GENTLEMAN JOHNNY BURGOYNE

MISADVENTURES OF AN ENGLISH GENERAL
IN THE REVOLUTION

by

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CHAPTER I – EARLY DAYS

0n the morning of March 10, 1760, at the Horse Guards, that building which is familiar to every Londoner and to every visitor to London, and which had then been standing just ten years, there began the "Fourth Day's Sitting on the Tryal of Lord George Sackville, being charged with Disobedience of Orders while he commanded the British Horse in Germany."

Colonel Sloper in his red uniform and with his jolly red face - which one may assume in view of his rank, the age in which he lived, and the Treaty* with Portugal - was sworn and gave evidence. And, for an Englishman, it is very painful evidence to read. He told the Court how on August 1, 1759, early in the morning in the open country near Minden, on a heath, a "blasted heath" so far as the honor of the British Army was concerned, thanks to a white-livered scoundrel, Captain Winschingrode, aide-de-camp to Duke Ferdinand, rode up to Lord George Sackville and told him in French that "it was the Duke's orders he should advance to the left with the right wing of the cavalry." "The Duke" was Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick. He sent his orders for the advance of the Horse with the words: *"Voici le beau moment pour la cavalerie: courez y."*

Colonel Sloper went on: "My Lord said, *'Mais comment, mais comment?'* Captain Winschingrode, like Captain Nolan at Balaklava, pointed with outstretched sword the direction for the advance. "I heard my Lord say," continued Colonel Sloper, " I do not comprehend how the movement is to be made." The movement was not made, le beau moment passed and was lost, and the French army escaped annihilation. Later Captain Ligonier galloped up and, to continue the Colonel's evidence:

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*The Methuen Treaty of 1703. The Portuguese got British woollen goods and in exchange we got a far, far better thing - port. As a nation we began drinking it then and have never stopped doing so. I have a bottle by my side as 1 am writing this.

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“I spoke to Captain Ligonier. As to what I said the Court must tell me whether I am to go on.

‘*Judge Advocate*. Yes, proceed.

"*Colonel Sloper*. I said to Captain Ligonier, 'For God's sake repeat your orders to *that man*, that he may not pretend not to understand them, for it is near half-an-hour ago that he has received orders to advance, and yet we are still here.

“Question. Who did you mean by the words 'that man'?

“Answer. My Lord George Sackville. My oath obliges me to say all I said. I said to Captain Ligonier, 'You see the condition he is in.' "

Further questioned, Colonel Sloper said, “My Lord was alarmed to a very great degree: he seemed in the utmost confusion.”

There was a very patient hearing of evidence on both sides, and the accused was allowed a free hand in cross-examination, but after Colonel Sloper's evidence it is not surprising to learn that the judgment of the court-martial ends with the words, “It is the Opinion of this Court that the said Lord George Sackville is, and he is hereby adjudged, unfit to serve His Majesty in any Military Capacity whatever.” What is surprising is that he was not shot on the Horse Guards Parade. Still, one must remember that he was “My Lord.”

The court filed out of the Horse Guards into Whitehall and made its way to the coffee-houses, the gaming. houses, the pleasure-gardens and (perhaps) the bagnios, and honest old Colonel Sloper must have felt like a terrier that has just killed a rat. But it is a pity that the court in its sentence could not have left out the word “Military.” For in 1775 “that man” emerges from “the trap-door of history,” if one may use a favorite phrase of a brilliant, not to say coruscating and glittering writer, as Secretary of State for the American Colonies and also for the American War.

The War of American Independence was won by Washington and his troops in spite of Congress: the loss of the American Colonies was due, not so much to the incapacity of the British generals in the field, as to the stupid bungling of affairs in London by “that man,” by this time Lord George Germain. He changed his name to Germain on inheriting some property.

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EARLY DAYS

Of the British commanders who fought and lost in North America none had a more variegated and romantic career than John Burgoyne. There is a legend, which still persists, that he was the illegitimate son of Lord Bingley, who had been ambassador in Spain and who was certainly Burgoyne's godfather. This legend has been repeated in a book which was published so recently as 1926. It was started by Lady Bingley, who was not on the best of terms with her husband, and that gossiping old woman, Horace Walpole, repeated it. There is no Lord Bingley now. Any eighteenth-century peer with to slap-dash, reckless and devil-may-care a name as Bingley must have had many love-affairs. And I say this in spite of that gentlemanly Mr. Bingley who was “a single man of large fortune, four or five thousand a year. What a fine thing for our girls.” (If you do not know who he was, you are not a Janeite.) As a matter of fact, it is recorded of Lord Bingley that he “left annuities to two or three widows.” They can not, of course, all have been his - unless he was a trigamist.

