

THE LETTERS OF CAPTAIN
GERALD GOODLAKE V.C.



Sharpshooter
in the Crimea



Michael Springman

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IN THE CRIMEA

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THE LETTERS OF CAPTAIN GOODLAKE, VC

Transcribed, edited and annotated

by

MICHAEL SPRINGMAN



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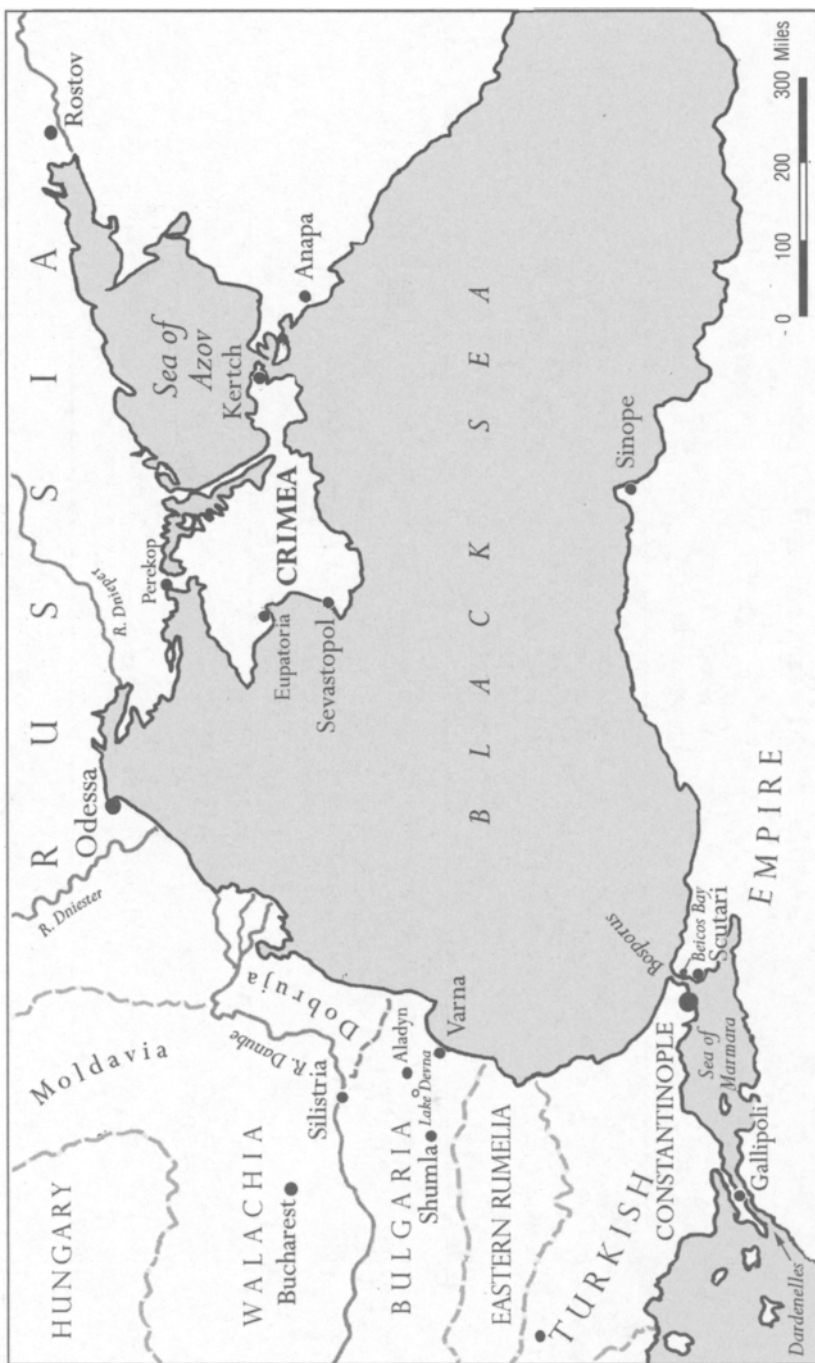
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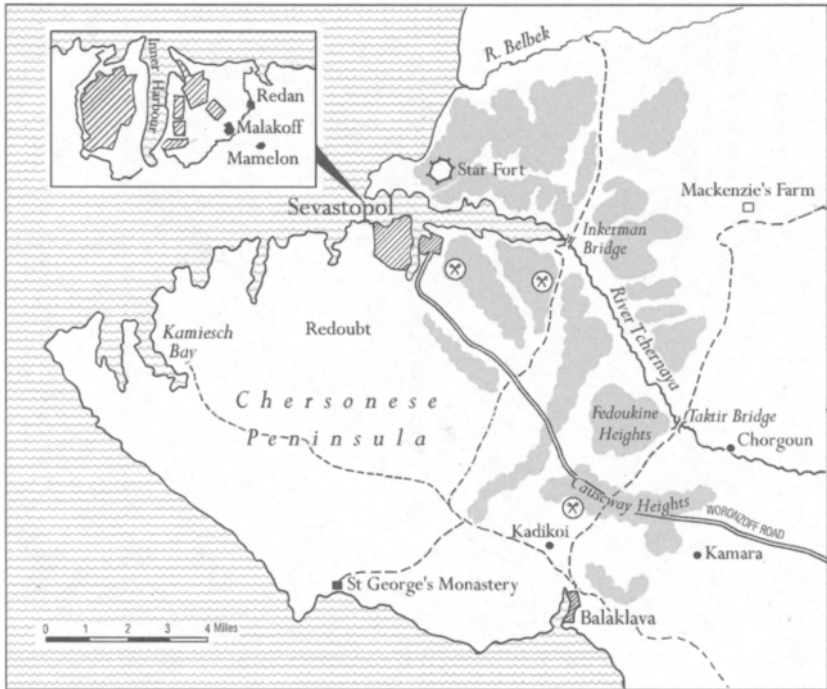
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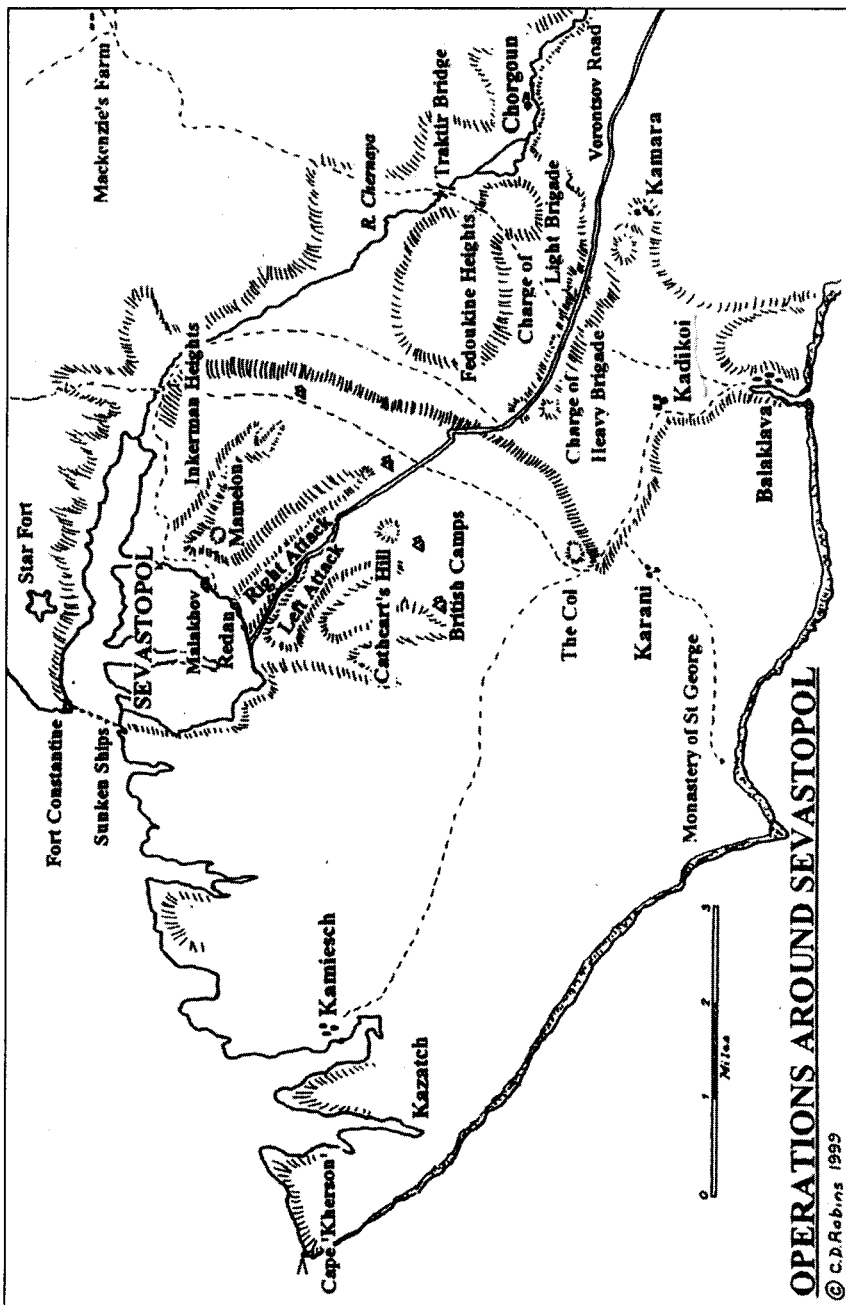
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Preface and Acknowledgements

