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FIELD-MARSHAL

FITZ-ROY J. H. LORD RAGLAN, G.C.B.

LORD FITZ-ROY JAMES HENRY SOMERSET, afterwards created Baron Raglan, was born at Badminton, on 30th September, 1788. He was the eighth and youngest of eight sons of the fifth Duke of Beaufort, of whom more than one rose to high distinction in the Army. His mother was a daughter of Admiral the Hon. Edward Boscawen.

When at Westminster School an incident occurred which showed the kind disposition for which he was in after life remarkable. He was placed in a higher form than his brother, Lord John Somerset, but begged of the Head Master not to be put above his elder brother, and his request was granted. After leaving Westminster he entered the Army at the age of fifteen, receiving his first commission on 9th June, 1804, as Cornet in the 4th (Queen's Own) Regiment of Dragoons, and being promoted to Lieutenant on 30th May, 1805. In 1807 he was attached to the Hon. Sir Arthur Paget's Embassy to Turkey; and on 5th May, 1808, obtained a company in the 6th Garrison Battalion, from which, three months later, he was transferred to the 43rd Light Infantry. So that he had the advantage, like his master and friend the great Duke, of acquiring in a subordinate rank, a practical knowledge of the various duties, uses, and capabilities of both cavalry and infantry.

When Sir Arthur Wellesley was appointed to the command of the troops in the Peninsula, Lord Fitz-Roy Somerset accompanied him to the seat of war; serving, in the first instance, as his Assistant Military Secretary and Aide-de-Camp, and afterwards as Military Secretary. From this moment to the victory of Waterloo he attended the Duke of Wellington in every action. It is related that, after the first action in which he was engaged, Sir Arthur Wellesley inquired of him: "Well, Lord Fitz-Roy, how do you feel under fire?" "Better, sir, than I expected," was the reply; an answer which, from its frankness and modesty, is said to have very favourably impressed his chief.

He was present at the battles of Roleia, Vimiera, and Talavera; and in that of Busaco, on the 29th September, 1810, where he was repeatedly under a galling fire, he received his first wound. The two engagements at Fuentes d'Onoro, on the 3rd and 5th May, 1811, afforded him further opportunities of displaying that high courage and tact for which he had already become so conspicuous; and in both these actions he greatly distinguished himself, and was promoted Brevet-Major on the 9th June. Sir William Napier pays the following high tribute to his merits at this critical period:—"Lord Fitz-Roy Somerset, Military Secretary, had established such an intercourse between the headquarters and the battalion chiefs, that the latter had, so to speak, direct communication with the General-in-Chief upon all the business of their regiments, a privilege which stimulated the enthusiasm and zeal of all. For the regimental commanders being generally very young men, the distinctions of rank were not rigidly enforced, and the merit of each officer was consequently better known and more easily supported when promotion and honours were to be obtained. By this method Lord Fitz-Roy acquired an exact knowledge of the moral state of each regiment, rendered his own office important and gracious with the Army, and with such discretion and judgment that the military hierarchy was in no manner weakened. All the daring young men were excited, and, being unacquainted with the political difficulties of their General, anticipated noble triumphs, which were happily realised."

After participating in the assault and capture of Ciudad Rodrigo, Lord Fitz-Roy Somerset acquired additional distinction by his gallantry and intrepidity at the storming of Badajos, on the night of the 6th April, 1812. The horrors of that fight were not soon forgotten. The roar of cannon and musketry, the rush forward of forlorn hopes, and their spring into the fatal ditch, the columns of sturdy British infantry rolling on to the attack, the cheers, the shouts, the groans, the cries of triumph and despair, the crash of walls, and the general din are powerfully and vividly described by Napier. In the midst of this scene a figure rises, like a shadow, on the summit of a distant rampart. Others follow in breathless succession—there is a shout, a charge, a roll of musketry, an English party is in the streets, and Lord Fitz-Roy Somerset is soon found among the foremost. Making his way to the stronghold of San Christoval, to which the French Governor had retreated, he secured the drawbridge, and prevented the enemy from continuing their resistance. By this prompt measure he completed the success of the operation, and on the following morning had the honour of receiving the submission of the French Governor. In recognition of his services he was promoted Lieutenant-Colonel in the Army by brevet on the 27th of the same month.

