

Diary of the Siege of Pondicherry by an English Fleet, Commanded by General Boscawen.

INTRODUCTION

In reading through this translation of the French original, it is important to take the following points into account:

1. The original diary was written by an anonymous author. It is evident, from the quality of the language, that the author was well-educated and almost certainly of the quality of an officer, clergyman, doctor, etc.
2. Written in 1748, the document naturally uses the spellings of the day, i.e. of the ‘ancien régime’ These include, in particular, the uses of many accents which are differently used in the French language of today. However, there are many inconsistencies in their use and this can, at times, be confusing.
3. More confusing is the lack of full stops. Combined with inconsistent use of upper case letters, the start a new sentence is not always obvious. The English version tries to rationalize this and it is hoped that errors of meaning have not been introduced as a result.
4. It should be remembered that in 1748 Britain was still using the Julian calendar, whereas the remainder of Europe, including France of course, used the Gregorian calendar. This means that the dates reported for a particular event would differ by 11 days, British dates being earlier than the French. For example the date of arrival of the majority of Boscawen’s ships is reported in the diary as 7th August whereas Boscawen himself reports it as 28th July. All the action takes place between July and October of 1748. Since this narrative precedes the Napoleonic period, measures of weight and distance follow the system still adopted by the English-speaking world. For distances I have replaced the frequent use of ‘toise’ (fathom, or 6 feet) by twice the far more commonly used English word ‘yard’ (3 feet)
5. Unfortunately, there are a number of words, largely technical, of which I have been unable to find a translation – even having consulted the online versions of ‘Dictionnaire de l’Académie Française’ which covers the 18th century. Rather than guess, I leave it to the reader to determine the meaning but enter the original in italics.

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The Diary

On the 7th August 1748, the English fleet anchored before Cuddalore, the English roads 2 leagues away from Pondicherry. It is comprised 21 vessels, of which 8 are warships of 50 to 70 guns, nine Company ships, two brigantines, one bomb ketch and a (*Bolls*). They met with seventeen vessels at Cuddalore, six warships, making a fleet of thirty-eight ships.

It is said that Boscawen’s squadron passed by the Isle de France where they tested the strength of the batteries, and sailed on. It is thought that they became scattered, because they arrived one after the other. Boscawen arrived on the 5th of this month, two others arrived and the rest came in on the 7th. They landed at least 300 sick and it is reported that 5 of their vessels are missing: The squadron should have comprised 26 vessels. This fleet remained at Cuddalore until the 21st August when they came to anchor a quarter of a league to the south of the town of Pondicherry, close to the fort of Ariancoupan. During the night, the enemy then came up to half a league to the south of the river Choumнар.

22nd August. We saw that at Ariancoupan, where they made their landing, they sent 400 sepoys to a place where we had set up a camp for the whole summer but which had been raised on the first of this month because of the rains. This camp is placed on the bank of this river Choumнар on the opposite from the maximum range of the guns of the fort of Ariancoupan. At half past three in the afternoon, the English, separated into three groups and wanted to take over this camp but the sepoys, commanded by a brave man (of their

nation) called Ceid Cassem, did not believe that they should leave it without striking a blow, although the enemy seemed to number more than two thousand. The sepoys lay stomach down in the shelter of several poorly constructed earth works which had not been fully removed when the camp was abandoned. When they saw the enemy within close range, they rose up and fired. They fought for an hour and a half and pushed the enemy back in three stages by a rolling fire which felled more than two hundred people. We were astonished, and at the same time favourably impressed by the valour of our sepoys: But M. Dupleix (our Governor), not wishing to lose such brave people, made a signal to the fort of Ariancoupan to order them to pull back. They did so with regret. It was even necessary to send out a detachment of dragoons to order them to do so verbally. They only had three men wounded.

23rd August. The English disembarked for this fort a further two thousand men, together with their General Boscawen, ammunition and six 6-pdr. guns. One of our soldiers from Ariancoupan deserted at 6 o'clock in the evening to the English who were intending to pass to the west of Ariancoupan to come directly to Pondicherry. However, they found this very difficult since they had to cross fields, bogs and stacks of (*Nely*) which were channelled for irrigation. This deserter explained all these difficulties and persuaded them to go straight to the fort of Ariancoupan by a well made route which he showed them. He told them that there were only forty men in the fort, advised them where the powders were kept and, in a word, he got them to understand that there would be nothing easier than to raise this fort, by placing themselves in the precincts of the Church of Our Lady of Ariancoupan and in a large garden where there was a (*Taupe de Mangiers*) which would offer them cover. He offered himself as a guide and settled them for the night in this garden and in the churchyard. All this was very pleasing to General Boscawen because, being in control of this fort would simplify communication with Cuddalore, with and without the need to take a long roundabout route to keep in touch with his ships. Seeing himself as master of such an advantageous position, he considered that he only had to come close to the fort to take it since it was very small, having only ten guns and, since the soldiers had described the commander, called M. De la Touche, as a small man without great presence, but with the heart of a lion. This had been hidden from the deserter.