It has been 150 years, a century and a half, since the Crimean War ended with its record of inefficient and bungled supply chains, inept planning in every part of the Government and lack of a proper command and medical staff. The Prime Minister and the Minister of War set the Army the task of capturing Sevastopol, but the Treasury denied the Army the funds it needed for the proper performance of the tasks it had to carry out.

In the time of the Crimea this was typified by the closing down of the Royal Waggon Train and by a failure to maintain a military staff after Waterloo, in the search to find economies. The chaos in supplying the Army in the Crimea resulted in the resignation of both the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for War, but not the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was in charge of the Commissariat and who had held up the supply of fodder for the Army. This problem of a lack of co-ordination between the tasks set the Army by the Government and the funds made available by the Treasury to carry them out continues today.

I am very grateful to Major Edward Crofton, the Regimental Adjutant of the Coldstream Guards, for allowing me to borrow one of their two original typed copies of Lieutenant-General Gerald Goodlake's Crimean letters and to entrust me with the task of editing these letters for publication. Major Robert Cazenove has helped me to locate pictures from the Regimental files. The Regimental Archivist Clerks, Corporal Bingley, Corporal Jones and Guardsman Casey have all helped me in my researches.

The Regiment also possesses a medal board with General Goodlake's medals, his Victoria Cross and his Crimean campaign

medal, with clasps for the battles of the Alma, Balaklava, Inkerman and the Siege of Sevastopol, which were given by Mrs Goodlake to the Regiment.

The two identical typed copies of the letters, both dated 5 April 1899, were given to the Regiment by General Goodlake's Widow, Margaret Goodlake. The copy I used was dedicated by Margaret Goodlake, his Widow, to Edward Wilson for his faithful and loving service to General Goodlake VC.

The original copies of the letters are not in the possession of the Regiment and almost certainly do not exist. The General died in 1890, long before these letters were typed in 1899. Without his advice and in the absence of these original letters, it would have been hard to find answers to obvious mistakes. These would have not been detected by a typist, with no knowledge of the Crimean War, who was trying to decipher the text and transcribe the letters. There are frequent misspellings of names of people, places, regiments etc. 'Infanterie de Maincre' was typed instead of 'Infanterie de Marine'.

The frequency of letter writing varies very considerably over the period of the War. In certain cases this could be because of operational problems in the field, the loss of letters sent home or their loss at home. Furthermore General Goodlake did not keep the letters from his family.

In the Crimean War there was a severe shortage of writing paper; for this reason, some letters written had writing round the four edges of the paper. In some cases the paper was turned 45 degrees and lines were written at right angles to the original script. Furthermore in the earlier part of the war in the Crimea officers had to write letters in their tents on their laps or else lie on the ground and write on a piece of board. The writing was not therefore of a high standard and would be difficult to decipher, even for parents, wives or other close family members. Tables did not come available till much later in the war, when the troops lived in wooden huts.

There was also misdating of the letters, where the date and location on the letter differ from the timetable of the Guards Brigade's movements. Furthermore the matters written about in the letters took place at a different date to that of the date of the letter. In the list of the letters, there are notes on the alterations made in the dates of these letters, explaining why these changes have been made.

It has not been possible to solve all the questions that arise, especially where nicknames are used for brother officers, or to iden-

tify all the people mentioned, even after extensive research has been carried out, including research at RHQ, Coldstream Guards.

I have only been studying the Crimean War in detail since I joined the Crimean War Research Society in March 2000 and went on a Battlefield Tour of the Crimea in September of that year. My colleagues in the Society, who have studied the War extensively for many years, have helped me very much in my researches about the Crimean War, and in particular the following Members:-

Colin Robins, late Royal Artillery, the Editor of The Society's Journal, *The War Correspondent*, has acted as my mentor and guide throughout the writing of the book. He has read the proofs of the book and has suggested alterations. He has also advised me on a wide variety of subjects and in particular on the function of artillery in the war and on the munitions used in the campaign. I am greatly indebted to him for his help and advice, which I asked for and obtained on a regular basis throughout the writing of the book.