By the side of the Duke he was present throughout the battles of Salamanca and Vittoria in 1812 and 1813. At length the French were driven into the Pyrenees, and Soult prepared to dispute its passes. While the French General was occupying the Vals de Zubiri and de Lanz, threatened in front by Cole, supported at a little distance by

Picton, Wellington galloped on to Sauroren, attended solely by Fitz-Roy Somerset, "the only staff officer," says Napier, "who had kept up with him." At this moment Clausel was making for this very town, and Wellington observed his troops advancing hastily along the ridge, which, thus secured, would necessarily cut off the allies. The crisis was imminent, the French being almost within gunshot; but Wellington drew up, wrote an order on a slip of paper to the General of the 6th Division, and gave it in charge to Lord Fitz-Roy, who, while Wellington galloped up the mountain to his troops in front, rode off in another direction, quitting the town at one end as the French cavalry entered it at the other. Cheers pealing from the heights announced the safety of Wellington, who instantly presented himself on an open spot, where he could be seen by the enemy, and whence he himself discerned Soult. Here it was that he made a remarkable exclamation, as if in commune with some unseen intelligence, and which will be quoted in the words of Napier—"Yonder is a great commander, but he is cautious, and will delay his attack to ascertain the cause of these cheers; that will give time for the 6th Division to arrive, and I shall beat him." And the French General made no serious attack that day.

Making his way alone through passes infested by the enemy, and swept by a fearful storm, Lord Fitz-Roy arrived early in the afternoon at Olague, in the valley of Lanz, where the 6th Division had come to a halt; and, in obedience to his orders, brought it round by Lizasso after passing a night on the road. At this point it was able to communicate with the 7th Division, which had come up by another route; and thus by a masterly movement, Wellington converted a position of danger into one of great strength. The two battles of Sauroren followed, inflicting a terrible chastisement on Soult; and in both sanguinary engagements Lord Fitz-Roy Somerset bore a prominent part.

The strong fortress of Pampeluna was the bulwark of the Pyrenees; but Soult, though sensible of its paramount importance, relied on its strength and resources for a protracted defence. Wellington and Fitz-Roy Somerset were riding unattended through one of the mountain passes, when they were met by a muleteer, dispatched by the French Governor with a secret communication to Soult. Struck by the appearance of Wellington, he instantly set him down as the French Marshal, who was supposed to be in the neighbourhood; and as he came up, he took a scrap of paper from his mouth and presented it to him. It was inscribed with ciphers. "If we could unravel this, we might gain some intelligence," said Wellington, handing the paper to his companion. Lord Fitz-Roy scanned it attentively, and, detecting two or three vowels, quickly deciphered the whole, whence it was discovered that if Pampeluna were not relieved by a certain day, the Governor would be obliged to surrender. Wellington took his measures accordingly, and the renowned stronghold fell into his hands. With the key of Spain he unlocked the gates of France, and hurried rapidly on to the engagements of Nivelle, Nive, Orthes, and Toulouse—battles ever glorious to the British arms, in which

Lord Fitz-Roy won fresh laurels by his promptitude, intrepidity, and chivalrous indifference to danger. The peace of 1814 permitted him to return to England, where his close connection with Wellington was cemented by his marriage with Emily Harriet, daughter of the Hon. William Wellesley Pole, afterwards Lord Mornington, and niece to the Duke. In acknowledgment of his military services, Lord Fitz-Roy was awarded the Peninsula gold cross with five clasps for Fuentes d'Onoro, Badajos, Vittoria, Salamanca, Pyrenees, Nivelle, Nive, Orthes, and Toulouse; and on the institution of the Peninsula silver war medals he received one with five clasps for Roleia, Vimiera, Talavera, Busaco, and Ciudad Rodrigo.

On the 25th July, 1814, he was transferred from the 43rd Light Infantry to Captain and Lieut.-Colonel in the 1st Foot Guards on augmentation. In the same year he was appointed to the post of Secretary to the British Embassy at Paris, and was Minister Plenipotentiary there for a few months in 1815. But Buonaparte's escape from Elba and the recommencement of hostilities with France in that year recalled Lord Fitz-Roy Somerset to the seat of war. That short campaign of 1815 entailed on him duties no less onerous than arduous. The old Peninsula Army no longer existed, and the ambition of Napoleon had to be met with hastily raised levies and Militiamen. But the same high qualities that had enabled Fitz-Roy Somerset to do such good work in the Peninsula produced a similar effect in the Waterloo campaign. Those who in the days of the Crimean War attacked the administrative ability of Lord Raglan probably knew little of the career of Fitz-Roy Somerset. Under his direction the various foreign contingents were, as regards the staff, soon brought into cohesion; the allied commanders enjoyed every facility for communicating with the Commander-in-Chief; and, in the midst of hurry and movement, the well-organised staff executed its duties with the regularity of a machine.

