street,
n 29 1777.