24th. General Boscawen detached forty of his most intrepid men, supported by four hundred others placed opposite the gate of the fort, onto the track which led to the church. They were not well hidden so that M. De la Touche was able to see them. He let them approach as far as the drawbridge so as to see them clearly, since it was at daybreak when they were in the position where he was preparing to receive them. He welcomed them with grapeshot, grenades and musket fire so vigorous that only two of them escaped. Two were taken prisoner with seven others wounded, among whom was an officer who had his leg broken. He chased after the 400 men who withdrew with loss. The engagement lasted for two hours. It had begun at 5 o'clock in the morning and ended at 7 o'clock, since the enemy continued to fire their guns and to send several detachments which did not fare any better. We killed about two hundred men here. We do not know exactly how many were wounded. This traitorous deserting soldier was found in the ditch among the dead. At ten o'clock, M. de la Touche wrote to General Boscawen to say that there was a large number of dead and wounded and that, if he wished to remove them, he would grant him an hour's cease fire. The general replied that he would accept the offer and promised him, in very polite terms, to offer him the same as soon as the situation presented itself. From quarter past ten until a quarter past eleven the enemy were occupied in removing their dead and wounded, and the nine prisoners were sent to Pondicherry. At 11.15 they started to fire shells into the fort of Ariancoupan. Ten of them fell into the fort but did no damage; the others fell into the ditch. Between Pondicherry and the fort of Ariancoupan there is a river with three feet depth of water, sometimes more and sometimes less, since there are seasons when there are up to 7 feet of water, and others when it only reaches up to one's knees. This river is very close to Ariancoupan. On its bank, on the Pondicherry side, and at a height which commands the Ariancoupan, two earthwork redoubts have been built, each supplied with four guns to defend its passage. Some say that these are useless precautions. Nevertheless, at ten o'clock in the morning, Monsieur Dupleix ordered M. Paradis to the camp behind these redoubts. He got there at 11 o'clock. He noticed that one of these redoubts gave openly onto the Church of Our Lady of Ariancoupan and the garden where the enemy was encamped. He then informed M. Dupleix, who sent him four guns which were set up and got ready to fire at two o'clock in the afternoon. They had so much effect that the enemy was forced to de-camp, to recross the river Chounrnaar and to set themselves up in our former camp, which was achieved at 5 o'clock in the evening. During this time, to M. de la Touche's annoyance, there were some straw huts which provided cover for the English and from which came some musket

fire which was inconvenient to him and to which he was unable to reply since it was hidden from him. Resolved to set fire to these to clear the place, but not daring to sacrifice any men to carry out this operation, and finding himself highly embarrassed, chance offered him a little Malabar boy, about ten to eleven years old and a dare-devil, to whom he offered a reward. He was given two torches (these are very resinous pieces of wood which are used in place of torches during night marches). He ran like a rat through these huts and set fire to some fifteen of them. When he had returned he was sent to M. Dupleix who asked him many questions to which he replied appropriately. He was asked, among other things, if he had not been afraid. 'I am so small' he said. 'that I thought that they would take me for a fox and so as a result, I had nothing to be afraid of.'

Between the Ariancoupan river and Pondicherry M. Dupleix had established a camp of four thousand men, as many whites as sepoys, to resist the crossing of the river and to support the fort of Ariancoupan and the two redoubts.

As all this was taking place, in the town of St. Louis and, since the enemy knew about this camp, we climbed the ramparts and bastions to salute the king, as is customary, by three firings of musketry and one of all the guns, except the Barbet batteries on the seaward side, and the troops in camp.

25th August. St. Louis' Day. The enemy has worked the whole day to retrench at the coast at medium gunshot range of their (*bouque en bas*), to place their munitions and their (*Bouque*) in safety. And they disembarked all their people at six o'clock in the evening and made a movement as if they were abandoning their camp and were transferring to their new entrenchments. This manoeuvre made us make one also. Eight hundred men entered the town at eleven o'clock in the evening through the Villenour Gate and left by the Cudalore Gate to observe the English. But on the morning of the 26th we still saw several tents in their first camp. Since they were quiet, our troops returned.

27th, The enemy has completely abandoned their first encampment. They have set up a battery of six 24-pdr. guns to attack the fort of Ariancoupan out of range of its own which were only 6 or 8.

28th They bombarded the fort of Ariancoupan and the two redoubts the whole day long with the battery that they had set up the evening before without making us lose the positions that we are occupying.

29th. During the night of the 28th to 29th, the English came to take over the enclosure of the church of Our Lady of Ariancoupan, but they found a detachment of 200 sepoys who chased them and who took five prisoners, amongst whom was a white sailor and two English deserters who said that the Captain General of Artillery had had both thighs removed by a cannon shot, which is a great loss because he was an important artilleryman. The whole morning they fired at and bombarded the fort of Ariancoupan which did not respond, but at 3 o'clock in the afternoon they did answer with a battery of two 12-pdr. guns which hit them on their flank and which upset them greatly. The fort of Ariancoupan and the western redoubt fired as well at a small battery which they had brought forward and which was knocked out. It was noticed that they were setting up another even further forward. At 9.45 they attacked the camp. One single musketry discharge pushed them back.