John Burgoyne was born in London in 1722. The family was of good old stock and acquired their estates in 1387 from “time-honoured Lancaster,” who granted them to Roger Burgoyne by the following quaint deed:

I John of Gaunt
Do give and do graunt
Unto Roger Burgoyne
And the heirs of his loyne
All Sutton and Potton
Until the world's rotten.

His father was the younger son of the third baronet, Sir John Burgoyne. His mother, Anna Maria, was the daughter of a London citizen, called Burnestone, and “worth a plum,”* as they used to say in those days. She was also a great beauty, and her son inherited her looks. The third Sir John married a daughter of Richard Lucy of Charlecote in Warwickshire, of that Lucy family which in the person of that member of it who served as a model for Mr. Justice Shallow, objected to young William Shakespeare killing deer which did not belong to him. John Burgoyne had in this way a roundabout connection with the theater and the drama of which he was in his time both a devotee and an ornament. His father was a man about town who, like so many men about town of his day, finished a glorious, gambling career in the King's Bench.

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*That is to say, had a handsome fortune.

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Nowadays men of fashion who have come to grief go beyond the King's Bench, into the City, where, if they are sufficiently distinguished, they become Directors of Companies. But they do not as a rule direct, fortunately perhaps for the Companies.

John Burgoyne, like another famous soldier who was not exactly a success in the field, Lord Raglan, went to school at Westminster, where, unhappily, for it had rather a sad effect upon his style, he became well acquainted with the classics and, also, happily, formed a great friendship with Lord Strange, heir to the eleventh Earl of Derby.

Burgoyne was in later life much addicted to tags of Latin, and probably many of his brother officers did not understand them. Latin and Greek are not really much use to a soldier. It is all very well to know every move in the Siege of Troy, but, as a matter of cold hard fact, this siege was, even in the eighteenth century, from a practical point of view, as much out of date as the Siege of Jericho, where Joshua initiated a system of Siege Warfare which has never since been surpassed, although there certainly have been in military history commanders who could blow their own trumpets to some purpose. Burgoyne himself was not guiltless in this respect. His friendship with Lord Strange led to an acquaintance with the latter's family and also to an elopement with Lady Charlotte Stanley,[1] when he was a young officer in the 1st Dragoons. He had had a "priory tachment," as Sam Weller puts it, to Miss Frances Poole, who ultimately married the Lord Palmerston of the day. Burgoyne dedicated to the bridegroom a poem on the charms of Fanny to which he had nearly succumbed: "Subsiding flame" for the cooling-off of a flirtation is

'Twas mine to see each opening charm,
New beauties rise - new graces charm; [2]
'Twas mine to feel their power;
Nature and morals just and pure,
For that has made the fruit mature
Since 1 adored the flower.

After hard conflict passion cool'd;
Discretion, honour, reason ruled
O'er the subsiding flame;
Till Charlotte to my vacant breast,
With kindred charms and virtues blest,
A sweet successor came.

[1]Sixth daughter of the eleventh Earl of Derby.

[2]Rather a poetic license, this repetition.

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excellent.But one can not help wondering what Charlotte thought, of Fanny, and vice versa.

Burgoyne, as we shall see, was not indifferent to female charms, but he loved his Charlotte dearly and was a good, kind and most considerate husband to her. Her family, except Lord Strange, at first. frowned upon the match, but ultimately, won over by the dashing young cavalryman's charm of manner, accepted him with great kindness and ever did what they could for him. And in the eighteenth century a peer could do a great deal.

He joined the army in 1744, but, chiefly owing to cards, sold out in 1747. He went with his wife to France where they settled down near Canteloup, and where he acquired that knowledge, or rather, smattering of the french language which in those days was indispensable to any man of fashion. And yet most of them mangled it; not more, however, than they did English, - witness that creation of Burgoyne's friend, Sheridan, Lord Foppington with his “As Gad shall jedge me,” “Stap my vitals,” “Rat me,” and so forth. But one loves Lord Foppington, if only for his remark that he was “passionately fond of music - on Tuesdays and Saturdays, for then there is always the best company at the Opera.”

