



## 'ASKARĀN

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'ASKARĀN, village in Qarābāg about seven miles northeast of Stepanakert in the eastern Caucasus, where peace negotiations between Russia and Persia took place in 1225/1810. In 1220/1805, after achieving extensive territorial gains in the Caucasus, Russia, confronted by hostility from the Ottomans, the Persians, and rebellious Georgians, sought peace with Persia. A military setback at Yerevan (Iravān) in 1224/1809 (Hedāyat, *Rawzat al-ṣafā* IX, pp. 449-51) led to replacement of the Russian commander-in-chief in Georgia, General Ivan Vasil'evich Gudovich, with General Alexander Petrovich Tormasov (see Bournoutian, pp. 520, 540). In December Tormasov sent Baron Wrede to arrange an armistice. The British envoy, Sir Harford Jones (later [Brydges](#)), warned, however, that such a settlement would be regarded as an affront to the British government, which would approve neither armistice nor peace (Public Records Office, Kew, U.K., F. O. 60/3, Jones to Meerza Shafee, 18 February 1810). Jones, an old friend of Mirz'ā Bozorg Qā'emmaqām, vizier of Azarbaijan under the governor and heir apparent to the Qajar throne, 'Abbās Mirz'ā, and also close to Fath-'Ali Shah, succeeded in having the negotiations postponed for nearly two months. Finally it was agreed that a meeting would take place in 'Askarān on the Russian side of the frontier, and with the Shah's authorization Mirz'ā Bozorg left Tabriz on 29 Ṣafar 1225/5 April 1810 (Public Records Office, Kew, U.K., F. O. 60/3, Brydges to Bathurst, Tauris 15 April 1810; Hedāyat, *Rawzat al-ṣafā* IX, p. 468).

Ironically, it was Jones whom 'Abbās Mirz'ā asked to prepare an outline for the armistice talks. Article 6 of that draft called for British approval as a



precondition for signing any treaty, evidence of the degree to which Persia’s political sovereignty had been compromised already at this early date. Disagreement over the fate of Tāleš, Georgia, and the Ottoman frontiers (see [BOUNDARIES ii](#), p. 404) led to a breakdown in negotiations and the rejection of Russian proposals that a Persian ambassador be sent to St. Petersburg to conclude peace (India Office Library, London, PFR 27, Project for a convention and armistice between Persia and Russia, delivered at the desire of the Prince Royal to Meerza Mohammad Hassan on the 5th May 1810 by Sir Harford Jones Bart.). In dispatches to the Foreign Office Jones was able to congratulate himself on having brought about the failure of the conference. Qajar chronicles provide very short accounts, if any, of the ‘Askarān negotiations, the failure of which was a foregone conclusion.

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