30th August. At daybreak, the battery that they had started the evening before was found to have been completed. It attacks from the flank ours of two 12-pdr. cannons, which upsets us greatly. For this reason, we decided to make up a detachment of eight hundred sepoys, sixty volunteers, forty caffres and all the dragoons to support them to go out to spike the guns of this battery. They would have achieved this if the troops had marched according to the orders and the plan which had been given to them, but the enthusiasm of the dragoons caused us to miss our objective since, instead of following the infantry, they placed themselves at the head and, without taking account of the fact that they could not move as rapidly as they, they forced the retrenchment of the English, put to flight the four hundred men who were guarding it, and took thirteen prisoners among whom there are two senior officers. One is called Laurens (Lawrence) who is the Major of the troops, and the other Brousse (Bruce) who is captain of one of the companies. The dragoons were only 60, commanded by M. Cochinas because M. Dauteuil, who commands them had gout, when the enemy had recovered from their previous state of terror. And, since they saw so few people, they recovered their arms,

which they had thrown down, and the major part of the army became scattered. Having seen this, the dragoons abandoned the foray. M. Cochinas' horse having collapsed under him due to the wounds that he had received, forced him to give himself up as a prisoner. If the orders and plans had been followed, the guns would have been spiked and 400 prisoners taken, which could possibly either have forced the English to re-embark or to flee to Cuddalore. This action had only frightened the enemy since the dragoons and the volunteers, who followed them closely, killed many people and returned in glory with thirteen prisoners. We only lost M. Cochinas, two dragoons, two volunteers and three horses who died on the battlefield and whose riders are prisoners.

At half past eight in the morning one of the prisoners was taken from Ariancoupan to Pondicherry. He passed the eastern battery. A number of people were curious and surrounded him to question him. As this was happening, an enemy 24-pdr. cannon ball, which pierced the parapet of our battery, fell onto three wagons full of war munitions which caught fire. These three wagons jumped up and fell on top of these people. They killed outright forty-two people among whom was the son of M. Passy, of whom only his sword was found, and burned forty men who were taken to the hospital where two died. It is hoped that the others will recover.

This accident has thrown us into such a great deal of consternation that we did not wish to risk the brave people who were in the fort of Ariancoupan for much longer. They received the order to abandon it, to spike the guns and to blow them up. This was done at mid-day. There were in this small fort, eighty five men, as many white as black, who all came to Pondicherry in good condition. They climbed down by a ladder which the English had left during their first attack. Whilst they were climbing down their guns continued to fire, the six last men each fired their charge and spiked the guns one after the other. The fort blew up an hour and a half after mid-day. The English only took it over at three o'clock when they raised their flag. In the evening, one heard the celebrations that they were making at Cuddalore for the capture of Ariancoupan. The following morning we got our troops to retire to within our boundaries and to disarm the batteries which were on this side of the river Ariancoupan.

1st September 1748. The enemy have ceased firing their guns because their range of their batteries could not reach our boundaries.

3rd and 4th of this month. Eight vessels left Cuddalore sailing north.

6th. The enemy, not having dared to cross the Ariancoupan river where there are four feet of water, travelled upstream and made a detour of two leagues without being observed. They were only seen at the top of a group of tamarind trees where they took the road to Oulgaret to come to attack our boundaries. At two o'clock in the morning they began the attack from the side of the Valvadour Gate with field pieces, bomb mortars and grenades. We replied until four o'clock in the evening when we decided to withdraw all our troops into the town. Seeing that they were not people to accede to doing this, we withdrew all the artillery from the batteries for the benefit of the musketry. We set fire to several straw huts and everything had been withdrawn by six o'clock in the evening.

7th. The enemy, who are not people not to risk things, have not yet dared to enter our boundaries, which has given us the time to withdraw two 12-pdr. guns which had been set up in a battery formed of 4 on the side of the (*Banque de Barre*) to deter them from crossing at this point.

8th. The enemy are camped at the 'Grand Oulgaret' and stretch along the Tamarind tree slopes. This is an important position from which they wish to make their attack between the Valvadour Gate and that of Villenour, which is the weakest place in the town. We fired several cannon shots of 24 pounds and sent them some shells of 200 which made them withdraw their camp beyond the range of this artillery, and also made their guns of about the same calibre cease fire.

9th September 1748. This morning at one o'clock after midnight, the Bomb ketch arrived in the roadstead. We fired several shots from the shore battery which did not prevent her placing herself within range to fire some shells at us, although their calibre was 18 or 24. She started up at 4 o'clock in the morning. At six

o'clock, M. Dupleix went up to the Royal Battery to observe it. Several people went with him there: the people of the bomb ketch apparently saw them, since they despatched a shell which fell very near to us and which made him duck, as well as the rest of us, causing no person to be wounded. Immediately, M. Dupleix ordered that we should send her back as many shells, which caused her to cease fire at 7 o'clock in the morning. She withdrew a sufficient distance so not to be concerned nor she a concern to us. This morning at one hour past midnight, M. Paradis made a sortie with six hundred men. He patrolled the limits where he found no one nor any works started. He took three Malabar prisoners in the service of the English. He returned back for the town at daybreak. Immediately, we set out to find a 12-pdr. gun which was not able to have been recovered at the same time as the rest of the artillery the day that we abandoned the boundaries. At 7 o'clock in the evening the bomb ketch began to shell the fort. She fired 14 of them of which she had despatched 7 this morning. There are several of large calibre which did not explode at all. They are filled with combustible material to set fire, but, since they are pressurized, they enter three feet into the sand which covers them immediately and, being fused, this stops them from having any effect, and which means that we absolutely do not understand of the objective of the English.

10th September. The bomb ketch began to fire at 4 o'clock in the morning, just at daybreak. She despatched 14 shells. An English deserter came in who said that the first of our bombs had fallen in the enemy's camp where it had killed or wounded ten people, one of theirs had broken the neck of one of our horses, another fell in the fort, on the church of which it had removed a piece of the cornice of the room which serves as a prison for M. la Ville Cague Mahe (brother of M. de la Bourdonnais). From the Valvadour gate we fired several gun shots at the place where it was believed that the English were seen working on their retrenchments. Three hundred sepoys made a sortie to the boundaries where they chased an English detachment of which they killed two men and wounded several. They had two men wounded. They left at eleven o'clock in the morning and returned at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. The vessels which had been anchored to the south, opposite Ariancoupan, went to anchor north of the town at the same distance that they had been to the south. There are fifteen of them of which two are of 74 guns, the bomb ketch included.... Which only commenced firing at 9 o'clock in the evening and ceased at midnight. She fired seven shells.