Bill Curtis, late Royal Artillery, the former Chairman of the Society, is an expert on musketry and in particular on the Brown Bess Musket, the Pattern '51 Rifle/Musket, the Pattern '53 Rifle, on other weapons and ammunition used in the War and on the drills laid down for firing rifles/muskets on the battlefield. He has given me valuable advice on the use and performance of these weapons during the Crimean campaign. Anthony Margrave has given me advice on foreign medals and on the French Army in the Crimea.

Michael Hargreave Mawson, the Society's Web Master, has given me valuable insights on the French Army and on the medals awarded in the War. Ron McGuigan has extensive knowledge of the command structure of the British Army in the Crimean War. He has helped me to define the command structure of the 1st Division and of the Guards Brigade, which formed part of this Division.

Robert Oliver, formerly a Researcher on Musketry at the Pitt-Rivers Museum at Oxford, has helped me to understand the role of Captain Augustus Lane-Fox, Grenadier Guards, who later became Lieutenant-General Pitt-Rivers, in advising and instructing the Army on the effective use of the Pattern '51 Rifle/Musket [The Minie], which replaced the Brown Bess.

John Joynson, late Coldstream Guards, has given me valuable lists of the officers of the Coldstream Guards, who served in the Crimean War. Major Brian Oldham very kindly looked through my lists of officers of the Coldstream Guards and by consulting his Great

Crimean War Index has suggested various amendments to my lists.

The late Ken Horton has advised me on maps of the Crimean War. Megan Stevens has given me valuable information on the operations of the Commissariat in the War. Keith Smith has given me valuable advice on Crimean War photographs.

Anthony James, who maintains records of officers who served in the Crimean War, has advised me on various officer records. Ed Dovey has kindly made available to me his family's research on the origins of their ancestor Private Stanlake VC, Coldstream Guards. Among other people who have helped me, my cousin, Patrick Mayhew, has kindly lent me his set of A. W. Kinglake's *History of the Invasion of the Crimea*.

Captain David Horn, the Curator of the Guards Museum at Wellington Barracks, has given me valuable advice on matters relating to the Brigade of Guards at the time of the Crimean War. He has also suggested several amendments to the Appendix on Military Terms. Mrs Bridget Webster has researched General Goodlake's family background.

I am most grateful to Dr Duncan Anderson, the Director of War Studies at the RMA, Sandhurst, for suggesting that Dr John Sweetman would be the most appropriate person to advise me on the organization of the British Army in the 1850s. Dr Sweetman, formerly the Head of the Political and Social Studies Department at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, has given me valuable advice on Army organization both before and after the Crimean War. He has also helped me understand the process of reform of the Army's organization.

My brother-in-law, Bruce Lee, has given me the benefit of his knowledge and experience both as an editor and as an author of military histories.

Newstead Abbey, now owned by the Corporation of Nottingham, was formerly the home of Mrs Emilia Jane Webb, the sister of General Goodlake, [Bob in the letters]. After his death and that of his wife his pictures and other items he sent back from the Crimea were left by Mrs Goodlake to Mrs Webb. The estate finally passed to her grandson, Charles Ian Fraser. Mr Fraser sold the estate to Sir Julien Cahn, who presented it to the Nottingham Corporation. Mr Fraser gave all the Goodlake pictures and memorabilia to the Corporation and they are exhibited at the Abbey. I am very grateful to Ms Haidee Jackson, the Curator, for permission to reproduce these pictures in the book.

Simon Seely has given me much valuable advice on using my computer and Brian Cantwell has improved Kinglake's map of Captain Goodlake's operations at Little Inkerman. The other maps were drawn by Neil Hyslop.

Dr Morton, the Curator of the Royal Logistics Corps Museum, has helped me to find answers to logistical questions that arose. The Staff of the National Army Museum have helped me in my researches.

The Staff of the Bembridge Public Library has found numerous books, which I have used in my researches. Mrs Caws, who is in charge of the Newport Public Library, has helped me to research the background of people connected with the War.

I would like to thank Henry Wilson, the Publishing Director of Pen & Sword Ltd, for his help in rearranging the contents of the book, Tom Hartman for his help and my wife for her valuable assistance in checking the corrected pages.

Michael Springman
Bembridge

Introduction

General Goodlake's Family

Gerald Littlehales Goodlake was born on 14 May 1832 at Wadley House, Shellingford, Berkshire, the second son of Thomas Mills Goodlake and of Emilia-Maria Goodlake, his wife. She was the second daughter of Sir Edward Baker Bt, by Lady Elizabeth-Mary, his wife. Goodlake is a Saxon name. Thomas Godelac, Godlak or Guthlac was Lord of the Manor of Hanworth, Middlesex in 1378, and obtained from Richard II, about 1394, the Lordship of the Manor of Woxendon, now Uxonden in Middlesex. Prior to the establishment of Registers in 1536, the family resided at Letcombe Regis in Berkshire. His father served in the 5th Dragoon Guards in the Peninsular War.

