

FRANCES MEADE (NÉE ILIVE) (c 1758 – 1823)

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Frances Meade (née Ilive) was a sister of Elizabeth, the Countess of Egremont and Thomas Hamilton Ayliffe. She married two officers in the British Army — Lieutenant James O'Shanly, who died less than three years after their marriage; and Augustine (later Augustus) Meade, who joined the Army after their marriage and attained the rank of Major and Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel. She is not known to have had any children.

Frances was born in about 1758 or 1759.¹ She was a daughter of Abraham and Cecilia Ilive.²

It is likely that Frances was born in Ireland. Abraham, who had been a printer in London and Southwark in the 1730s and 1740s, filed a complaint in the Irish Court of Exchequer in 1752.³ Frances's younger brother, John, was baptised at St Andrew's church in Dublin on 15 November 1762.

Frances had at least three other siblings: Maria who was born in about 1764 or 1765,⁴ Elizabeth who was born in about 1769, and Thomas who was born in about 1773 or 1774.

In a notice written in Oxford and dated 24 January 1777, Frances's father, Abraham, stated that he had a wife and four children, was 'confined to his Bed by a severe Fit of Illnefs', and was 'in want of the common Necessaries of Life'.⁵ It is apparent that Frances was the eldest of those four children. Abraham was buried at St Thomas the Martyr in Oxford six days after the date of the notice.

On 5 June 1778, Frances made a sworn statement in the parish of St Clement Danes, Westminster on behalf of her sister, Maria. Frances stated that she was aged about 19 years, that Maria was aged about 13 years, that she and Maria were the daughters of Abraham Ilive, and that their mother was then living in the workhouse of the parish of St Botolph without Aldersgate.⁶

Frances married James O'Shanly on 3 March 1781 at St Margaret, Westminster. According to the record of the marriage, both Frances and James were of that parish.

On 5 June 1781, James O'Shanly, Esquire made a will in which he referred to 'my dearly beloved wife Frances O'Shanly'. In the will, he stated that he was of James Street, Golden Square (within

¹ As referred to below, Frances made a sworn statement on 5 June 1778 in which she stated that she was aged about 19 years: *St Clement Danes, Examinations Books, 1776–1779*, Westminster Archives Centre, Ms B1184, p 189.

² See Jeremy Masters, 'Mr Ayliffe, Surgeon' and 'This Ingenious Lady': *Uncovering the Origins of Thomas Hamilton Ayliffe and Elizabeth, the Countess of Egremont* (2015); Sheila Haines, Leigh Lawson and Alison McCann, *Elizabeth Ilive, Egremont's Countess* (2017).

³ Ireland Court of Exchequer, Bill Books, 3 March 1752.

⁴ A woman named 'Maria Eliff' of Brewers Row, aged 50, was buried at St Margaret, Westminster on 16 December 1813. This may have been Maria Ilive. The abbreviation 'GD. St M Yd' appears before the name in the burial record. According to a flyleaf in one of the burial registers for the parish, that abbreviation denoted 'Great Duty' (the burial fee that was paid) and 'St Margaret's Yard' (the location of the burial). Brewers Row was in the street now named Spenser Street. See William Faden, *A Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster, with the Borough of Southwark Including Their Adjacent Suburbs* (4th ed of Richard Horwood's Plan, 1819).

⁵ *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 25 January 1777.

⁶ *St Clement Danes, Examinations Books, 1776–1779*, Westminster Archives Centre, Ms B1184, p 189.

the parish of St James) and that he was a ‘Lieutenant of the African Corps stationed at Goree’. The will was proved on 13 May 1784.⁷

In 1777, James O’Shanly had been a Lieutenant in the Régiment de Berwick,⁸ which was a regiment in the Irish Brigade of the French Royal Army.

A document made in 1895 in relation to the public records and State Papers of Ireland refers to a record dated 1792, being a ‘Will, Probate or Grant connected with Will’, in relation to ‘O’Shanly, James (*alias* Shanley), Dublin and London, gentleman’.⁹

James O’Shanly was an officer in the African Corps of Foot on the island of Gorée, off the west coast of Africa, under the command of Governor Joseph Wall.