11th September 1748. At 4 o'clock in the morning the bomb ketch started to bombard us again. We let them do so until half past 7 when we sent them one which made them quiet. At 10 o'clock she started up again until mid-day and at 4 o'clock in the evening she restarted until nightfall. At eight o'clock in the morning we fired briskly at the enemy from the Villenour and Valvadour Gates to interrupt their works, which continued until mid-day. Two hours later the spies having reported that there were only two hundred men guarding these works, we made a detachment, made up of dragoons, volunteers, grenadiers and 400 sepoys, to chase them away and to gather them up. They were at 300 yards from the town. The detachment left at three o'clock in the afternoon. But, despite the covering fire that we made from our guns, the enemy noticed them. They immediately sent a detachment of a thousand men to cover their own men who gave more than they got. We killed or wounded 180 men. We had fifty disabled and four officers, of whom M. Paradis, who was commanding the said detachment, was one. He was dangerously wounded in the head, also M. Astruc and then M. Morin. M. Roche was killed on the spot. The detachment had returned at six o'clock in the evening. The sepoys did not do very well because they understand nothing of these sorts of attacks, but the other troops distinguished themselves, among others, six volunteers who had retrieved the field pieces which were in danger of being taken by the enemy. Five had six pagodas each and the other not having wanted any money at all was made an officer.

M. Paradis made his confession after his first dressing had been applied. His wound starts at the back of his head. We withdrew half of a lead ball from the front, a finger's length from his forehead. He stopped growing paler as soon as he had confessed, which he could only do in a very low voice. At ten o'clock in the evening he was taken to the hospital in the room of M. Cairfourgt, his friend.

12 September 1748 VV

At daybreak the bomb ketch began to fire. She has two mortars which she fires at intervals of six minutes one after the other. She paused at 10 o'clock in the morning but, M. Dupleix having caused the firing from the side of the enemy camp and their trenches, sixty gunshots which were fired like a (*Meslés*) salute of

bombs, the bomb ketch brought into play again its mortars at six minute intervals until an hour and a half after mid-day. Four bombs fell into the fort, one onto the government's commercial building where it broke a (*Poultre*), another at the foot of the small powder store on the left hand side coming in through the Royal Gate, and another at the Dauphine Gate which shook a staircase leading down to the ditch at the Colombier bastion. Mr Paradis was given extreme unction in the afternoon .

13th September 1748

Death of M. Paradis.

This morning, at 3 o'clock. M. Paradis was trepanned. At ten o'clock, I saw him rally for a time. He died at eleven o'clock in the morning. They opened up his head and found the other half of the ball when they trepanned and withdrew eight slithers of bone and a piece of his hat and a tuft of hair from his wig which had been pushed into his brain. He was universally regretted by everybody.

The enemy are trying as much as they can to open up the trench. The bomb ketch fired shells all day. 4 officers were created to replace the dead and wounded.

14th September. The bomb ketch was quiet last night. She started again at daybreak and fired at the fort all day. A shell fell there at the small door on the right hand side as one enters, and killed a man there at six o'clock in the evening. She ceased fire and then started up again at ten until two o'clock in the morning and, although she sent more than 30 canisters, none hit the houses. A poor woman, seated on a (*poval*) near to our house was killed, which made me leave at two o'clock in the morning to go to sleep in the fort.

The sepoys who roam around the town during the night took prisoner 4 English sailors and a ship's officer who were leisurely dining after having disembarked. It is said that Aliburton (Haliburton), one of the principal English officers, had been killed during the affair of the 11th of this month. He had saved himself from Madras during the siege with fifty men that he had led to Cuddalore.

15th September 1748. The bomb ketch started at daybreak to despatch some shells, but M. Dupleix having ordered return fire, they came so close that she hauled herself off and did not fire again all day. She began again at a quarter to nine in the evening until midnight. One of her bombs fell at M. Elyas' house (since at night she fires to the north and to the south of the fort) where she set fire to a warehouse belonging to the Company, which was put out by the rain, which did more damage to the enemy's entrenchments than a detachment which had sallied out during the night was able to do. Without any support, it was unable to carry out the orders which it had been given. They only took one prisoner, an English serjeant.

16th. The bomb ketch did not bombard us at all during the day, but did so during the night. One of her shells fell into the office of M. Dupleix where it broke doors and windows, a large mirror and a cabinet where there was all his correspondence which, happily, did not catch fire. Another fell at M. Dubosset's house where it destroyed an office where he had wished, the day before, to place his wife and children. Although the enemy are still 1200 yards away from the place, we send them some shells to interrupt their works. We fired one at them a 5 o'clock in the evening which (according to spies' reports) killed 15 of their men.

