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Anglo-Dutch War in Java

Also known as: Anglo-Indonesian Colonial War

Date: 1810–1811

From: *Encyclopedia of Wars*, vol. 1

PRINCIPAL COMBATANTS: Netherlands vs Great Britain

PRINCIPAL THEATER(S): Java

DECLARATION: No formal declaration

MAJOR ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES: Control over Southeast Asian colonies and their rich trade in spices, tobacco, teak, and other commodities

OUTCOME: The Dutch ceded Java, Sumatra, and Macassar to the British.

APPROXIMATE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF MEN UNDER ARMS: Unknown

CASUALTIES: Unknown

TREATIES: Capitulation of Semarang, September 17, 1811

By the end of the 17th century the Dutch had established both economic and political control over Indonesia, including Java. No serious challenge was brought against them until 1810, when Napoleon's (1769–1821) conquest of the Netherlands weakened Dutch colonial authority, and, in response, the British East India Company launched an impressive conquest of French and Dutch holdings.

Led by the governor general of India, Gilbert Elliot of Minto (1751–1814), the British fleet attacked Java at the port city of Batavia in August 1811. The Dutch governor general, Herman Willem Daendels (1762–1818), had anticipated the attack. He withstood the onslaught for more than a month but was finally forced to surrender on September 17 at Semarang. The defeat, recorded in the Capitulation of Semarang, resulted in the Dutch cession of Java, Sumatra, and Macassar to the British.

In 1816 Great Britain ceded Java back to the Netherlands in return for Dutch assistance at the Battle of Waterloo, which resulted in the final exile of Napoleon.



Further Information

Mark T. Hodcer, *The History of Holland* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1999); Patrick J. N. Tuck, *The East India Company* (New York: Routledge, 1998).



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