James was made an Ensign in the African Corps of Foot on 25 February 1780.¹⁰ Joseph Wall had entered the Corps, as its Commandant, in the same month. At the time of James’s entry into the African Corps, *The London Gazette* referred to him as ‘— O’Shanley, Gent.’¹¹ It appears that James had not yet joined the Corps at Gorée by January 1781.¹² James attained the rank of Lieutenant on 6 February 1781¹³ (that is, a few weeks before his marriage to Frances).

Wall was hanged in 1802 following his conviction for the murder of one his soldiers, Sergeant Benjamin Armstrong, at Gorée on 10 July 1782.¹⁴ James was the officer on duty at that time.¹⁵ He was present at the flogging of Armstrong and five other men, which occurred on Wall’s orders. James was one of three officers who were within a circle of soldiers within which Armstrong was flogged, the others being Captain William Lacey and Lieutenant George Fall.¹⁶ James was reported to have made the following sworn statement:

JAMES O’SCHANLEY, Lieutenant in his Majesty’s African Corps of Foot, also maketh oath, and doth swear upon the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, that he was Officer of the Day, both on the 10th and 11th days of July 1782, and saw on the 10th in the afternoon, the following men punished, Serjeant Armstrong with eight hundred lashes, and George Robinfon with eight hundred lashes ; and on the morning following,

⁷ National Archives, *Records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury*, PROB 11/1117, pp 120–1.

⁸ John O’Hart, *Irish Landed Gentry* (1887) p 558.

⁹ *The Appendix to the Twenty-Sixth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records and Keeper of the State Papers in Ireland* (1895) p 662. See also p 770. The record may have been lost in the fire that destroyed the Public Record Office in Dublin in 1922.

¹⁰ *A List of All the Officers of the Army* (1780) p 198.

¹¹ *The London Gazette*, 30 May – 3 June 1780 (Number 12088), p 1.

¹² A monthly return of the African Corps of Foot for the period from 25 December 1780 to 24 January 1781 recorded that James was one of a number of ‘Absent Officers’. Whereas the other absent officers (Captain Roberts, Captain Lacey, Lieutenant McNamara and Lieutenant Fall) were recorded as having been absent since particular dates in 1780, the return simply stated ‘Not joined’ in relation to James. See J J Crooks, ‘A Statement of Events in Senegal and Goree, 1758 to 1784’ in *The United Service Magazine* (1916) vol LII, p 530 at p 532.

¹³ *The London Gazette*, 20–24 February 1781 (Number 12164), p 4; *A List of All the Officers of the Army* (1781) p 179; *A List of the Officers of the Army* (1782) p 183; *A List of the Officers of the Army* (1783) p 183.

¹⁴ James was referred to on numerous occasions during the trial: see *The Trial of Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph Wall for the Murder of Benjamin Armstrong, on the 10th July, 1782, at Goree, in Africa* (1802) pp 5, 9–10, 15, 23, 36, 38, 41, 45, 48, 50, 52, 54, 69–70, 76–7, 91–2, 102–3, 124.

¹⁵ *The Times*, 5 February 1802, p 3. See also *The Trial of Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph Wall for the Murder of Benjamin Armstrong, on the 10th July, 1782, at Goree, in Africa* (1802) p 76 (evidence of Mrs Lacey).

¹⁶ *The Trial of Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph Wall for the Murder of Benjamin Armstrong, on the 10th July, 1782, at Goree, in Africa* (1802) pp 23, 38 (evidence of Evan Lewis), 41 (evidence of Roger Moore), 48 (evidence of Thomas Poplett), 52 (evidence of Peter Ferrick), 69–70 (evidence of Joseph Wall), 91 (evidence of John Faulkner), 102 (evidence of Peter Williams).

being the 11th of July, Corporal Thomas Upton received 350 lashes ; George Paterson, 800 lashes ; William Evans, 800 lashes ; and Henry Fawcett, 47 lashes. That this punishment was inflicted upon the said seven [sic] men, without trial or public hearing ; that they were flogged by several black men, changed at every twenty-five lashes, with inch rope, knotted ; and that Corporal Upton died on the 13th, Serjeant Armstrong on the 15th, and George Paterfon on the 19th July, in consequence of the inhuman punishments imposed by Colonel Wall.¹⁷