17th. At daybreak, we got the bomb ketch to cease fire by sending them a few shells to make them stand off; but she started up again at night at her anchorage and fired so accurately that she despatched a shell which fell in the government commercial building where it (*acornee une maitresse poultre*) and broke a dozen (*barottin*) The others fell left and right within the town on which one was on M. Elyas' house, which smashed several pieces of furniture. The rest caused no damage. The same day, M. Dupleix received a letter from General Boscawen which explained to him that the rumour had spread among the Polygars that, if they are in the neighbourhood, they will be made slaves and sent to the isles; and that he was convinced that M. Dupleix took no part in spreading this tumour, since that nation was born free. As we have some of them in our service, M. Dupleix replied to him that this rumour was false, but he was obliged to those who had given him the same news since it could only instil terror among the English Polygars.

18th 7ber. The bomb ketch left us at rest for the whole day. At six o'clock in the evening she had slipped her anchorage to move to the north, because the St. Laurent bastion mortar threatened her, and this prevented her from firing during the night. We sent some shells, and fired some guns onto the enemy's works which only served to interrupt and inconvenience them.

19th at 6 o'clock in the morning the bomb ketch fired two shells which were only able to reach the walls of the St. Louis bastion outside the town. The sepoys made a sortie against those of the enemy who had advanced to within the boundaries. They fought for an hour and a half. Ours chased the English out of the boundaries. They killed several of them and wounded several others. We had three wounded. To keep the bomb ketch in check, at least during the day, we brought to the St. Louis bastion the mortar which was on that of St. Laurens. In effect, she hasn't fired at all during the day because she was constrained by its fire during the day to stand off, but she comes closer at night time and despatched two shells into the town, of which one came onto a straw hut where there was nobody. She smothered it without setting it on fire. The other caused no damage. All the others fell outside the town. We continued day and night to fire at and to bombard the enemy in their trenches to interrupt their works. They are 940 yards from the town.

20th September 1748

The besiegers on the landward side have fired several shells at us, but they are small and have only landed on a battery of two guns which is at 400 yards from the town. The Fort St. Louis mortar prevented the bomb ketch from firing during the day and those fired at night fell outside the town's walls on the glacis, with the exception of five which fell to the north of the town but without causing any damage.

21st in the morning. We count that up to now the bomb ketch has fired 350 shells or canisters which have crushed a straw hut, killed one man through his own fault, a black woman sleeping on a (*poyal*), a small boy, a horse, a pig and a goose.

The English have established a battery of cannons and mortars opposite the Valvadour gate from which they are attacking Fort St. Joseph, the Sanspeur bastion and the Nordon bastion and from which they are firing shells which are coming in as far as the town. There are even some which have landed close to the missionaries where all the nuns have taken refuge. This has caused Mme Duplex to withdraw to the fort today. The nuns have been with the missionaries since the 9th of this month. The enemy has advanced their trench by about sixty yards.

22nd. The bomb ketch bombarded us the whole night. At daybreak, the sepoys made a sortie and fought with the English sepoys. They managed to kill many of them. Ours had 7 men wounded and two killed. We have received, as much from the sea as from the land, eighty shells which have caused no damage. We have fired back to the enemy around forty, and as many gunshots.

23rd One of the besieger's shells from the landside killed a sepoy. They have increased their battery by 2 mortars and fired 101 shells at us. By night, the bomb ketch has despatched 29, of which only two came into the town and caused no damage.

We saw on the hill where they mess, 400 Moorish horsemen, two elephants and two camels who, we think, are come to help the English. These people have never seen shells. Curiosity has brought them to the English battery who, to satisfy them, have fired with more vigour. But, our people, having noticed this large number of people sent one which landed in the middle of them and which certainly wounded a few of them, since we saw them scatter very quickly and run as fast as they could towards the hill.

24th September 1748.

We continued to fire and to bombard the enemy's works. During the night the bomb ketch despatched 28 shells and the besiegers' trenches fired 98. We calculate that, up to today, 900, as many from the sea as from

the land, which have not done much damage. The spies have reported that the bomb fired yesterday killed two horses and wounded several Moorish horsemen.

25th. The bomb ketch has apparently realised that she was not making a lot of progress where she had been anchored, since she did not fire at all during the night and at daybreak had set sail. She anchored opposite the sea gate.

The English are working at setting up a gun battery at about 800 yards from the town. Those of their mortars continue by day but not by night. One of their bombs killed a Malabar, and another removed the back-side of a Malabar, at six o'clock in the evening. The bomb ketch fired three shells into the fort, one to the south and the other to the north of that fort. She stopped at six o'clock in the evening.

26th. Today at 11 o'clock in the evening the bomb ketch started to fire shells again. She continued until two o'clock in the morning. Also, at 11 o'clock in the evening, we made a sortie composed of dragoons, volunteers, grenadiers, sepoy and caffres. A party of them went as far as the position of the English battery and hid themselves there in ambush under the cover of the earth which the English had thrown up from below, and when they climbed up to finish them, our people fired their volley at those who then fell down and backwards. At the same time we fired some shells at them which interrupted their work for this night.

Our sepoy and caffres have gone to set up an ambush at the place where the English disembark. At day-break, they saw 14 or 15 long boats which were ready to land. They fired on them and forced them to re-embark and then faced an enemy detachment who had come to assist in the landing of the equipment that the long boats were bringing. They chased them in the sight of the whole English army which had not taken the trouble to cover themselves. The commander of the English detachments and two serjeants were killed here and they had many wounded.

We had two sepoy killed and five wounded. The caffres performed miracles. It was they who killed the English serjeants. One dressed up in the clothes of one of the dead men, took his halbard and his sword and presented himself in this accoutrement in front of the governor and said to him. 'me, am English serjeant'. They are very upset with the English since Griffin had not wished to accept an offer that M. Dupleix had made him, the year before, of five Englishmen for five caffres taken in a long boat.

