

**82<sup>ND</sup> FOOT OFFICERS MILITARY GENERAL SERVICE 1793. WITH BROWNE'S FLANK BATTALION AT THE BATTLE OF BAROSSA (WOUNDED). COMMANDED THE 82<sup>ND</sup> IN AMERICA DURING THE 1812 WAR. BREVET PROMOTION OF LIEUT.-COLONEL FOR HIS CONDUCT IN THE REPELLING OF THE ATTACK MADE BY THE AMERICANS BEFORE FORT ERIE ON THE 17TH SEPT 1814. CB 1838**



MILITARY GENERAL SERVICE 1793-1814, ONE CLASP, BARROSA 'H.A. PROCTOR, C.B., CAPT., 82ND FOOT'

Lieutenant-General Henry Adolphus Proctor C.B, entered the British Army as a Cornet, 2nd Life Guards on 14th Jan 1801 and was advanced to Lieutenant in March of the following year. Promoted Captain into the 82nd Foot on 16<sup>th</sup> May 1806 and given Command of the Regiments light company. In 1809 he participated in the Walcheren Expedition and was present at the siege of Flushing. Thereafter, he served at Gibraltar and the peninsular from 1810, being present at the affair of the Posts near Malaga. He was wounded whilst one of Company commanders in Browne's Flank Battalion, who played such a prominent roll at during the desperate battle of Barossa in March 1811. He then took part in the defence of Tarifa, the siege of and the half starved retreat from Burgos. A retreat of over 200 miles in atrocious weather conditions. Proctor left the Peninsular in December 1812, having been promoted Major on 30th April that year. After a couple of years on home service, he returned to the Peninsula, serving in the latter phases of the War in the South of France, from April to July 1814.

Major Proctor embarked from Bordeaux for Canada in July 1814 in commanded the 82<sup>nd</sup>, Commanding at Fort Erie and throughout the successive operations of the Campaign on the Niagara Frontier - towards the end of the year he received the Brevet of Lieutenant-Colonel for his gallant conduct in repelling an attack made by the Americans on the Batteries before Fort Erie on 17<sup>th</sup> September 1814 and Cook's Mill on 19th October 1814. The 82nd Regiment left Canada in June 1815 for England, and then served briefly with the British occupation army near Paris.

Proctor was advanced to Colonel in January 1837, nominated into the Order of the Bath in 1838 and promoted to Major-General in November 1846. He was appointed Colonel of the 97th Foot in November 1852 and to Lieutenant-General in June 1854. Proctor died in 1859, aged 74.



CAPTAIN PROCTOR 82<sup>ND</sup> LIGHT COMPANY IN 1806

#### ARMY LIST ENTRY:

*'Major-General Proctor served with the 82nd on the expedition to Walcheren, in 1809, and was present at the siege of Flushing. Served also at Gibraltar, Tarifa, and in the Peninsula, from 1810 to Dec. 1812, and subsequently in the Peninsula and south of France, from April to July 1814, including the affair of Posts near Malaga, battle of Barrosa (contusion on the body), and retreat from Madrid, Embarked from Bourdeaux for Canada in July 1814, and commanded the 82nd before Fort Erie from 2nd Sept., and throughout the successive operations of the campaign on the Niagara frontier. Received the Brevet promotion of Lieut.-Colonel for his conduct in the repelling of the attack made by the Americans on our batteries and position before Fort Erie on the 17th Sept. 1814. He has received the War Medal with one Clasp for Barrosa.'*

Cornet 2nd Life Guards – 14th Jan 1801  
 Lieutenant 2nd Life Guards – 5th March 1802  
 Captain 82nd Foot – 16th May 1805  
 Major 82nd Foot – 30th April 1812  
 Lieut Colonel 82nd Foot –Brevet – 17th Sept 1814

Half Pay 6th Foot – 26th November 1818  
Colonel – 10th January 1837  
Major-General – 9th November 1846  
Order of the Bath (CB) - July 1838

### **BATTLE OF BAROSSA 4<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 1811**

Captain Proctor Commanded the light company of the 82nd and as such was one of the company commanders of Browne's Flank Battalion who played such an important role at the battle of Barossa. The battalion, 514 strong under Lt Colonel John Browne 28th was formed from troops of the Gibraltar and Cadiz command. Comprising two coys each of the 2/9th, 1/28th and 1/82nd Foot.