From 1844 to 1849 Gerald Goodlake was educated at Eton College, where he excelled at games. On 14 June 1850 he was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant by Purchase into the 23rd Foot [The Royal Welch Fusiliers]. On 27 June 1851 he transferred to the Coldstream Guards, becoming an Ensign and Lieutenant by Purchase. On 14 February 1854 he sailed with the 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards to the Crimea and on 14 July 1854 he was promoted to Lieutenant and Captain without Purchase. From 17 October to 27 November 1854 he commanded the Sharpshooters of the Guards Brigade for 42 days, which included repulsing a Russian sortie on 26 October 1854, called Little Inkerman, and during the winter of 1854. For his actions in commanding the Sharpshooters on this day and on another occasion he was awarded the Victoria Cross.

Apart from Inkerman, he was present at the Battles of Alma,

Balaklava, the Siege of Sevastopol and the Battle of the Tchernaya. He was one of the few members of the British Army present at that battle, which was between the French and Sardinian Armies and the Russians. The British Army, apart from a battery of guns and some cavalry, was not involved. In October 1854 he was recommended for a Brevet Majority by HRH The Duke of Cambridge, Brigadier-General Bentinck, Colonel Upton and Colonel Lord F.Paulet. His claim was sent to London by Lord Raglan. It was refused as he had not served in the Army for six years.

During the winter of 1854/55 he served in the trenches during the Siege of Sevastopol. He claimed that he never missed a day's duty in all his time in the Crimea, but was ill on the day of the Battle of Inkerman. From 27 March 1855 to 21 June 1856 he was Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General at the 1st Division, but attached to Headquarters. He was organizing the distribution of huts until 1 September 1855, and thereafter was in charge of working parties, building roads. Apart from the Victoria Cross, he held the Crimean Medal, with four clasps, was a Knight of the Legion of Honour and held the Turkish Medal of Medjidie, 5th Class. On 6 June 1856 he left the Crimea for England.

The British Army in the 1850s and its Preparation for War

By the 1850s Britain had forgotten the lessons it had learned earlier from the successful campaigns of the Duke of Wellington in India, the Peninsular War and on the Continent. The country had been at peace since Waterloo and for the whole of this period the Duke of Wellington had been in and out of Government. In 1842 he had been appointed Commander-in-Chief for life. He had tried unsuccessfully to protect the Army from the attempts by the Treasury to reduce military expenditure after the Napoleonic Wars.

Army Organization & the General Staff

In the Peninsular War the Duke of Wellington had established an efficient and effective divisional and brigade structure, had selected and trained up a competent staff, had also set up a well-organized Military Train and an effective intelligence operation. When peace came, there was great public pressure to reduce expenditure and these

organizations had been disbanded in order to save money. The lesson that armies, to be effective, need command, operational, logistical and intelligence structures had been forgotten.

Because there was no proper staff training in the British Army as there was in the German Army, the Army as a body, as distinct from individual regiments, was largely untrained. Out of more than a hundred officers on the staff, only nine had attended the staff course at the Senior Department of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. The officers who made up the efficient general staff, built up by Wellington during the Peninsular War, had all retired or died. In the interests of economy, the Government did not feel it necessary to keep an embryonic general staff in existence in peacetime.

General Officers were able to influence the appointment of the staff officers they wanted, especially their ADCs, which in Lord Raglan's case were all his relations. However, the Secretary of State for War could appoint a senior officer as Chief of Staff, as happened when General Simpson was appointed Lord Raglan's Chief of Staff.

Without divisional organizations or manoeuvres, the Generals had no experience of handling large numbers of troops. The first Camp of Exercise took place at Chobham in 1853, at the suggestion of the Prince Consort, where 8,000 men were in camp:

The men were splendidly clothed but they were led by officers who had no conception of military tactics. Units frequently got lost, were found by distracted staff officers advancing with smart determination and affected grimness on men of their own side, were taken off the field altogether by commanding officers who thought the 'whole damned thing' was 'a waste of time'. 'This Army', remarked an officer in the Royal Artillery, with angry exasperation, 'is a shambles.'