27th 7ber. The bomb ketch relocated herself more safely. She then again took herself to her first position yesterday at 11 o'clock in the evening and started to fire shells and only stopped at 2 o'clock. She started up again at 7 o'clock in the evening. At ten o'clock Monsieurs Le Marchand, Naval Commandant, Le Vayer, officer, and Ogev, Port Captain, were wounded by a bomb which fell between them and the Sea Gate, the first and the last slightly, M. Le Vayer dangerously.

The English bombard us from the land by day and from the sea by night. We return fire with accuracy by land.

28th 7ber. At 2 o'clock in the morning the bomb ketch began to fire shells at us until half past 5 and between 8 o'clock in the evening and midnight 4 fell within the fort, one in the (*Godon*) of the Surgeon, called M. Lafitte, the other close to the room where M. Dupleix sleeps, making a lot of noise, and the 2 others in the square. On land, the English have established a battery of two guns which only send cannon balls into the town at full volley.

29th We calculate that up to now we have received 1400 shells. The bomb ketch only started a half past three in the morning since it has been raining from midnight until this time. And from 7 o'clock in the evening until midnight, she fired 42 shells of which 8 fell into the fort. One of these fell onto the (*voute*) of the guardhouse of the Royal Gate where it exploded. It only penetrated 14 inches. From the land, the English have operated their battery which only penetrates into the town at full volley.

30th. The bomb ketch fired from 4 o'clock in the morning until half-past five and from 7 o'clock in the evening until midnight.. She sent 52 shells, 10 of which fell into the water. By land the English fired several

gun shots at full volley of which many fell within the town, others landed against the walls and others only made their marks and fell into the ditch. The largest are three inches deep. They sent no shells during the day, and very few during the night. We fired at them the whole day and shelled them, which interrupted their works.

First of October 1748.

From 4 o'clock in the morning until 5 and from 7 until mid-day, the bomb ketch fired 57 shells which did no damage. We completed raising a battery of guns at 400 yards from the town which fires on that of the enemy in flank. His guns are of 16 pdr. balls. Despite our efforts, the enemy has 7 guns in two batteries, one of 4 guns and the other of 3. Mm. Valin and Passy, and Mme De la Morandiere died of illness this evening, the first two in hospital and the last with the reverend father missionaries.

2nd. The enemy has fired, as much from the land as from the sea, 142 shells and have fired many ricochet gunshots to hit the walls where they made their marks. As for the preceding day, one of our guns in the external battery burst and only wounded three men slightly.

3rd. Before dawn this morning we made a sortie of about a thousand men who were dragoons, volunteers, sepoy and caffres with two cannons of the type which fire 21 shots in one minute. The plan was to go into the enemy trenches but M. de la Tour, the commander, noticed that several long boats were about to land, which made him change his mind. He hid his men, allowed two fine 24 pdr. guns to be disembarked and set up on their wheel levers, that we call 'big devils', and whilst the vents were being prepared to aim them, he fired upon the sepoy on one hand and the caffres on the other, The first fired on the long boats, which were obliged lay off. The others fired at the escort which was of some 2000 men, the greater part of the detachment supporting them. The enemy tried to make some sort of resistance but, having first discharged, and seeing our sepoy join up with the troop, they withdrew and allowed their levers to be removed with their guns. It was removed from the enemy camp where 6 companies, who did not dare to fight, and who left these guns to be taken from under their noses to one and a half leagues from the town and close to the shore. We only had two sepoy killed and nine wounded. We reckon that on the enemy's side about a hundred men were rendered ineffective.

This morning a 24 pdr. gun of the advanced battery burst and by some sort of miracle only wounded five men. The breech was thrown to the rear by more than 40 yards, the front part was carried forward, and the centre part broke into several pieces. An Enemy ball fell onto the trunnion of the other gun, broke and smashed the breech into a thousand pieces without wounding anyone. There were more than 30 men around this gun. In the same battery an enemy shell fell into a ditch where there were 120, 24 pdr. cartridges. It caught fire. The powder burned without doing any damage to anyone, although there were more than 50 men in the area of the battery, busy in dismantling the broken gun.

After the removal of their two guns, the besiegers fired like madmen. They sent shells and balls without number. A servant of M. Duplex had a leg broken and 5 or 6 coulees were killed.

4th October. The enemy fired many gunshots and shells. We count the latter, up to today, to be two thousand, as many from the land as from the sea. Two big vessels have come to anchor opposite Pondicherry but outside the range of the guns. During the night we remounted the external battery which has been operating since the morning. We are constructing two more with a communication trench.

5th. At daybreak, the besiegers revealed a battery of 10 24-pdr. guns which they had hidden and started to fire from it, along with the two others of 4 and 3 and another small one with two guns. This means that they have 4 batteries which make 19 guns of 24, 16, 12 pounds which are firing at the Nordon bastion, that of St. Joseph, the Sanspauvre, the Valvadour Gate and that of Madras. But all these batteries are more than 800 yards away from the town. The balls, which do not reach the wall, cross into the town and reach as far as the Jesuits. We think that they have 12 mortars, both large and small, because we have seen 12 shells in the air at the same time. There are 2 soldiers killed of whom one is called St. Cloud.

6th 8ber. The Enemy has fired from all their batteries. They have destroyed the castellation of the whole of the Nordon bastion so that in the evening we could not fire any more. Several people believe that it will not be long before the enemy makes a breach at this place.