That the tyranny of Colonel Wall was so violent, that no officer or man dared act or speak according to his sentiments, unless they coincided with the interests of the said Wall, nor did this deponent ever think his reputation, his bread, or his person, free from danger while he was under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Wall.¹⁸

James died on 26 January 1784 during the passage of the transport *Willington* from Gorée to England.¹⁹

On 3 June 1784, Frances O'Shanly made a sworn statement in which she stated that she had been lawfully married to James O'Shanly, late a Lieutenant in the African Corps. Thomas Poplett, who had also been a Lieutenant in the African Corps at Gorée, certified on 4 June 1784 that James had died on 26 January 1784 and had left Frances unprovided for. He recommended Frances 'as an Object of his Majesty's Royal Bounty and Compassion'.²⁰ In his evidence at the trial of Wall in 1802, Poplett stated that James had died on the passage from Gorée to England, that James was in the same transport as him, and that he (Poplett) had arrived in England on about 24 February 1784.²¹

On 22 February 1785, Frances was brought in to the 'Master's Side' of Newgate Prison as a debtor prisoner.²² She was recorded as being a debtor prisoner on the 'Common Side' of

¹⁷ *The Times*, 5 February 1802, p 3. The article states: 'We have received a very long Letter from Mr. FERRIT [sic] the Surgeon who gave evidence on Governor WALL'S Trial, in which he wishes to explain a part of his evidence, which he says has been much misconceived by the Public. The Letter is much too long for our insertion ; but we shall take such parts of it as are material to his own vindication, and the justice of the late sentence. ... Mr. FERRIT encloses the depositions of different Witnesses [including of James O'Shanly] ...'

¹⁸ *The Morning Chronicle*, 5 February 1802, p 3. The article states: 'We have received the following letter from Mr. FERRICK, who was Surgeon at Goree at the time of Armstrong's being flogged to death. Mr. F. conceives that as the affair has become the subject of general conversation, it is proper for him to explain why he did not interfere to prevent excessive punishment being inflicted. Mr. F. would have given the explanation in Court when examined, but the rules of evidence prevented it. This is the substance of the introductory part, which we omit for want of room. We give the explanation entire.' The letter stated: 'I will only add, that there are ample materials for such a narrative, and I refer as part of those materials, to affidavits that were taken by the Officers and men.—[The originals of these affidavits are in the hands of the Solicitor of the Treasury, and copies are left at the office of this Paper.]' A notice in *The Sun* on 5 February 1802 at p 2 states: 'Two Papers of this Morning contain a Letter from the Surgeon who was present at the punishment inflicted upon *Armstrong* and the other two Soldiers by Governor WALL at Goree, in July 1782, and likewise the Affidavits with respect to this transaction, of some of the deceased Officers.'

¹⁹ See *The Trial of Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph Wall for the Murder of Benjamin Armstrong, on the 10th July, 1782, at Goree, in Africa* (1802) pp 15, 45, 50; *A Complete Collection of State Trials and Proceedings for High Treason and Other Crimes and Misdemeanours* (1820) vol XXVIII, pp 62, 84, 88, 155; J J Crooks, 'A Statement of Events in Senegal and Goree, 1758 to 1784' in *The United Service Magazine* (1916) vol LII, p 530 at p 536.

²⁰ National Archives, *War Office: Officers' Birth Certificates, Wills and Personal Papers. British Officers and Their Families*, WO 42/36/O107, p 492.

²¹ *The Trial of Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph Wall for the Murder of Benjamin Armstrong, on the 10th July, 1782, at Goree, in Africa* (1802) p 50. According to a disembarkation return, the *Willington* arrived at Portsmouth on 23 February 1784: J J Crooks, 'A Statement of Events in Senegal and Goree, 1758 to 1784' in *The United Service Magazine* (1916) vol LII, p 530 at p 536.

²² National Archives, 'List of Prisoners on the Master's Side: Newgate Prison', PCOM2/172.

Newgate Prison on 28 February 1785 and 7 March 1785, and was discharged by warrant on 12 March 1785.²³

On 25 October 1785, Frances O'Shanly married Augustine Meade by banns at St Martin-in-the-Fields.