A few months later, with hope and confidence and the cheers of an admiring people, it was sent to war.¹

The Army's uniforms were completely unsuitable for a campaign in the Crimea, let alone a winter one. The officers of the Brigade of Guards wore cut-away scarlet long-tailed tunics, with large gold braid epaulettes. The men fought wearing scarlet coats. All ranks of the Foot Guards wore bearskins for the first and last time on active service. Prince Albert had designed a side-cap for the Brigade, which was worn by the sharpshooters and in the trenches. All ranks in the

Brigade of Guards wore grey greatcoats, as did many soldiers in the Russian Army.

There were no reserves available either to replace casualties or to increase the size of the Army in the Crimea, except by depleting other regiments at home. The Government had to resort to raising various foreign legions to solve this problem temporarily.

The Military Train, which Wellington had built up to be an efficient and effective organization for supplying the Army in wartime with arms, ammunition, food and materials, was finally disbanded in 1833 to save money. It was clear therefore that there was no adequate supply system in existence which would be able to provision an army in the Crimea.

No consideration had been given to the logistical problems that the Crimean Army would face: how much and what type of transport would be needed to move the troops, what systems should be set up to supply them and to keep them supplied in the field in all seasons and how they would be provided with a regular supply of munitions and suitable food and clothing, etc. The Treasury assumed, without any basis for their decision, that the Army would be able to purchase transport and find sufficient drivers for its requirements locally, which proved to be incorrect.

Army Promotion & The Purchase Of Commissions

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Crown and its Ministers wanted to prevent the appointment of officers, like those in Cromwell's New Model Army. These men had wanted to exercise political power and wished to challenge and limit the power and authority of the Commons.

Governments wished the officer corps to consist of people with a stake in the country, who were thus unlikely to act like mercenaries, revolutionaries or political firebrands. They did not want professional soldiers, but gentlemen who would regard the Army as an occupation for an amateur with private means, before he inherited his estate:

The Army had never been a profession for which an officer need prepare himself nor once commissioned to take seriously. It had consequently persisted throughout these years of peace, without a hard core of experts, without even an organization. It remained as it had been in the eighteenth century a collection of regiments, each a self-contained unit,

*efficient or no, depending upon the qualities of its commanding officer, adjutant and its non-commissioned officers.*²

The exceptions to this rule were those wishing to become officers in the Artillery and Engineers, where entry to the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich was by examination.

Those wishing to join a regiment – cavalry, foot guards or infantry – had to purchase their commissions from those officers who were retiring or being promoted. It was not necessary for a candidate for a commission in the cavalry, foot guards or the infantry to attend and pass out from Sandhurst until the Purchase of Commissions was abolished by Royal Warrant on 1 November 1871.

The most senior officer of any rank in a regiment had the first choice to be promoted, regardless of merit, provided he paid the Regulation Fee. There was frequently an unofficial fee on top of this, which would be very low if the battalion or regiment was ordered for active service or for service in India, which was very unpopular. It was much higher if the unit was on home service. The reason for the lower unofficial fee was that if an officer died or was killed his commission reverted to the Crown, whereas when he retired the sum raised from selling his commission would finance his retirement. This system was very unfair to the widows of officers who were killed or who had died, as it left them without any means of support.

No fee was paid for promotions to fill vacancies caused by death on active service by the officers appointed to these posts. In the same way, appointments made because of an Augmentation, an increase in the officer establishment, were normally made without a fee being charged to those appointed.

Officers who could not pay the Regulation Fee would have more junior officers, who could afford to pay, promoted over their heads. This was both unfair and inefficient as experienced officers often had incompetent or inexperienced officers promoted over them. Finding or procuring the necessary funds was required to finance promotion up to the rank of colonel.

Promotion to the rank of major-general resulted in the colonel losing the right to sell his position to the officer taking over from him. It should be noted that all general officers of the same seniority were promoted at the same time, regardless of their merit.

Double-Rank in the Brigade of Guards

Officers in the Brigade of Guards had the advantage of holding a dual rank, their rank in their regiment and a higher rank in the Army. e.g. captain & lieutenant-colonel, lieutenant and captain, ensign and lieutenant. The double-rank privilege had been awarded to the Brigade of Guards by King James II, King William III and the Prince Regent. This had been done partly to reinforce their loyalty to the Crown and also for their bravery on the field of battle. The double-rank gave officers in the Brigade of Guards great advantages in seniority in the Army, which was reflected in the purchase price of commissions. In 1856 a lieutenant-colonelcy in the Foot Guards cost a regulation price of £9,000 plus an extra 'over regulation fee' of £4,200, making a total of £13,200, whereas a lieutenant-colonelcy in a line regiment cost a regulation fee of £4,500, plus an extra £2,500, total £7,000.³ The double-rank was abolished in 1871 for officers commissioned after that date, but officers still serving retained their double-rank for life.