BATTLE OF BAROSSA

At the beginning of the battle, Browne's and five Spanish battalions were left to hold the commanding position Barrosa Ridge. On the advance of vastly superior numbers of French under General Ruffin, the Spanish troops retreated and soon, feeling his position now untenable, Browne withdrew on the advance forces of General Graham's division. However because of the time it took to deploy a full brigade into battle formation, Graham knew he needed to delay the French. He therefore ordered Browne, to turn his single "Flankers" battalion around and advance up the slope of the Barrosa Ridge. Browne's battalion of 514 men surged back up the Hill which by now was held by at least five battalions (1,900 men) of Ruffin's division supported by a battery of guns. The French opened fire with devastating effect, within minutes leaving half of Browne's men lying dead or wounded on the hillside. Dilkes's brigade had by now emerged from the wood and was forming up at the base of the slope and Graham ordered them to follow Browne's men and take the ridge. The French tried to sweep this brigade (and what was left of Browne's battalion) off the hill by attacking with four battalion columns but the British deployed in line and poured musket fire into the tight enemy columns, breaking them and making the survivors run off the hill.

Browne's battalion lost 50% of its men at Barossa, by far the highest of any battalion involved. The flank Companies of the 82<sup>nd</sup> alone suffering 99 Officers of men killed and wounded, including Captain Proctor.





## **1810 SOUTH SPAIN – A FIASCO NEAR MALAGA.**

In 1810, the 82nd Regiment was posted to Gibraltar. In mid October, the Governor of Gibraltar sent an unusually motley force to attack the small French-held port of Fuengirola, west of Malaga. They were supposed to foment Spanish insurrection and help in the capture of Malaga. The troops were 340 men of the 89th Regiment (Princess Victoria's), a Spanish battalion and 500 Poles, Italians and Germans who had deserted from the French. The port was fiercely defended by Polish troops in French pay and the attack failed. The 82nd Regiment sailed in a slow transport ship as reinforcements. They sent ahead 80 men aboard HMS Rodney who could only land and hold off the Polish troops while the ramshackle allies ran for the boats. The British major-general in command and the unfortunate soldiers of the 89th had already been taken prisoner. The 82nd returned to Gibraltar with the rescued survivors.

## **FORT ERIE 17<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 1817**

Very often overlooked, the American sortie on the British batteries at Fort Erie was one of the fiercest and bloody actions of the 1812 War. Fought in pouring rain, in a wooded area, confusion and hand to hand fighting was order of the day. Both sides suffering very heavy losses. Indeed only the larger battles of Chippewa, Lundy's Lane, Fort Erie (British assault) and New Orleans had larger numbers of killed and wounded!

The 82<sup>nd</sup> Foot, Commanded by Major Proctor, arrived at Fort Erie shortly after the disastrous British Assault of the 15<sup>th</sup> August 1814. On the 25<sup>th</sup> August the American's made a sortie from Fort Erie, which was repulsed, when the 82nd were for the first time engaged losing several men.

Covered by heavy rain, at noon on 17 September, American troops numbering 2500 men, made a sortie from the besieged Fort Erie. Part of this force completely surprised De Watteville's regiment, who were covering the end of the British siege works, and captured Battery No. 3 and at the same moment the other part attacked the British centre. Attacked from both front and flank, Battery No. 2 was also captured.