The morning of the 16th June, 1815, found the Allies in possession of Quatre Bras. Wellington was on the ground at 10 o'clock, accompanied by Lord Fitz-Roy, who assisted him in reconnoitring the enemy. With his illustrious chief he was throughout the day in the post of danger. At one time, nearly overtaken by some French Lancers, they were obliged to make at a gallop for the 92nd Highlanders, to whom the Duke called to lie down in a ditch, and then fairly leaped over them. This, however, was only one of the hairbreadth escapes of Lord Fitz-Roy, and he was continually bearing orders from his chief to every part of the field. At the final victory of Waterloo he had his full share of its horrors as well as its glory, for there he lost his right arm. Wellington announced the disaster to the Duke of Beaufort in the following interesting letter:—
 "I am very sorry to have to acquaint you that your brother Fitz-Roy is very severely wounded and has lost his right arm. I have just seen him, and he is perfectly free from fever, and as well as anybody could be under such circumstances. You are aware how useful he has always been to me, and how much I shall feel the want of his assistance, and

what a regard and affection I feel for him, and you will readily believe how much concerned I am for his misfortune. Indeed, the losses I have sustained have quite broken me down, and I have no feeling for the advantages we have acquired. I hope, however, that your brother will soon be able to join me again, and that he will long live to be, as he is likely to become, an honour to his country, as he is a satisfaction to his family and friends." For his distinguished services in the Waterloo campaign Lord Fitz-Roy Somerset was appointed extra Aide-de-Camp to H.R.H. the Prince Regent, with the rank of colonel in the Army, was created a K.C.B., and received the Waterloo medal and the Orders of Maria-Theresa of Austria, St. George of Russia, Maximilian Joseph of Bavaria, and the Tower and Sword of Portugal. Lord Fitz-Roy took lessons in writing ten days after the loss of his right arm, and quickly learnt to write well with his left hand. He soon took again to riding, and was an excellent horseman.

In 1816 he resumed his former diplomatic duties as Secretary of Embassy at Paris. He subsequently accompanied the Duke of Wellington to the Congresses of Vienna and Verona; and afterwards attended him, in the same capacity, in his special mission to St. Petersburg, on the occasion of the accession of the Emperor Nicholas. In 1823 he was himself entrusted with a special mission to Madrid, where his former distinguished reputation was still remembered and insured him a gratifying reception in that capital. He was promoted to the rank of Major-General on the 27th November, 1825. All this time he held the post of Secretary to the Master-General of the Ordnance to which he had been appointed by the Duke of Wellington in 1819; and he continued to occupy the position till the 29th August, 1827, when he became Military Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief, the duties of which he performed until the 30th September, 1852, with great tact and ability.

On the 19th November, 1830, Lord Fitz-Roy Somerset was appointed Colonel of the 53rd Regiment; in 1834, on the occasion of the installation of the Duke of Wellington as Chancellor of the University of Oxford, he had the degree of D.C.L. conferred upon him; on the 28th June, 1838, he was promoted to the rank of Lieut-General; and in September, 1847, he received the Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath. On the death of the Duke of Wellington he obtained, on the 30th September, 1852, the post of Master-General of the Ordnance; and in October of the same year was elevated to the peerage with the title of Baron Raglan of Raglan, county Monmouth, and was constituted a Privy Councillor. He was subsequently, on the 8th May, 1854, appointed Colonel of the Royal Horse Guards (the Blues), and was promoted to General on the 20th June of the same year.

The period had now arrived when he was to enter on the most distinguished part of his career, for when, on the outbreak of the Crimean War, in 1854, it was determined to send an expedition to the East, the Government appointed Lord Raglan to the command. He was then sixty-five, an age when men usually consult their own ease. He was occupying for

the first time a position which enabled him to accumulate some provision for his family, yet Lord Raglan suffered no considerations of this kind to interfere with his duty, but promptly accepted the charge. He arrived in the East on the 29th April, and was soon engaged in carrying out, what Sir John Burgoyne pronounced as "a desperate enterprise," the attack on Sebastopol. He himself declared, in a public despatch, that it "was undertaken more in deference to the wishes of the Government" than was justified by the information in his possession. The battle of the Alma, in which he showed great personal bravery, was fought, and won on the 20th September, 1854. Lord Raglan was accused of an error of judgment in not following up this battle by a *coup de main* on Sebastopol, but it is not proposed to discuss that point here. It is known, however, that when, by that flank movement, which frustrated the long-planned tactics of the enemy, he afterwards brought the Allies to the South of Sebastopol, it was found to be an impregnable fortress, mounted with numerous guns, manned by 6,000 gunners from the fleet, defended by a garrison of nearly 30,000 men, provisioned for a year's siege, supported by an army of co-operation, and possessing an inexhaustible arsenal. In front of this stronghold a popular outcry and a feeble Government had sent on an enterprise, undertaken with insufficient means, the noblest spirits of England to sicken, and rot, and perish.

It is scarcely necessary to allude to the circumstances connected with the battles of Balaklava and Inkerman, beyond saying that the aged General animated every heart by his grand example of calmness and *sang-froid* in the thickest of a heavy fire. For the victory of Inkerman, Lord Raglan was rewarded by Her Majesty with the bâton of a Field-Marshal, and the Sultan of Turkey conferred on him the Imperial order of the Medjidie of the 1st class.

