

= Raid on Griessie =

The Raid on Griessie was a British attack on the Dutch port of Griessie (later renamed Gresik) on Java in the Dutch East Indies in December 1807 during the Napoleonic Wars . The raid was the final action in a series of engagements fought by the British squadron based in the Indian Ocean against the Dutch naval forces in Java , and it completed the destruction of the Dutch squadron with the scuttling of three ships of the line , the last Dutch warships in the region . The British squadron ? under the command of Rear @-@ Admiral Sir Edward Pellew ? sought to eliminate the Dutch in an effort to safeguard the trade route with China , which ran through the Straits of Malacca and were in range of Dutch raiders operating from the principal Javan port of Batavia . In the summer of 1806 , British frigates reconnoitred Javan waters and captured two Dutch frigates , encouraging Pellew to lead a major attack on Batavia that destroyed the last Dutch frigate and several smaller warships . Prior to the Batavia raid however , Dutch Rear @-@ Admiral Hartsinck had ordered his ships of the line to sail eastwards , where they took shelter at Griessie , near Sourabaya .

On the morning of 5 December 1807 , a second raiding squadron under Pellew appeared off Griessie and demanded that the Dutch squadron in the harbour surrender . The Dutch commander ? Captain Cowell ? refused , and seized the boat party that had carried the message . Pellew responded by advancing up the river and exchanging fire with a Dutch gun battery on Madura Island , at which point the governor in Surabaya overruled Captain Cowell , released the seized boat party and agreed to surrender the ships at anchor in Gresik harbour . By the time Pellew reached the anchorage , however , Cowell had scuttled all of the ships in shallow water , and Pellew was only able to set the wreckage on fire . Landing shore parties , the British destroyed all military supplies in the town and demolished the battery on Madura . With the destruction of the force in Griessie , the last of the Dutch naval forces in the Pacific were eliminated . British forces returned to the region in 1810 with a large scale expeditionary force that successfully invaded and captured Java in 1811 , temporarily removing the last Dutch colony east of Africa .

= = Background = =

In 1804 , at the start of the Napoleonic Wars , a powerful French squadron operating from Batavia harbour on the Dutch island colony of Java attacked a large and valuable British merchant convoy sailing from China near the Straits of Malacca in the Battle of Pulo Aura . The French attack was a failure , but the threat posed to British trade passing through the Strait of Malacca by French or Dutch warships had been clearly demonstrated . Determined to eliminate this threat , the commander of Royal Navy forces in the Indian Ocean ? Rear @-@ Admiral Sir Edward Pellew ? ordered frigates to reconnoitre Dutch naval activity in the East Indies during the summer of 1806 . The Dutch maintained a small squadron in the region under Rear @-@ Admiral Hartsinck , principally intended to operate against pirates , consisting of three 68 @-@ gun ships of the line , three frigates and a number of smaller vessels . Despite the obsolete nature of many of these ships , they nevertheless constituted a threat to British trade and Pellew 's frigates raided Dutch harbours and merchant shipping extensively during their patrols .

At the Action of 26 July 1806 , a Dutch convoy sailing along the southern coast of Celebes was attacked and defeated by one of Pellew 's reconnaissance frigates , HMS Greyhound . Among the captured ships was the Dutch frigate Pallas and two large merchant vessels . Three months later , the frigate HMS Caroline entered Batavia harbour itself , seizing the Dutch frigate Maria Riggersbergen at the Action of 18 October 1806 . These successes encouraged Pellew to conduct a larger scale operation , launching a major Raid on Batavia harbour on 27 November 1806 . As his large squadron sailed into the bay , the surviving Dutch ships were driven on shore to avoid capture , boarding parties under Admiral Pellew 's son Captain Fleetwood Pellew completing the destruction by setting the wrecks on fire .

A number of vessels , including all of the Dutch ships of the line , had escaped the raid . Hartsinck had sought to divide his forces shortly before Pellew 's attack and consequently sent a number of vessels eastwards along the Javan coast under an American @-@ born Dutch officer named

Captain Cowell . Cowell 's force eventually sheltered in a protected anchorage at the town of Griessie near Sourabaya , 570 mi (500 nmi ; 920 km) to the west of Batavia . There the squadron rapidly deteriorated so that one ship of the line ? Kortenaar ? had to be broken down into a sheer hulk and two others ? Pluto and Revolutie ? were disarmed , their cannon transferred into batteries on shore .