It was at this date that Burgoyne with his wife paid a visit to Italy, where in Rome his portrait was painted by Ramsay,* and a remarkably handsome fellow the artist depicts him as being, with large and lustrous eyes. No wonder Lady Charlotte fell in love with him. In 1756 he rejoined the army and, thanks to the interest of the house of Stanley, was gazetted Captain in the 11th Dragoons. It was not long before he saw service in the field. The Seven Years' War had for its main theater Germany, but at this date England was constantly fitting out expeditions to the coast of France. These were called “diversions,” and to read about them is certainly diverting, for as a rule the admiral who took the troops over and the general who commanded them were not on the best of terms. The “general idea,” as soldiers say, was that by landing men somewhere on the coast of France, the French troops serving in Flanders, or High Germany, or wherever Bellona may have been belloning about, would be “diverted” thence to deal with the invasion of Normandy or Brittany. These expeditions might have been called Tip-and-Run Expeditions: they were not cricket, for they usually ended in a draw. Fox compared them, to "breaking windows with guineas," and it is an apt simile. What a wit said

*Official portrait painter at George III's Court

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of the Rochefort Expedition of 1757 might be said of most of them:

> **We went, we saw, were seen, like Valiant Men**
> **Sailed up the Bay, and then-sailed back again.**

Young Burgoyne took part in three of them, the attack upon Cherbourg in 1758, the expedition against St. Malo in the same year, and the Belle Isle adventure in 1761. The St. Malo enterprise, known in its day, but now quite forgotten, as “The misfortune at St. Cas” - St. Cas being the bay from which the troops reembarked - had some interesting features. It was commanded by General Bligh, whom Horace Walpole describes as “an old General routed out of some horse armoury in Ireland.” In other words, he was what we now call a “dugout.” One can not blame this poor old boy, for his instructions were of the vaguest: they were to the effect that he should “carry a warm alarm along the coast of France.” An indignant and ungrammatical pamphleteer of the day demanded, “Who could the descent alarm but a few peasants and a few old women for fear they should not be ravished?” (A very cynical “*not*” this, 1 think.) But the “Misfortune” deserves to be remembered, if only for one incident. When the troops were driven on to the beach of St. Cas, the Quartermaster-General, a certain Colonel Clerk, instead of worrying about such trifling details as arrangements for the re-embarkation, sat on the shingle, “Spending his time in the trivial amusement of reading a Gazette which accidentally fell into his hands.” This is the right British phlegm which helped us to win an empire and also, incidentally, later on in the eighteenth century, to lose a large part of it. Burgoyne learned in this expedition to assume responsibility. He writes, “C. and myself who were upon the right perceived a very large body of the enemy pushing with great expedition upon the hill on the right in the intention to flank us. Of this we immediately informed the Generals, but received no order how to act and were obliged to determine upon our own authority to wheel the divisions we commanded so as to front the enemy.” And it is most probable that the generals were anxiously waiting each his turn, all queued up, to borrow the Quartermaster-General's *London Gazette* to see who had been promoted. Our troops had to swim for it to the boats and many were killed in the water. It is not to be wondered at that the first of the dug-outs, General Bligh, when he got back to England found himself in disgrace. But the odd thing is that the Duc d'Aiguillon, the French commander, was also heavily censured. So this particular show was emphatically a draw. The subsequent history of Colonel Clerk is not known. But one might wager that the coffee-houses buzzed with stories of his calmness.

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In 1759 it was decided to raise two regiments of Light Horse, and George II gave Burgoyne the command of one of them, the 16th Dragoons. (The other was given to Eliott, afterward Lord Heathfield, the hero of the Siege of Gibraltar: you can see his portrait in the National Portrait Gallery, and a fine red-faced, hook-nosed old gentlemen he is, a typical British general of the period.) The ranks of Burgoyne's regiment soon filled up, and no wonder, for the recruiting advertisement said, “You will be mounted on the finest horses in the world, with superb clothing and the richest accoutrements; your pay and privileges are equal to two guineas a week; you are everywhere respected; your society is courted; you are admired by the Fair, which, together with the chance of getting switched to a buxom widow, or of brushing with a rich heiress, renders the situation truly enviable and desirable. Young men out of employment or uncomfortable, ‘There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune': nick in instantly and enlist.” I think we may be pretty sure that it was Burgoyne who suggested the Shakespearian quotation. He soon licked his regiment into shape.