Sir Colin Campbell's position in the Crimean War provides an interesting example of the advantage of the dual rank to officers in the Brigade of Guards. Sir Colin had started the war commanding the Highland Brigade and, as he had no private wealth, he had only obtained his Lieutenant-Colonelcy by Augmentation.⁴

Captain and Lieutenant-Colonel William Codrington, who had been promoted in 1846 to a Colonel in the Army without any change in his regimental rank, started the war as a company commander in the 1 Coldstream. In June 1854 Codrington was promoted to Major-General and on 1 September 1854 became Commander of the 1st Brigade of the Light Division, in the place of Brigadier-General Airey, who became Quartermaster General. In June 1855 Codrington was promoted to Lieutenant-General as Commander of the Light Division, when Sir George Brown went home sick. When General Simpson resigned as Commander in Chief, Codrington succeeded him and not Sir Colin Campbell, who had distinguished himself in India, as well as at Alma and at Balaclava. However, Sir Colin ended his military career as a Field Marshal and was created Baron Clyde,⁵ while Codrington turned down the offer of promotion to Field Marshal, as he had had experience of only one campaign.

Medical

The Medical Department was a staff department, which purchased for the Army medicines, bandages, etc, but it had no doctors or medical staff under its control. Each regiment had a Surgeon and two Assistant Surgeons, who established a battalion hospital. Badly wounded casualties were sent to one of the general hospitals. Although the surgeons wore uniforms, they were not officers and were treated by the Army as civilians. However, as civilians, they were subject to the Mutiny Act [The Army Act of that period.] and could be court-martialled.

No one had considered how soldiers would cook their food, as the Army provided no unit cooking facilities. No studies had been made to ensure that the soldiers' diet was suitable for the heavy tasks they had to carry out or for the hardships they had to endure.

The experience learned in past campaigns had been forgotten. No one was made responsible for the general hygiene of the Army, as Army and Navy doctors, not being officers, lacked executive power and could only recommend measures, which their superiors could and did ignore. In these times cholera epidemics, from contaminated water supplies, occurred regularly in London in summer, as the Thames was used both as a source of drinking water and as a sewer, as it was not then known that this disease was caused by drinking contaminated water. By 1894 effective main drainage systems had eliminated this disease in the main cities in England.

In the Crimea lack of knowledge of this fact caused some regiments to be careless in preventing their water supplies from becoming contaminated by their latrines. This caused cholera epidemics to break out both in Bulgaria and in the Crimea.

Ordnance

In 1847 the Duke of Wellington pointed out that the country was defenceless, as the Government had cut the purchase of armaments drastically after Waterloo. The Army had only 70 field-guns, which had last been used at Waterloo. In 1852 Lord Hardinge, the Commander-in-Chief, and Sidney Herbert, the Secretary-at-War, organized the purchase of 300 nine-pounder guns, which became the Army's moveable armament in the Crimean War.⁶

The Iron Duke had reluctantly agreed to the introduction of a new

rifle, the Pattern '51 Rifle/Musket, based on the principles of the French Minie, which had been proved to be greatly superior in trials against the standard infantry musket, the Brown Bess, and the Prussian breech-loader.⁷ The Duke died in 1852 and his replacement Lord Hardinge had carried on with the gradual introduction of the Minie when he had funds to do so.

The School of Musketry at Hythe, which was established in 1852, studied the tactical implications of the increased range and accuracy of the Minie. Soldiers, firing the Minie had to learn how to judge distances accurately and to set the sights correctly, in order to use effectively the increased range and accuracy of the Pattern '51, the Minie. This skill was not required when they fired the short-range Brown Bess.

Army Organization

The organization of the Army was difficult to understand, as a number of autonomous bodies, each pursuing their own objectives, shared in managing and controlling its operations and there was no overall authority. These persons were the Secretary of State for War, the Commander-in-Chief, in charge of the cavalry and infantry, and the Master General of the Ordnance, in charge of the artillery and engineers and responsible for procuring weapons, munitions and warlike stores. The Master General was also responsible for building and repairing forts and barracks. The Secretary-at-War, a different minister from the Secretary of State for War, was responsible for finance and for medical services. The Treasury managed the Commissariat, which supplied food and clothing.