They have sent an infinite number of shells. We reckon 3500, as many by sea as by land. A ship came closer by sounding close to the walls of the town. We fired some gun shots from the St. Louis fort which made her stand off.

7th 8ber. This night, we repaired the Nordon fort with some sacks of earth. We filled in all the holes so that it is in a state to defend itself as it was before. We also repaired the chain of the drawbridge of the Villenour Gate, which had been carried away by a shell, as well as the cross-bar.

This night the ships appeared opposite the town's walls and a quarter to 6 in the morning, they each fired their broadsides. They fired for an hour and a half and have despatched two thousand balls all of which fell into the water. For this reason we did not reply at all.

During the night, the bomb ketch sent us twenty eight shells and from the land the enemy sent a deluge which they made explode in the air and which, thanks be to God, did no harm to anyone. Their fire ceased at half past six in the evening.

Tuesday 8th October.

The bomb ketch did not send any bombs during the night, but the land began to bombard at mid-night. The ships moved last night to closer than they were yesterday, but outside the range of our guns. Either their powder is better than ours or our guns are not as strong as theirs, although we have some 12, 18 and 24-pdrs. They moved 10 V(essel)s as well as the bomb ketch. They started at a quarter past 6 by firing all their broadsides and continued until a quarter past 6 in the evening. The balls of 30, 24, 18, 12 and 8 entered the town and the fort. Those above fell under the barrier and on the flat (that is to day the sea). There were a few which landed against the wall. It is only by chance since the muzzles of their cannons were elevated to fire balls like shells. They damaged several houses as much from the northern side as from the southern and have set fire to each of them. They fired eighteen thousand balls or shells. Others say twenty thousand, based upon our paying for 16,000. Since the Malabars collect them. M. Dupleix, from the beginning of the siege, ordered that they be paid one fanon for each of them. One can not see anything more disheartening nor frightening than this continual fire that they made during these twelve hours. Despite the number of balls which rained down upon the whole town (For there was no corner free from receiving them) the Malabars run to collect them. The appetite for earning a fanon caused eight to die and as many to get wounded. All the area around the fort and within it are strewn with pieces. The walls and the earth are all pitted with the marks of cannon balls and bombs. This has caused more fracas than it caused damage which amounts to up to two thousand pagodas to repair. Only two shells fell inside the fort of which 1 on the small door of the chapel on the left as you go in which broke it into pieces, the other on the cornice of the treasury which it broke and which afterwards fell to earth outside where it made its hole without wounding anybody. A ball pierced the wall of the treasury and fell inside. The firing stopped suddenly as I said above at a ¼ past 6 in the evening and the bomb ketch not having restarted firing until half past nine in the evening, M. Dupleix left the fort to make his rounds and issue his orders for the repair of the bastions. He pointed out the batteries to repair and others which were to be taken down, among others, that which is at 400 yards from the town. He used all the lascars, the masons and the coolies with such efficiency that by 9 in the morning there were forty guns which were aiming at all the enemy batteries. M. Nolan, an officer freshly come from Europe, died of sickness this night. There were two priests.

9th 8ber. The enemy started to fire again at midnight. They killed a lizard and a (*maquois*) among 200 who repaired the battery which is outside the town. To cover these people we fired from the batteries which are in a good state. At a quarter to 3 in the morning one of our shells fell in a place where there was apparently some enemy powder. This made such a big noise that the whole town shook. Those who are at the batteries, saw the fire but did not know of the damage that it caused it. This morning we searched for some better powder that had been distributed to the batteries at the seaward side which fired at the English vessels still in

evidence. One of our shells fell into a ship which must have worried her since she hauled off. Immediately, the other vessels did the same.

This evening at 7 o'clock the (*parias*) caught a messenger of the English who was carrying a letter from Boscawen to one of his ships' captains. It explains that he is annoyed at the death of Mr. Adams. He congratulates him in that he had only had his armchair carried away from underneath him without having experienced anything worse and that, if he had been poorly treated at sea, it is no better ashore. He orders him not to place anything in danger.

The bomb ketch began at 8 o'clock in the evening to launch its shells. She is only firing them one at a time. She stopped at midnight, and had only sent twenty, but the mortars on shore have sent so many of them that we counted 480 during the 24 hours, mostly small. The English minister who had his leg broken during the attack on Ariancoupan died this night.

10th 8ber. All the batteries being in condition, this morning we fired on those of the enemy. Happily, they were so successful that, of the twelve mortars which were firing, there are now only five, and of nineteen guns there are now only ten, which has reduced their fire since, during the 24 hours, they have only fired 200 shells and that the bomb ketch has not fired since midnight yesterday since she had (*colume*)

11th. This morning we saw the bomb ketch in the line of the other vessels. She did not fire at all this night. Our batteries are performing marvels ashore. We have knocked out 7 guns of their large battery which was composed of 10, 24-pdr. guns. They still have a small battery of 6, 8 pdr. guns but which is further away and only sends its balls at full volley into the town. The ships sent their long boats to raise their anchors which they had placed on the land side to be catted. The seaward batteries fired on them and made them abandon their plans.

12th The bomb ketch launched no bombs during the night apparently because she is tired since she stopped at midnight. We calculate a thousand sorties from its bowels in thirty days. We are therefore only besieged from the land, whence the enemy fire is much reduced. They only launched 80 shells. They have only (*peus*) two guns in their large battery. They are only firing 8 guns. Their battery of 6 carries at full volley and passed a little beforehand into the town; several balls fall at the foot of the wall. The sepoys made a sortie a little before daybreak. They fought with the English sepoys whom they put to flight and from whom they captured 50 fusils.