George III after his accession took a special pride in, and never wearied of inspecting, “Burgoyne's Light Horse,” so smart a regiment had it become. Later on, when it returned from Portugal, the King gave it the title of The Queen's Light Dragoons, and used to review it regularly every year on Hounslow Heath or Wimbledon Common. Burgoyne drew up a Code of Instructions for the guidance of his officers, which is of peculiar interest. He was in advance of his time. He actually, anticipating Sir Joseph Porter, K. C. B., told them not to swear. An occasional joke, in talking to the men, is also recommended as “an encouragement to the well-disposed and at the same time a tacit reproof to others” - though surely such a joke must have been rather like Lord Burleigh's nod. To the private, soldiering was no joke in the mid-eighteenth century. Army punishments were horribly severe. They included flogging,[1] tying neck and heels (akin to the Scavenger's Daughter, [2] a form of torture used in the Tower of London), riding the wooden horse, picketing and running the gauntlet, or "gantlope," as it used to be called. Minor punishments were clubbing, bottling, booting, and, perhaps most terrible of all, “Removal to the Navy.” One need not go farther than Smollett to learn that a Life on the Ocean Wave, And a Home on the Roaring Deep, was not exactly a home from home in those days. But Burgoyne was no

[1]The Bostonian taunt of 1770, "Bloodybacks," referred to the floggings then almost of daily occurrence in the British Army.

[2] Said to derive its odd name from Sir William Skevington, Lieutenant of the Tower, who invented it in the time of Henry V111.

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bullying martinet. We shall see later on, in North America, that if ever there was a general popular with the rank and file, it was Gentleman Johnny, chiefly indeed because he was a gentleman.

It is but poor consolation to reflect that the men in other armies were even more savagely treated. In that crack corps, the Prussian Guards, between 1740 and 1800 there were over one thousand six hundred desertions and one hundred and thirty suicides. The Prussian method is .what Burgoyne calls in his code “Training men like spaniels by the stick,”* and he contrasts it with the French system of “substituting the point of honour in the place of severity.” These are significant words: the “point of honour” was (after women) the lodestar of John Burgoyne's life. He goes on to say, “An Englishman will not bear beating so well as the foreigners,” and he even urges that soldiers should be treated as thinking beings! Here he is enormously in advance of his age.

Regimental officers of his day regarded their men not as thinking, but as drinking, beings. “You have no business, Sir, to think,” was a common army phrase of the period. And, as a matter of fact, the private who thinks has always in the past been rather an anomaly. Trooper Silas Tomkyn Comberback (otherwise known as Samuel Taylor Coleridge) thought a good deal when he was in the 15th Dragoons. But his thinking led to his writing Greek inscriptions - not unpleasant ones, one trusts upon walls while he was on sentry-go. And probably a famous writer of the present day could not refrain from thinking when the Sergeant-Major at Caterham told him that he “looked like a plateful of warmed-up Death.” Burgoyne gives his officers excellent advice, though it must have given rise to many an oath of astonishment.

The ignorance of the British officer of this day was, in the biting words of Colonel J. F. C. Fuller, “of a Stygian density.” Burgoyne actually urges them to read books and to learn foreign languages, though he admits that they should first learn English, and to “write it with swiftness and accuracy.” When he comes down to brass tacks he is extraordinarily sensible. A dragoon officer should acquire “the knowledge of every article that concerns the horse,” in other words he puts his officers through it, they had to "accoutre and bridle a horse themselves till they were thoroughly acquainted with the use of each strap and buckle." This is as sensible as the Duke of Wellington, who, anxious

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* “A spaniel, a woman, a walnut tree,
The more you flog them the better they be!”

Of the three it would seem wiser to deal with the *Juglans Regia*. It can not bite, kick, scratch, or call you unpleasant names.

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to know the exact weight carried by a private, instead of calling for a return on paper, made out by a clerk, sent for an infantryman, fully accoutered, put him into a pair of scales, weighed him and noted the weight. He then made him strip stark naked, weighed him again and noted the difference. Burgoyne also animadverts upon "the small allowance given by the Government for corn." This stinginess persisted for centuries, certainly up to 1880, or thereabouts, when there was a very popular ditty:

Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines*
Fed, his horse on corn and beans,
Which surely far exceeds the means
Of a Captain in the Army.