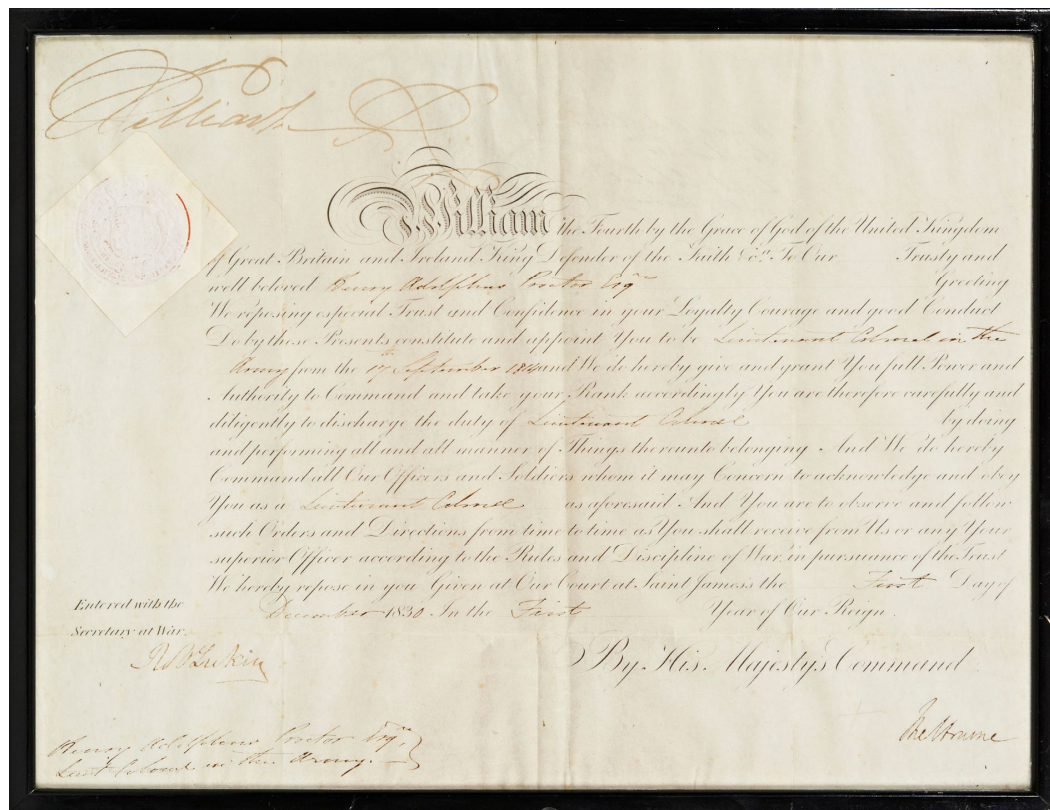
82<sup>nd</sup> FOOT RETAKING BATTERY NUMBER 2

The British Commander, General Drummond quickly hurried his reserves forward, which included the 82<sup>nd</sup> under Major Proctor, who along with three companies of the 6<sup>th</sup> Foot were ordered to retake battery number 2. Major Proctor ordered the charge and his force hurled themselves against the American's now within the British works

and a bloody hand to hand struggle ensued. There was severe fighting amid the whole of the British entrenchments and the Americans were unable to capture Battery No. 1 and were eventually driven out of the other two they had captured. With this the American troops were ordered to withdraw back to the fort, taking with them many British prisoners. Although repulsed, the sortie had achieved much.

Three of Drummond's six siege guns were destroyed in Battery No. 3 and although the Americans had been unable to spike the guns in Battery No. 2 before they were driven out, much of the works had been damaged and many casualties had been inflicted on the British, including a large number of men captured.

The Americans suffered 79 killed, 216 wounded and 216 missing. The British official casualty return stated 115 killed, 178 wounded and 316 missing.