3 English deserters came to us who told us that the accident of the 9th in their camp had killed 40 men and wounded 50, also that the English were preparing to raise the siege, but that they still wanted to make a final effort.

The Dutch from Negapatam sent them two companies one of which is commanded by a man called M. Roussel, who left the French service based at Mahe, who still has his wife and children at Pondichery, having formerly been in the service of our Company.

13th 8ber. The bomb ketch is still moored before Pondicherry out of range of its guns. All the English vessels set sail and moved back to the north of Pondicherry. There were 22, of which two remained with the bomb ketch.

M. Dupleix got a battery of 6 guns established in a battery hidden inside the walls. Our land-side batteries are still firing against those of the English who have only fired 30 to 40 times during the day and have only sent 14 shells. They still have two batteries, one of 2, 24-pdr guns and one of 6, 8-pdr. guns. We saw a large convoy leave their camp, well escorted, going towards the sea. We believe that they are decamping.

14th The bomb ketch is still anchored before Pondicherry. The enemy still has 8 guns in its battery. They have only fired 14 shells and fired a few cannon shots which have immobilized two of our guns, one at the mouth and one at the breech. We saw a large convoy embarking with a large escort. Towards 11 o'clock in the evening a French deserter arrived from the English, a native of Chateauroux en Berry, who was taken

prisoner in Scotland during the flight of the Pretender. He says that truly the English are raising the siege because most of their batteries are dismantled, because the season is too far advanced to construct any more and to bring up any fresh artillery; that these last three days our batteries have killed 39 to 40 men each day, and 12 to 20 the days before, without counting what they have lost before; that the tally amounts to nine hundred. Munitions from a brigantine that left from Negapatam, four thousand English, when they arrived, and two thousand English sailors; that the Dutch had sent him two companies of a hundred men each, with a quantity of munitions, by a brigantine which left Negapatam in September; and that in poligars, moors and sepoys there could well have been two thousand men; that he had always counted upon eight thousand combatants; that the auxiliary Moorish troops went at 9 o'clock. He said that General Boscawen is still ashore with nine hundred men and two field pieces; that he should embark at 4 o'clock in the morning with the remainder of the artillery. We returned this morning.

15th 8ber. Since last night six deserters have come in, the last at 6 o'clock in the morning. This is a sailor who left the camp yesterday evening. HE SAYS ARTILLERY. We made a sortie at 5 o'clock in the morning at the sea side which made no progress because a brigantine fired on it.

At 6 o'clock in the evening the English again fired three gun shots at the town from one lone 24-pdr. that they have in their battery. This means that we had to remain on guard for the night. We count that the English have launched into the town five thousand shells from the land throughout the siege and one thousand four or five hundred from the sea and that they have fired around forty thousand rounds from guns of all calibre.

16th. The Polygars wandered around the enemy batteries this night, and not having heard any sound, they came back in again. They found them abandoned. They went into the trenches where they found nobody. They came to advise M. the Governor who sent out men who found nine guns out of service for various reasons, and sponges from elsewhere. That the sepoys have made a sortie and carried off fifty fusils which they say they have taken from the enemy.

It is said that General Boscawen left at half past eleven in the morning in a palanquin to go to Cuddalore. Since yesterday evening the enemy has not fired their guns nor sent any shells. We see their tents on the hillside.

17 8ber. We made a sortie at 4 o'clock this morning to attack the enemy in their camp, but they had moved out 2 hours after midnight. They had already crossed the Ariancoupan river when we saw them. They had two field pieces and they fired at our people which killed two caffres. The troops returned at 10 o'clock. They went to Oulgaret. The church has not been knocked down but has been damaged on the outside, and is very untidy inside. The Company house and that of M. Dilaurens are very badly treated. All the fine palm trees have been cut down, as well as those which were around this village.

This evening at 5 o'clock, we sang the 'Te Deum' to the noise of gun and musketry in action in thanks for the raising of the siege.

The nuns who were housed with the reverend missionary fathers and in the rude huts under protection from shell and ball, returned to their own quarters. Meanwhile the citizenry continues to mount guard within the fort. It is composed of 160 men divided into two companies of 80 men each, mounting the Prince's Guard with two officers of the first. Messrs. le Maire, Burat, Cornet and Boileau, officers of the second.

18th October 1748. On the 18th in the morning we had news that the enemy had abandoned Ariancoupan, where they blew up the fort and damaged the outside of the church. All the English ships weighed anchor before Pondicherry and left for Cuddalore.

The Citizen's Guard was raised at 5 o'clock this evening by the (*Ganades*). Nobody doubts at all that the English have many sick since the trenches were in the marshland which extends from the Madras Gate as far as that of Valdavour. It is true that this is the weakest of the town but M. Dupleix, having got the dykes con-

structed to keep the water in the marshland made it impracticable. The enemy was forced to undertake some immense works which took them a great amount of time and which only led to their destruction. The (*croupie*) water, the extraordinary number of midges which hatched, the heat and the mortality have all left after them smells so overcoming that this alone, without the approach of the monsoon, had been capable of making them raise the siege. The flies and the mosquitos are at their peak here and their number is so great that we can not describe them. These are the plagues sent by God, which have visibly protected the town of Pondicherry on all the occasions of the siege only having lost in total one hundred and fifty men.

Eternal thanks are given to him.

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