In 1761 Burgoyne took part as a volunteer in another "diversion," the attack on Belle Isle. His Charlotte, quite naturally, did not want him to go. He tried to console her with a poem which begins:

Still does my Obstinate repine
And reason's voice reprove;
Still think him cold who would combine
Philosophy with Love.

Perhaps "my Obstinate" was right. Philosophy and Love go ill together. Though of course there is the classic case of Lord Lytton, who, on one occasion, told his wife that he was going into the country "to study philosophy." Lady Lytton, who appears to have smelled a rat, followed him and, as she put it, "found Philosophy in pink muslin upon my Lord's knee." "How charming is divine Philosophy," especially when you can dandle it and address it as "Honey."

The expedition to Belle Isle is remarkable for one very curious episode. The governor, Sainte Croix, did his best by stratagems to deceive the British as to his strength. In this the ladies of the garrison - was there ever a French lady who was not at once both strategist and tactician? - gave him valuable aid. Clad in red uniforms, they rode on horseback along the coast where they could be seen by the English fleet then lying in that vague - to landsmen - quarter generally known as "the offing." Such was the patriotism of these daughters of France that "those who had no horses rode on cows." Which must have soured, if not the milk, at all

*No such regiment, of course, ever existed. Which seems a pity, as the British Army is so frequently engaged in what is called Amphibious Warfare.

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events the cows. This is very like the Welsh women who, in their red cloaks and steeple-crowned hats, completely took in the French soldiers[1] when they landed at Fishguard in 1797. There was no battle at Fishguard and there is no mention of the Pembrokeshire Yeomanry in Lord Cawdor's despatch dealing with this very trivial affair. Which is, no doubt, the reason why the corps in question was in 1853 given by the Home Secretary, Lord Palmerston, [2] "Fishguard" as a battle honor - a most Palmerstonian proceeding. And yet many regular regiments had to wait until 1882 before they got battle honors which they had won in Flanders under the great Duke of Marlborough. Probably in 1853 there was some Welsh M. P. whose vote was valuable.

Belle Isle was very futile. A verdict of the day on it was, "There was not wanting some in England who did not sufficiently estimate the value of this conquest, yet all the parties agree in applauding the valour of the officers by whom it was obtained." This may be said of every diversion, or side-show, as we call them now, in military history. The latest, the Dardanelles, has given a word, Anzac, to history which will certainly never be forgotten. In a contemporary account of Belle Isle there is a quaint passage. "The French began to fire from behind a breastwork: the English returned it every time, squatting themselves on their backsides every time to unload, which saved them from the shot of the enemy." The word of command "Backsides!" is not to be found in the old drill-books, though these contain some very odd directions. Those interested in such should read *The Sergeant-Major*, by Colonel F. J. Davies, [3] published in 1886. This highly entertaining work ends with an extract from an old drill-book which I should love to quote. But I dare not, lest, I be denounced by some censor as a turp., and lest this my book be Ellis-Islanded, upon some *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*. John Burgoyne got taken prisoner once, and I do not want this to happen to him again.

Burgoyne was now to see more serious campaigning than these "Tag you're it" kind of expeditions to the coast of Normandy and Brittany. France and Spain had made up their minds to bully Portugal, and England, mindful of her favorite wine and ever the champion (when convenient) of small countries, fired up on behalf of her old ally, declared

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[1]They had just been recruited from the French jails and were hardly real soldiers.

[2]At this date the Militia and Yeomanry were administered by the Home Office, not the War Office.

[3]Now General Sir F. J. Davies, K. C. B., Lieutenant of the Tower of London.