On 9 February 1803, an infant daughter of Frances's sister, Elizabeth, the Countess of Egremont, was buried at Petworth, Sussex. The infant was also named Elizabeth. In 1847, Jane Lucas, who had been employed as a nursery maid to Elizabeth, recalled that the infant was taken ill in the night and that, as no clergyman could be summoned in time, Elizabeth's sister, 'Mrs Meads', baptised the baby after its death.²⁴

On 7 June 1808, Cecilia Maria Ayliffe (a daughter of Frances's brother Thomas) was baptised at St Patrick's Catholic Chapel in London. 'Francisca [Frances] Mead' was recorded as being the godmother.

Augustine (later called Augustus) Meade was a son of Augustine and Elizabeth Meade. Augustine senior was a merchant in London. After the death of Augustine senior, Elizabeth continued operating the business. The Meades were Catholic.²⁵

'Augustine Meade, Gent.' was made an Ensign in the 13th Regiment of Foot in about April 1795.²⁶ He was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant in the 13th Regiment on 3 September 1795.²⁷ 'Lieutenant Augustus Meade' joined the 48th (Northamptonshire) Regiment of Foot as a Lieutenant on 26 October 1796.²⁸ He was made the Captain of a Company in the 39th Regiment of Foot on 9 July 1803.²⁹ He was made a Major of the Maltese Corps on 8 December 1804,³⁰ and a Major on half-pay of the Regiment of Malta in 1811.³¹

In 1836, Giorgio Mitrovich, whose father had been an officer of the Royal Regiment of Malta, stated as follows in relation to the capture of Capri by French forces in 1808:

The Royal Regiment of Malta, about 950 strong, left Malta on the 10th November 1807, under the command of Major Meade, to join the army in Sicily. About ten months afterwards, on their passage from Sicily to the island of Capri, they landed at Diamante, on the coast of Upper Calabria, and there captured a convoy belonging to the enemy of thirty-eight richly-laden small vessels and four gun-boats. This so enraged Murat, that on the 4th of October 1808, a few days after the arrival of the regiment at Capri, that

²³ National Archives, 'List of Prisoners on the Common Side: Newgate Prison', PCOM2/171.

²⁴ Sheila Haines, Leigh Lawson and Alison McCann, *Elizabeth Ilive, Egremont's Countess* (2017) p 67.

²⁵ See M Casteleyn, 'Augustine Meade: A London-Based Irish Catholic Merchant' in *Catholic Ancestor: Journal of the Catholic Family History Society* (2010) vol 13, pp 62–9. In a will made on 9 June 1788 and proved on 7 November 1789, Elizabeth stated: '... I give to my Sons Augustine Christopher and Andrew Meade their own respective Pictures now in my Possession and all other my Effects whatsoever'.

²⁶ *The London Gazette*, 25–28 April 1795 (number 13773), p 380.

²⁷ *A List of the Officers of the Army and Marines on Full and Half-Pay* (1798) p 197; *The London Gazette*, 22–26 September 1795 (number 13816), p 986.

²⁸ *A List of the Officers of the Army and Marines on Full and Half-Pay* (1798) p 197; *The London Gazette*, 15–19 November 1796 (number 13953), p 1117.

²⁹ *The London Gazette*, 20–23 August 1803 (number 15613), p 1071.

³⁰ *A List of the Officers of the Army and Royal Marines on Full and Half-Pay* (1805) p 43; *The London Gazette*, 11–15 December 1804 (number 15762), p 1499. See also C T Atkinson, *The Dorsetshire Regiment: The Thirty-Ninth and Fifty-Fourth Foot and the Dorset Militia and Volunteers* (1947) vol I, p 305, who states that Augustus went 'to Maltese Corps as Major 5.1.1805'.