Admiral Pellew was unable to return to Java early in 1807 , as his ships were dispersed on separate operations across the Indian Ocean , some deploying as far west as the Red Sea . However , during the summer responsibility for the blockade of the French island bases of Île Bonaparte and Isle de France (now Mauritius) passed from Pellew to Rear @-@ Admiral Albemarle Bertie at the Cape of Good Hope and Pellew was once again free to concentrate against the remainder of the Dutch squadron . During the absence of his main force , Admiral Pellew had sent two frigates into Javan waters : Caroline under Captain Peter Rainier and HMS Psyche under his son Captain Fleetwood Pellew . These ships rapidly established the location and the state of the Dutch ships of the line , and then separated to raid Dutch merchant shipping , Psyche having considerable success at Semarang on 31 August when Captain Pellew destroyed two Dutch vessels , and captured three , including the Dutch 24 @-@ gun corvette Scipio , which the British renamed Samarang .

= = Pellew at Griessie = =

When news of the Dutch whereabouts reached Admiral Pellew at Malacca , he immediately assembled a force from nearby warships , including his flagship HMS Culloden under Commander George Bell , ship of the line HMS Powerful under Fleetwood Pellew , [Note A] the frigates Caroline under Commander Henry Hart and HMS Fox under Captain Archibald Cochrane and the small vessels HMS Victor under Lieutenant Thomas Groube , HMS Samarang under Lieutenant Richard Buck , HMS Seaflower under Lieutenant William Fitzwilliam Owen and HMS Jaseur under Lieutenant Thomas Langhorne . The squadron was accompanied by the transport Worcester , which carried 500 men from the 30th Regiment of Foot under Lieutenant @-@ Colonel Lockhart for any landing operations that might be required .

Sailing from Malacca on 20 November , Pellew 's squadron passed along the Javan coast for 15 days , reaching Panka Point on 5 December and sending a boat under a flag of truce into Griessie with instructions for the Dutch commander to surrender his ships . Captain Cowell refused , and ordered the boat party to be arrested . He then sent a Dutch officer aboard Culloden to inform Pellew of his actions . In response , Pellew determined to attack the port and ordered that Culloden and Powerful be lightened by the removal of unnecessary stores to enable them to sail into the shallow straits . On 6 December , the British squadron moved steadily towards Griessie through the Madura Strait , coming under fire from heated cannonballs from a battery of nine cannon situated at Sambelangan on Madura Island . Returning fire with his full squadron , Pellew rapidly silenced the battery without loss or significant damage to his ships and as the squadron approached Griessie , a message from the civilian governor in Sourabaya reached Pellew , reversing Cowell 's orders , releasing the captured boat party and unconditionally surrendering the ships in the harbour .

On 7 December , Pellew agreed formal terms for the surrender of Revolutie , Pluto , Kortenaar and the Dutch East Indiaman Rustloff that were anchored in Griessie . However , when British boats entered the harbour it was discovered that Cowell had issued orders for all four ships to be scuttled , their wrecks protruding from the shallow water . Unable to remove the ships , Pellew ordered their remains burnt , while British landing parties spread throughout the town , burning the military stores and destroying the cannon that had been removed from the ship . Another landing party took possession of the remains of the battery at Sambelangan and demolished it . British operations were complete by 11 December and Pellew then ordered the squadron to withdraw and return to India .

= = Aftermath = =

The final operation of Pellew 's Java campaign , completed with minimal casualties on either side ,

saw the eradication of the Dutch naval presence in the East Indies for the remainder of the war . With the Dutch removed , British attention turned to the French Indian Ocean islands , which were blockaded and captured during the Mauritius campaign of 1809 ? 1811 . Once Mauritius had been captured , British forces returned to the East Indies , expeditionary forces overwhelming the Dutch defenders on several islands , Java falling last . By that time , Pellew was serving in the Mediterranean and British control of the Indian Ocean was assured , the British remaining in possession of the East Indies until they were returned to the Netherlands following the capture of Napoleon and the Anglo @-@ Dutch Treaty of 1814 signed at the Convention of London . The East Indies were handed over in 1816 after Napoleons final defeat at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 .