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war on Spain and in 1763 sent a contingent of seven thousand troops to the Peninsula. These troops were placed under the command of Wilhelm, Count of Lippe Buckeburg (some add Schaumburg, but this makes it painfully long), a field-marshal in the army of Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick. He had held a commission in the British Foot Guards and had fought at Dettingen. After the Seven Years' War he set up a kind of Woolwich for the training of young Brunswick sapper and gunner officers at which he himself instructed them in mathematics. The Portuguese army filled this old martinet with dismay and horror. The officers were ill-paid,[1] so much so that many of the captains did a little job-tailoring in their spare time and their wives took in washing. There is a British regiment pleasantly known as The Slashers,[2] - perhaps Portugal then had one called The Cutters. The Generals could not afford to pay their servants wages, so instead gave them commissions, missions, and the guards on duty outside the King's palace in Lisbon would beg alms from those who passed by. Probably if any one had thrown a copper on the parade-ground while they were being drilled - if they ever were - there would have been an unseemly scuffle, or, in the odd phrase of the newspaper reporters, "an ugly rush." That distinguished Spanish officer, that "unaffected, undetected, well-connected nobleman," the Duke of Plaza Toro, would probably not have seen anything odd or unseemly in this, but La Lippe was horrified. To show his lack of appreciation of Portuguese gunnery he gave a dinner to the Portuguese generals in a large marquee and offered a prize, to any gunner who should hit the flag flying on the, top of. it. One can only hope that the Portuguese generals took the cannonade as a salute in their honor; Burgoyne, always a fire-eater, must have thoroughly enjoyed it - I can hear him asking with a pleasant smile. on, his handsome face, "Where did that one go?"

The Count de la Lippe was given to grim practical jokes of this kind. Once, in Germany, after maneuvers, he gave a dinner in his tent to a number of distinguished visitors and toward the end of it was observed to be perpetually looking at his watch. He had, like Mr. Winkle, just said,

"Let's have another bottle," when he was asked why he was so anxious about the time. "Why," he replied, "I have ordered this tent to be mined by a new method: it is to be blown up at a certain moment, and I want to get out in time to see the explosion." His guests did not wait to empty that bottle.

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[1] It was painful to read in the French press in December, 1926, that in the French Army there were cases of officers whose pay was so inadequate that they were reduced to supplement it by cleaning motorcars and collecting railway-tickets in their spare time.

[2] The 28th Foot, now 1st Battalion The Gloucestershire Regiment won this nickname in North America at the battle of White Plains in November, 1776.

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Burgoyne had come over in command of his Light Dragoons and was given the local rank of brigadier-general, with a brigade of three thousand troops, two thousand of which were Portuguese and not very enthusiastic soldiers, for a large proportion of the inhabitants of Portugal took no interest whatever in the operations that had been undertaken in the defence of their country; they appear to have regarded the whole matter as a lot of unnecessary fuss. Burgoyne and his regiment greatly distinguished themselves in the surprise and capture of Valentia d'Alcantara. He started at midnight, forded the Tagus and, though misled by his guides, arrived at dawn in front of Valentia and, without waiting for the infantry to come up, rode, sword in hand, at the head of his Dragoons into the place and captured it. And the first thing he did was to "raise a contribution for sparing the convent and the town to be divided among his troops." Otherwise the town would have been pillaged and the convent - well, the less said about the fate of its inmates the better. And yet, though it is no excuse for pillage and rape, there is a story in a novel by Paul de Kock* dealing with 1814, when certain old maiden ladies in a town on the road from the Western Front to Paris, instead of flying from it with the rest of the inhabitants, are, rather unkindly, represented as eagerly demanding, *"Les Cosaques! Ou sont les Cosaques?"*

It is pleasant to read in Burgoyne's despatch: "I am conscious that the chief merit of the success was due to the admirable though not uncommon valour and activity of the troops I had the honour to command." This is in the right Gentleman Johnny vein. La Lippe was greatly pleased and issued a General Order in which he extolled *"la glorieuse conduite de Monsieur le Brigadier Burgoyne qui apre's avoir marché quinze lieues sans relàche a' emporte Valentia d' Alcantara, l'épée à la main; fait prisonnier le général qui devoit envahir l'Alentjo; détruit le regiment Espagnol de Seville, pris trois drapeaux, un colonel, plusieurs officiers de distinction et beaucoup de soldats."* And he further _urged his officers and men to strive to imitate *"un aussi bel exemple."* King Joseph, too, was delighted, and told Burgoyne that the colors he had captured were at his disposal to send back to England, if he so thought fit, and presented him with a diamond ring.[1] "My Obstinate," who accompanied him to the Peninsula, must have been very proud of her *beau sabreur*.