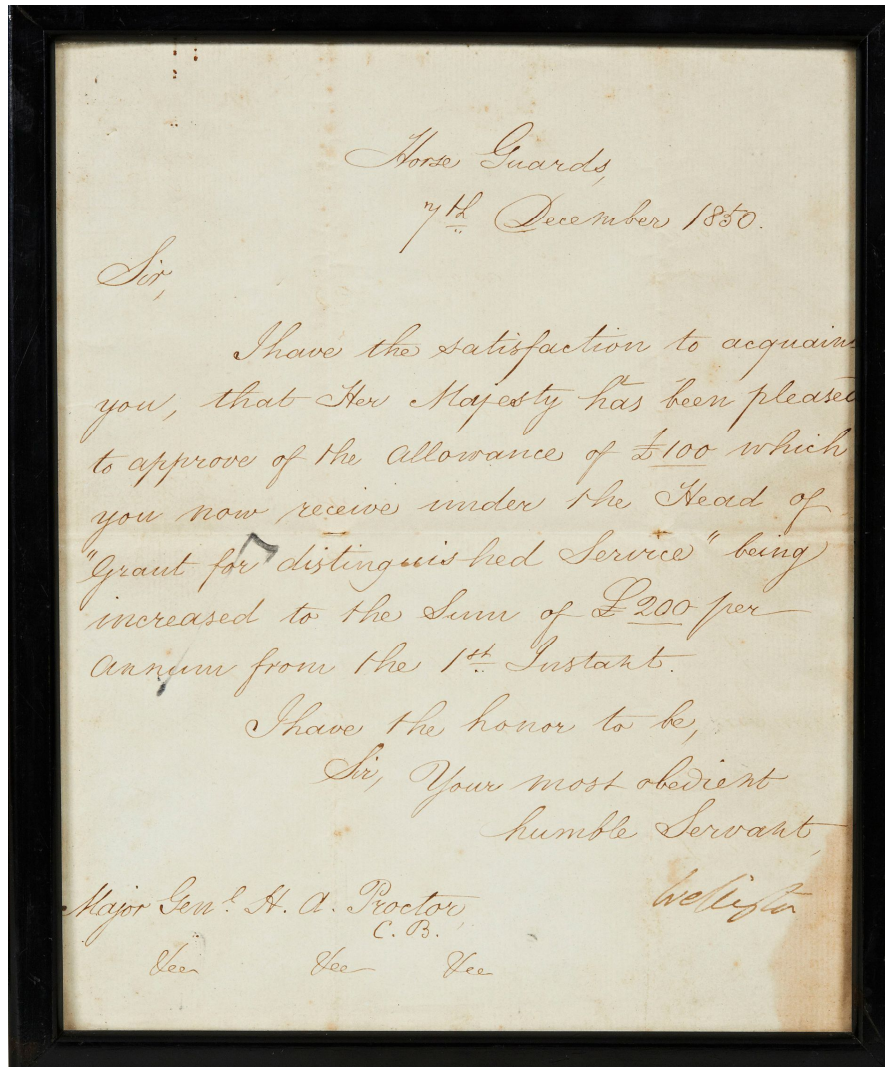


PROCTOR'S BREVET LI COLONEL COMMISSION FOR FORT ERIE

Major General Watteville's despatch:

'The enemy attacked our position on the 17th, in the afternoon, under cover of a heavy fire of his artillery from Fort Erie, and, much favoured by the nature of the ground and the rain falling in torrents, he succeeded in turning the right of our line of piquets unperceived, and with a very considerable force attacked both the piquets and supports in flank and rear. At the same time another column attacked in front the piquet between No. 2 and No. 3 Batteries, and though delayed considerably by the obstinate resistance made by the piquets under every possible disadvantage, he at last succeeded in getting possession of both the batteries. As soon as the alarm was given the first brigade, composed of the Royal Scots, the 82nd and 89th Regiments, under Lieut-Colonel Gordon, received orders to march forward, the 6th Regiment remaining

in reserve under Lieut.-Colonel Campbell. The Royals and 89th engaged the enemy on the right of No. 3 Battery, and checked his further progress. The 82nd and three companies of the 6th were detached to the left to support Nos. 1 and 2 Batteries, the enemy having at that time possession of No. 2 Battery and still pushing forward. Seven companies of the 82nd, under Major Proctor, and three companies of the 6th, under Major Taylor, immediately charged him with the most intrepid bravery, driving him back across our entrenchments and also from No. 2 Battery.'



1850 LETTER SIGNED BY WELLINGTON REGARDING 'GRANT FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE'

Lieut-General Drummond also bears witness to the dash and gallantry of the 82nd, in these words :

' The charge made by the 82nd Regiment, under Major Proctor, and detachment of the 6th, under Major Taylor, led to the recovery of the Battery No. 2, and very much decided the precipitate retrograde movement made by the enemy from the different points of our position of which he had gained short possession.'

Of the action, Drummond said the following:



*'The enemy did not again attempt to make a stand, but retreated in great disorder to the fort and was followed by our troops to the glacis of the place. To Major General DeWatteville's report I must refer Your Excellency for the cause of the enemy's success in the first instance, viz: the overwhelming number of the enemy, to which we had only the Kings and DeWatteville's to oppose. The spirit which the troops displayed in all the subsequent operations deserves the highest commendation, and entitles them to my warmest approbation. I have only to regret that the scene of action, (a thick wood,) was so unfavorable to the display of the valuable qualities which are inherent in British troops. The charge made by the 82nd Regiment under Major Proctor, and detachment of the 6th under Major Taylor, led to the recovery of battery No. 2, and very much decided the precipitate retrograde movement made by the enemy from the different points of our position, of which he had gained a short possession ...'*

Drummond continues by concluding the following:

*'The enemy, it is now ascertained, made the sortie with his whole force, which, including the militia volunteers by which he has lately been joined, could not consist of less than 5000. About 200 prisoners fell into our hands, and I cannot estimate the enemy's loss in killed and wounded at less than that number. The dreadful state of the roads and of the weather, it having poured with rain almost incessantly for the last 10 days, rendered every movement of ordinance or heavy stores exceedingly difficult. By great exertions the commanding artillery officer has succeeded in moving the battery guns and mortars with their stores, towards Chippawa, to which place I mean to withdraw them for the present.'*



1843 PENCIL SKETCH PORTRAIT OF PROCTOR