³¹ *The London Gazette*, 1–4 June 1811 (number 16492), p 1029; *The Royal Military Chronicle or British Officers Monthly Register, and Mentor* (1811) vol II, p 287.

island was attacked by an expedition conveying a body of troops, amounting to 6000 men, under Gen. Lamarque, who succeeded in taking possession of the island, and making prisoners of war the greater part of the regiment. I deem it proper, upon the assurance also of respectable officers, impartial eye-witnesses not natives of Malta, to declare, in as far as regards the men, that they behaved most gallantly, and that they gave the fullest satisfaction to all the officers commanding them, English, German, and Maltese ; and if the opinion of the majority of the officers had been acted upon, the regiment would have taken or destroyed all the enemy's troops that had effected a landing. These had landed on the narrow and enclosed beach of Damacuta, and had there sheltered themselves, under some rocks, from the fire of the Maltese ; but the commanding officer of the regiment, Major Hamill (Lieut.-Col. Sir John Pringle Dalrymple and Major Meade being absent on leave), fearing the loss of many of his men by the heavy cannonading to which the Maltese would have been exposed from the enemy's armed vessels (consisting of a frigate, a corvette, another vessel, and about thirty gun-boats and mortar-boats), opposed the general opinion of the officers and the ardent desire of the men themselves, demonstrated by loud and oft-repeated huzzas, and would not allow even a single detachment to move forward from the position which he had selected, to a place from which the enemy might have been attacked in the narrow and rocky position occupied by them at that moment, so that they would have been obliged either to re-embark under a heavy fire of musketry from the Malta Regiment, opening upon them as soon as they should move, or they must have surrendered at discretion. . . . The Major's [Major Hamill's] want of experience caused the loss of the greater part of the regiment and the sacrifice of his own life.³²

Augustus was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel on half-pay of the Regiment of Malta in June 1811.³³ He had the rank of Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel when he was made a Major of the 91st Regiment of Foot on 28 February 1812.³⁴ He was in the 1st Battalion of the 91st Regiment, and was slightly injured at the Battle of Toulouse, which was one of the final battles of the Napoleonic Wars, on 10 April 1814.³⁵ Goff stated of the battle on that day:

The French that day had lost 5 generals and 3000 men killed and wounded ; while the allies lost 4 generals and 4600 men. The 91st had 1 sergeant and 17 men killed, and 7 officers—namely, Colonel William Douglas, who commanded the brigade after Pack was wounded ; Meade, Walsh, Callander, J. Macdougall, Hood, and Colin Macdougall—and 98 men wounded : a lamentable spilling of blood, and useless, as Napoleon had already abdicated.³⁶

Augustus retired from the Army in 1818.³⁷ He was given the rank of Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel 'on the continent of Europe only' on 19 October 1826.³⁸

Augustus detailed his record of service between 1795 and 1809 in a statement dated 13 December 1809.³⁹ A transcription of that records appears in an annexure to this document.

In 1817, Augustus was a member of the United Services Club,⁴⁰ which was a London gentleman's club founded in 1816 for use by senior officers of the Army and the Royal Navy.

On 25 September 1821, Frances made a sworn statement for the purpose of 'Replacing an Officer's Widow on the Pension List'. She referred in the statement to the death of James

³² George Mitrovich, *The Cause of the People of Malta* (1836) pp 80–2.

³³ *The London Gazette*, 1–4 June 1811 (number 16492), p 1029; Major A G Chesney, *Historical Records of the Maltese Corps of the British Army* (1897) p 66.

³⁴ *The Army List, for May, 1816* (1816) p 46; *The London Gazette*, 29 February – 3 March 1812 (number 16579), p 406.

³⁵ *The London Gazette Extraordinary*, 26 April 1814 (number 16889), p 880.

³⁶ G L Goff, *Historical Records of the 91st Argyllshire Highlanders* (1891) p 64.

³⁷ G L Goff, *Historical Records of the 91st Argyllshire Highlanders* (1891) p 347.

³⁸ *The London Gazette*, 31 October 1826 (number 18301), p 2751.

³⁹ 'Statement of The Service of Major Augustus Meade Royal Regiment of Malta' (National Archives, WO 25/747/29).

⁴⁰ *An Alphabetical List of the Members, with the Rules and Regulations, of the United Service Club* (1817) p 33.