Who is not familiar with the horrors of the winter campaign before Sebastopol? The heroism of the British soldiers, insufficiently clad and housed, worn out with toil, harassed by continual alarms, and stricken with every evil but cowardice and despair; the indomitable fortitude with which they sustained the ordeal, the patience and courage with which they bore every privation and suffering, will never fade from the memory of Englishmen. During all this time, and by every means in his power, Lord Raglan exerted himself to alleviate the hardships and distress of his army. Yet while he was engaged in this harassing task, and while he was making superhuman exertions to supply every want, and, at the same time carry on the work of the siege, he was overwhelmed with abuse and misrepresentation at home, unjustly assailed even by some of his officers, and slighted by the Government. Only the strongest sense of religion and duty, and the support he received from the Queen and the officers and soldiers of his army, enabled his noble spirit to bear the animadversions, misrepresentations, and calumnies to which he was exposed. But there is a limit to all human endurance. The attack of the 18th June was not, it is known, carried out in accordance with the plan proposed by Lord Raglan and approved by his French ally,

else the result might have been different. Against his own judgment he was obliged to support the attack. On that fatal day he shared, with his usual intrepidity, all the dangers of the fray, occupying so exposed a station that the officers and soldiers, as they passed, cried out to his Staff: "If you want Lord Raglan to be killed, you'll let him stop there." His grief at the result, and at the lamentable loss of life it entailed, preyed on a mind harassed by so many cares, and he succumbed rapidly to an attack of diarrhoea, which easily subdued a frame weakened by anxiety, and bent with the burden of a divided command. After an illness of several days he seemed to rally, but it was only the flame flickering in the socket; and with the officers of his Staff gathered mournfully round his humble bed, he passed away in the camp before Sebastopol, on the 28th June, 1855, in his sixty-seventh year. His body, attended by the commanders-in-chief of the English, French, Turkish, and Sardinian armies, was removed on the 4th July, to Kazatch Bay, whence it was brought to England and buried privately at Badminton, on the 26th of the month. His great services to his country were acknowledged in a general order, of the 4th July, in which occur the following passages: "By his calmness in the hottest moments of battle, and by his quick perception in taking advantage of the ground or the movements of the enemy, he won the confidence of his army, and performed great and brilliant services. In the midst of a winter's campaign, in a severe climate, and surrounded by difficulties, he never despaired. The heroic army, whose fortitude amidst the severest privations is recognised by Her Majesty as beyond all praise, have shown their attachment to their commander by the deep regret with which they now mourn his loss." General Pélissier, in a general order to the French Army, said: "Those who knew Lord Raglan, who were acquainted with the history of his noble life, so pure, so rich in services rendered to his country; those who witnessed his bravery on the fields of Alma and Inkerman, who remember the calm and stoic grandeur of his character during this severe and memorable campaign—all men of heart, in fact—must deplore the loss of such a man."

It is not proposed here to enter into an argument as to the tactical and administrative qualities of Lord Raglan. He was, however, the pupil, the disciple, and confidant of the greatest English general of modern times. The Duke of Wellington admired and respected his talents, and acknowledged his indebtedness to him for much sagacity and foresight, his fertility of resource, his promptitude, and his power of combination; while Napier eulogised his administrative capacity and his influence in the Peninsula and Waterloo campaigns. No general ever undertook a campaign of greater magnitude and difficulty than did Lord Raglan in the Crimea, for of all the tasks which can be imposed on a military commander, that of a divided command is by far the most difficult. This task, not always under easy circumstances, sometimes not without peril and inconvenience, he performed on the whole with remarkable success.

Lord Raglan was brave to a fault, always foremost in the moment of danger, and to the last distinguished by his personal prowess. He was an admirable horseman, possessing a vigorous constitution, unsurpassed powers of endurance, and a frame capable of sustaining the greatest fatigue. Upon the field of battle he exposed himself to excess, and showed an enthusiastic contempt of danger. He dashed across the Alma in the midst of the Russian fire with the gaiety of a foxhunter. He was the first to come upon the Russian convoy on the flank march, and to ride under fire down the defile of Balaklava. At Inkerman, when he ordered the 18-pounders to be brought up which decided the fate of that bloody day, he stood under a shower of balls. He was in every sense a patriot, a soldier, and a gentleman. His charm of manner, his even temper, and kind heart, endeared him to all, for he was equally courteous to high and low. He was a man of strong religious convictions, deep feeling, and high principle, and it is not surprising that he was loved by his soldiers. When his death was announced to the troops, many a proud eye paid him the tribute of a tear.

There have been generals of higher military genius than Lord Raglan, but no more noble character ever wore the uniform of a British soldier. The reputation he leaves behind him is one which the bravest might be proud to enjoy, and the best might envy.

R. HOLDEN.