



CHRISTIE, CHARLES

CHRISTIE, Captain CHARLES (d. 1812), of the Bombay Regiment, an Anglo-Indian officer under the command of Sir John Malcolm. In 1810, following Malcolm's instructions, Christie and Lieutenant Henry Pottinger undertook an exploratory journey from Bombay to Baluchistan, Sīstān, and the previously unexplored territories north of Makrān, which were thought to provide a possible overland route by which a European army might invade India. Disguised as horse dealers, the two men made their way north from the Makrān coast to Nushki (Nūškī), where they separated in March. Christie proceeded north through Sīstān to Herat and thence across the central Persian desert to Yazd and Isfahan, where he was reunited with Pottinger. An abstract of his journal is appended to Pottinger's account of this expedition (pp. 406-11), which provided the first reliable information about these territories.

At the request of the British envoy to Persia, Sir Harford Jones, Christie and a number of other officers entered Persian service, forming the nucleus of the military mission provided for in the Preliminary Treaty that he had negotiated with the shah in 1809. Christie was charged with training the Persian infantry (*sarbāz*) and became commander (*sarhang*) of the Šaqāqī Regiment, one of twelve newly formed infantry regiments in Azarbaijan (Hedāyat, *Rawzat al-šafā*, IX, p. 484; Monteith, p. 78).

He also participated in military action against the Russians. When in 1812, after news of the reconciliation between Great Britain and Russia had reached Persia, the new British ambassador, Sir Gore Ouseley, withdrew the British



officers from Persian service. Christie and two other officers, Henry Lindsay and William Monteith, and thirteen sergeants, were permitted to remain at the express request of Crown Prince ‘Abbās Mīrzā, commander of the Persian army. Christie and Lindsay participated in the battle at Āṣlāndūz in Azarbaijan, which took place on 31 October 1812; the Persians suffered a major defeat at the hands of the Russians. Christie, though shot in the neck, refused to surrender and was said to have killed six men before finally being killed himself. Dr. Charles Cormick, the English physician to ‘Abbās Mīrzā, found Christie’s body and buried it near the spot where he had fallen (Monteith, pp. 87-95).

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