O'Shanly, and stated that had no pension, allowance or provision from government. She gave her address as 48 Sloane Square, Chelsea.⁴¹

Augustus attended the funeral of Frances's sister, Elizabeth, the Countess of Egremont, in Watchet, Somersetshire in January 1823. Frances's brother, Thomas, organised the funeral, and the Earl of Egremont met the funeral expenses. These included the cost of mourning wardrobes for Thomas and his family, Frances and Augustus, and others. Augustus and Thomas stayed at Watchet for the funeral.⁴² Two of Elizabeth's sons were the chief mourners in the funeral cortège. Augustus and Thomas were recorded as also being part of the cortège: 'Two other Mourners (Mr. Aileff & Col. Meade, brother & brother in law of the dec'ed)'.⁴³

A woman named Frances Meade was buried at St Pancras Parish Chapel on 8 April 1823. The burial record states that her residence was 106 St Martins Lane. A notation beside the record states 'C', which may stand for 'Catholic'.⁴⁴ Although the woman's age was not noted in the burial record, the fees paid for the burial (£1/11/6) were payable in respect of non-parishioners who were 'Grown' (as opposed to 'Children').⁴⁵ It appears likely that this was Frances Meade (née Ilive). If that is correct, then Frances died about three months after her sister Elizabeth.

In the 1841 United Kingdom census, Augustus Meade was recorded as an 'Army P [Pensioner]', aged 80 years, and living in Princes Place in the parish of St James, Westminster.

Augustus Meade was buried on 27 January 1850 at All Souls, Kensal Green. The burial record states that he was aged 91 years and that his abode was 4 Princes Place, St James.

⁴¹ National Archives, *War Office: Officers' Birth Certificates, Wills and Personal Papers. British Officers and Their Families*, WO 42/36/O107, p 494.

⁴² Sheila Haines, Leigh Lawson and Alison McCann, *Elizabeth Ilive, Egremont's Countess* (2017) p 96, citing Somerset Record Office, DD/WY, Box 199.

⁴³ Sheila Haines, Leigh Lawson and Alison McCann, *Elizabeth Ilive, Egremont's Countess* (2017) p 98, citing Somerset Record Office, DD/WY, Box 199.

⁴⁴ The Rev Daniel Lysons, *The Environs of London Being an Historical Account of the Towns, Villages, and Hamlets, within Twelve Miles of that Capital* (1795) vol III, p 351 observed: 'The church and church-yard of Pancras have long been noted as the burial-place of such Roman Catholics as died in London and its vicinity.'

⁴⁵ See *Report from the Select Committee on Courts of Law and Equity* (1842) p 74.

Annexure

Transcript of 'Statement of The Service of Major Augustus Meade Royal Regiment of Malta'⁴⁶

I was appointed early in 1795 Ensign in the 13th Regiment, and in 1796 Lieutenant in the 48th Regiment.

Early in 1797 I proceeded, agreeably to orders, to join the Regiment in the West-Indies. On my arrival at Barbados, I found that the 48th Regiment had some months before returned to Europe. I received directions to repair to Martinique to obtain a passage to England, which General Sir Ralph Abercrombie had been pleased to order me. But as there appeared no probability of Transports sailing for England for several months, I availed myself of the Packet to join my Regiment.

Upon a representation of the then Secretary at War / the Right Honourable William Wyndham / of the heavy Expence I had incurred in conforming to my Duty I obtained, in Aid of this Expence / exceeding one hundred and fifty pounds / a Grant from the War Department of Twenty Five Pounds.

I was subsequently employed with my Regiment under General Hunter, and was detached upon the Recruiting Service into Pembrokeshire.

At the expiration of a Leave of Absence from the King, I proceeded with a Detachment of the 48th Regiment to Gibraltar, from thence to Minorca and eventually to Malta, where I served with the Regiment during the Blockade, and at the Surrender of that Island by the French in September 1800.

The 48th Regiment having in Malta volunteered their Services to accompany Sir Ralph Abercrombie's Expedition to Egypt, the offer was accepted by Government. We embarked for the purpose of joining the Egyptian Army, and continued in this position for many days. Intelligence in the mean time arrived of Alexandria having surrendered to the British Force. The Regiment was ordered to disembark, and remained in Garrison in Malta until early in 1803, when it was ordered home.

I then obtained a Company in the 39 Regiment which during the Bustle of the Threatened Invasion of the Enemy, was employed upon the Coast of Sussex in Major-General Spencer's Brigade. A short time before the Embarkation of the Second Battalion for Guernsey, I was detached into Shropshire upon the Recruiting Service.