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*He was the favorite reading of Pio Nono, in spite of the fact that in London you generally see him in rather furtive shop-windows, in the company of Cora Pearl, Maria Martin and - *que diable allait-il faire dans cette galére!* -Aristotle! When the Pope heard that this lively, if somewhat free, story-teller was dead, he is said to have exclaimed in sorrow, *"Mio povero Paolo di Kocko!"*

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In the Public Record Office (W. 0. 1.-165) there is an interesting letter concerning his regiment written by Burgoyne, Lisbon, June 26, 1762, to Charles Townshend, Secretary at War. In this he recommends Captain Walpole for promotion to major: “His behaviour since his arrival in Portugal, where he has been trusted with a separate command, allows me the satisfaction of mentioning his name to you in a very different manner from what his habit of dissipation authorised me to do when I had the honour to talk to you upon his preferment in England. I never doubted his talents for the service; I am now convinced he is capable of steadiness to employ them and think I can make myself answerable that in the rank of major he will do his part to support the credit of the English cavalry.” Alas! the “habit of dissipation” was too strong to be thrown off, as we shall see later. Burgoyne was very proud of, and keen about, his regiment. In this same letter he recommends that Cornet Duperron should be placed in a regiment of foot, because though ,”a diligent, good officer,” he is “very unfit for the Dragoons as an incorrigible bad horseman and unacquainted with every part of horse service.” The Colonel kindly adds, his circumstances “make him a subject of compassion,” and “could he be transferred to a regiment of foot, it would make him and his family happy.” The letter ends, “Lady Charlotte begs you to accept her compliments.”

In October Burgoyne brought off another surprise, that of Villa Velha. This was largely due to the dash and enterprise of his subordinate, a certain Colonel Lee, who got into the enemy's encampment without being perceived, and, when the Spanish troops had rallied, “pursued them upon a brisk run” and chased them out of the camp. We shall meet Colonel Lee again, later on, in North America. It is one of the Romances of War that Colonel Charles Lee, who led Burgoyne's fine regiment into action in the Peninsula[2] in October, 1762, should have been captured by these his old comrades in North America, in December, 1776, at Basking Ridge near Trenton. The Regimental Record contains an illustration showing Lee handing over his sword to Colonel Harcourt on this occasion. There appears to be a whimsical smile of recognition upon both faces.

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[1]The King's reward to La Lippe took the form of "six pieces of golden cannon and carriages of such a weight that a strong man could not sustain one of them at arm's-length horizontally without being overpoized." The King left legacies to all the foreign officers down to the rank of colonel, with the solitary exception of Charles Lee, of whom more hereafter, whose manners were never ingratiating.

[2] Lee was every inch a cavalryman. When, after Portugal, he was in the Russian service, he wrote to a friend: "I am to have a command of Cossacks and Wollacks, a kind of people I have a good opinion of. I am determined not to serve in the line: *one might as well be a churchwarden."*

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Peace was concluded early in 1763, and Burgoyne and his regiment returned with their laurels to England. While in Spain he had defeated not only the Don but, a far more formidable antagonist, the War Office in London. His friends, Lieutenant-Colonel Brudenell, Lieutenant-Colonel Clinton and Lieutenant-Colonel Fitzroy, had all been promoted colonel. This was an age of nepotism; there was no such damned nonsense as. merit leading to promotion. Burgoyne wrote to Charles Townshend, Secretary at War, a pretty warm letter. He says plainly, with pardonable indignation, that he had "family support" and adds, "upon any other ground I should blush to ask preferment, and I doubt not that the gentlemen who have succeeded likewise waived the claim of service." And yet we won a good many victories in the eighteenth century. He goes on, should he not be promoted he would take it, not as a disappointment to himself, but as a slight to his patron and connection, Lord Strange. The Secretary at War was quite hurt; he had "a personal regard for Burgoyne as a man as well as an officer." And he adds the noble words, "I am not cold in any interest or to any person Lord Strange recommends and loves, my life and conduct will be a full answer to that charge." The upshot was that Lord Bute[1] wrote personally a very flattering letter to Burgoyne saying that he had procured him the rank he desired.For great people these were great days: plain Captain John Smith had to wait much longer before he got promotion - if he ever did.

It is a good thing that this correspondence never came the way of Charles Dickens; he was so prejudiced. He would have written something unpardonably bitter about it, for he did not like the army. Even "the flower of ours," that fine old rough and tough soldier and strategist (yes, strategist, for your true strategist is always "devilish sly"), Major J. Bagstock, is represented by Dickens as having a few venial faults, such as gluttony, curiosity, snobbishness and selfishness.

[1]Then Prime Minister.

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