All these, including the Treasury, attempted to control and manage the Army. However, this confused and illogical organization made it nearly impossible to produce a coordinated plan and to give it unity of direction. This situation, as Prince Albert said, reduced the Army to a mere 'aggregate of battalions'.⁸

During the War the record of inefficient and bungled supply chains, inept planning, the lack of a proper command system and an effective medical service showed that the Army organization was both incompetent and ineffective. These inadequacies and the horrific casualty lists made it clear to the public that reform of the Army was mandatory, if it was to survive as a fighting force. The process of reform took place during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, ending in the

reorganization of the Ministry of Defence as a tri-services ministry. This process started in 1964 and ended in 1998 with the formation of the Joint Services Command and Staff College.

Notes

- 1 *The Destruction of Lord Raglan*, p. 8, by Christopher Hibbert, Longmans, 1961.
- 2 *Battles of the Crimean War*, p. 19, by W. Baring Pemberton, B.T.Batsford, London, 1962.
- 3 *Double Rank in the Guards*, Major Colin Robins.
- 4 An increase in the number of officers in a battalion or regiment.
- 5 *Double Rank in the Guards* by Major Colin Robins.
- 6 *The War Office*, p. 179, Hampden Gordon, Putnam, London, 1935.
- 7 *The History of the Grenadier Guards, Vol.III*, pp. 153–4 and Addenda-p. XX, Gen. Sir F.W.Hamilton.
- 8 *The Destruction of Lord Raglan*, p.7, Christopher Hibbert.

Chapter One

The Origins and Reasons for the Crimean War

In 1853 the Russian Empire stretched from Germany to the Pacific and its territory bordered the Black Sea, the Ottoman Empire, Persia and China. The Tsar, who ruled over this immense land, was an absolute despot whose rule was imposed by his secret police. With limited access to the sea, Russia had little foreign trade and thus was not able to develop her considerable resources. Furthermore, her road and rail links were very primitive. She lacked a warm-weather port to enable her to develop foreign trade. To further her expansionist policies, her objective was to conquer Constantinople and the Dardanelles, and thus gain entry to the Mediterranean Sea. In addition, Russia had aims to expand its empire into Turkey, Persia and India. The influence of her agents with the rulers of Afghanistan had caused the British Government considerable problems in eliminating Russian influence in this country, which threatened India's security.

In 1844 Tsar Nicholas I had made it clear to the British Government that Russia regarded the Ottoman Empire as the 'sick man of Europe' and offered Britain dominion over Egypt and Crete, provided Russia could have a free hand elsewhere. The British Government refused his offer as it had no wish for Russia to extend its borders further into Europe and Central Asia and thus to threaten the route to India.

Russia used, as the occasion for their dispute with the Ottoman Empire, the Tsar's desire to obtain protection over the Christian subjects in these territories, for which there were some historical

precedents. Russia asked for this right in the spring of 1853, but the Sultan refused, as this would give Russia sovereignty over these lands.

In July 1853 Russia invaded Moldavia and Wallachia. [Modern Rumania]. The British Government then ordered Admiral Dundas's squadron of six warships to proceed to Besika Bay, at the entrance of the Dardanelles, to join the French Navy there, and if necessary to protect Constantinople from attack. The Austrian Government then attempted to use its influence to settle the differences between both parties.

The Tsar's military might had enabled Austria to put down the recent revolt by Magyar nationalists in Hungary and he was therefore sure that Austria was his ally. The Austrian Government was disturbed by the Tsar's expansionist aims in the Balkans, which could also upset its trade in Europe, as the Danube was a major trade route. They feared Russia, which controlled the German-speaking nations and had intervened in the dispute between the German Confederation and Denmark over the ownership of Schleswig Holstein. It had succeeded in obtaining the annexation of this territory by the German Confederation.

In France Louis Napoleon became President in December 1848. He was elected President for ten years in 1851 and in 1852 appointed himself Emperor Napoleon III. He was keen to demonstrate France's power on the world stage.

The Sultan was pleased that Britain and France were supporting him against Russia and put his defences in order. In October 1853 he issued an ultimatum to Russia to withdraw its troops from its territories in a fortnight. In November 1853 the Russian Fleet surprised and sank a Turkish squadron at Sinope on the Black Sea.

In January 1854 the British, French and Turkish fleets sailed into the Black Sea, as Russia needed to control this sea to be able to invade the Ottoman Empire. The British and French navies were sufficiently powerful and numerous to give the Allies undoubted command of the sea. The Russian Navy, whose warships were inferior to those of the Royal Navy, returned to Sevastopol.

In February 1854 Russia broke off diplomatic relations with Britain, but the two nations did not then declare war on one another. The Tsar was sent an ultimatum by the Allies to evacuate his armies from Rumania. He failed to do so and the British Government declared war on Russia on 5 April 1854.