Whilst in England, the Communication and Correspondence which I had kept up with respectable persons in Malta together with my knowledge of the French and Italian Languages had enabled me to mature a Plan, Advantageous to Government, for Augmenting the British Force in this Island by the Admission of the Natives into our Regular Service.

My Suggestions were submitted to the Commander-in-chief. His Royal Highness was pleased to approve of the humble Exertions of an Individual / at a period when Government had actually stipulated with the Army to grant Rank for a certain proportion of Men / And in Consideration thereof I was nominated in December 1804 to a Majority in the Royal Regiment of Malta, under

⁴⁶ National Archives, WO 25/747/29.

Lieutenant-General Villetes, and proceeded accordingly to this Island to assist in forming the New Levy.

Upon the Arrival of Sir James Craig in Malta I volunteered by Services to accompany his Expedition [to] Italy, but was ordered to devote my whole attention to the New Levy.

In 1807 the Royal Regiment of Malta was employed in Suppressing Froberg's Mutiny.

Upon Lieutenant-Colonel Sir John Dalrymple and Major Hamill's obtaining Leave of Absence to go to England, the whole charge of the Regiment devolved upon me, and a few months afterwards I had the satisfaction of Embarking it for Sicily, under the approbation of Lieutenant-General Sir Charles Green.

Whilst in Garrison in Mefsina, I took the liberty to solicit Sir John Sherbrooke to employ the Regiment wherever there might be a prospect of Service.

Being subsequently ordered to Augusta, the Command devolved upon the late Major Hamill, upon his return from England.

Under his Orders I accompanied the Regiment upon the Expedition against Diamante in Calabria, and Commanded the Second Division at the Attack and Capture of that Place.

Proceeding from Thence to Capri I there disembarked with the Regiment.

The accident of a short Leave of Absence which I had obtained to go to Sicily upon my own private concerns, prevented my being present with the Regiment at the Attack of Capri by the Enemy in October 1808.

I actually did however repair thither the instant this Intelligence was communicated in Mefsina, and arrived previous to the Surrender of that Island, where I received in charge the small remains of the Regiment who had effected their retreat to Lower Capri and were employed in its defence with the Royal Corsican Rangers.

After the Capitulation I re-conducted these Men to Sicily. A Board of Claims having been subsequently appointed for the Investigation of the Claims of such Individuals who became entitled to His Majesty's allowance for Losses of Baggage, and finding myself one of the principal Sufferers by the Fate of Capri, my Horses and the whole of my Effects and Personal Baggage having fallen into the Enemy's hands, I accordingly submitted by claims under the Sanction of the Commander of the Forces.

The Board of Claims, after a full Investigation, of the merits of my case, had no hesitation in awarding me the Grant allowed by the King's Regulations for my Losses.

Sir John Stuart however having, in his own mind, established a Maxim "that the Public were not responsible for Losses sustained by Officers during their Absence," gave his Negative to the Decision of the Board of Claims in my favor.

By this Exertion of Power in the Command of the Forces / although the propriety of Submitting my claims to the Board had previously met with His Excellency's Sanction / I have been totally deprived of any compensation for [losses] which many years service will scarcely allow me to retrieve.

The Command of the Royal Malta Regiment, whilst in Sicily, and the Inspectorship of the Calabrese Corps being united in Lieutenant-Colonel Sir John Dalrymple, I found myself in a manner unemployed, and in consequence took the liberty to offer my services to Sir John Stuart as a Volunteer upon his Expedition last Summer. I received orders however to do duty in the Garrison of Mefsina where I continued until the Embarkation of the [Regiment] for this Island in August last.

The Commander in Chief will judge that the slender fortunes of a Soldier are inadequate to the loss of property which I have Twice sustained during Fifteen years service, which I beg to submit to His Consideration, and at the same time to state that I have sufficient knowledge of the principal Languages spoken in the Mediterranean / French and Italian / to render me useful, at all times that He may judge expedient to grant me Employment, and to command my further Services in this Quarter.

Aug^s Meade

Major Royal Reg^t of Malta

Malta 13th December 1809