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OSPREY
MILITARY

CAMPAIGN SERIES

51

INKERMAN 1854



THE SOLDIERS' BATTLE

PATRICK MERCER

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SERIES EDITOR: LEE JOHNSON

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WRITTEN BY PATRICK MERCER
BATTLE SCENES BY GRAHAM TURNER



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First published in Great Britain in 1998 by OSPREY, a division of Reed Consumer Books, Michelin House, 81 Fulham Road, London SW3 6RB, Auckland and Melbourne

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ISBN 1 85532 618 3

Editor: Sharon van der Merwe

Designer: Stuart Truscott, TT Designs

Colour bird's eye view illustrations by Peter Harper.

Cartography by Micromap.

Wargaming Inkerman by Ian Dickie

Filmset in Singapore by Pica Ltd.

Printed through World Print Ltd., Hong Kong

For further information about Osprey Military Publishing please write to:

Osprey Marketing, Michelin House, 81 Fulham Road,
London SW3 6RB

Acknowledgements

The author would like to express his gratitude to Ian Knight, Rai England, Michael Barthop and Lt.Col. Ian Bennett for their generous help in the preparation of this book.

Publisher's Note

Readers may care to study this title in conjunction with the following Osprey publications:

Campaign 6 *Balaklava 1854*

MAA 196 *British Army on Campaign (2) 1854-56*

MAA 241 *Russian Army of the Crimean War 1854-56*
















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 ARMY GROUP	 ARMY	 CORPS	 DIVISION	 BRIGADE
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PAGE 2 **Capt Goodlake of the Coldstream Guards in action at Inkerman with a detachment of Guards Brigade sharpshooters. (Staff College)**

PAGE 3 **A sentry in the trenches. As numbers dwindled through disease and casualties so duties came around more frequently and exhaustion set in. Things were made no easier by the unusually wet autumn and subsequent harsh winter. (Wood)**

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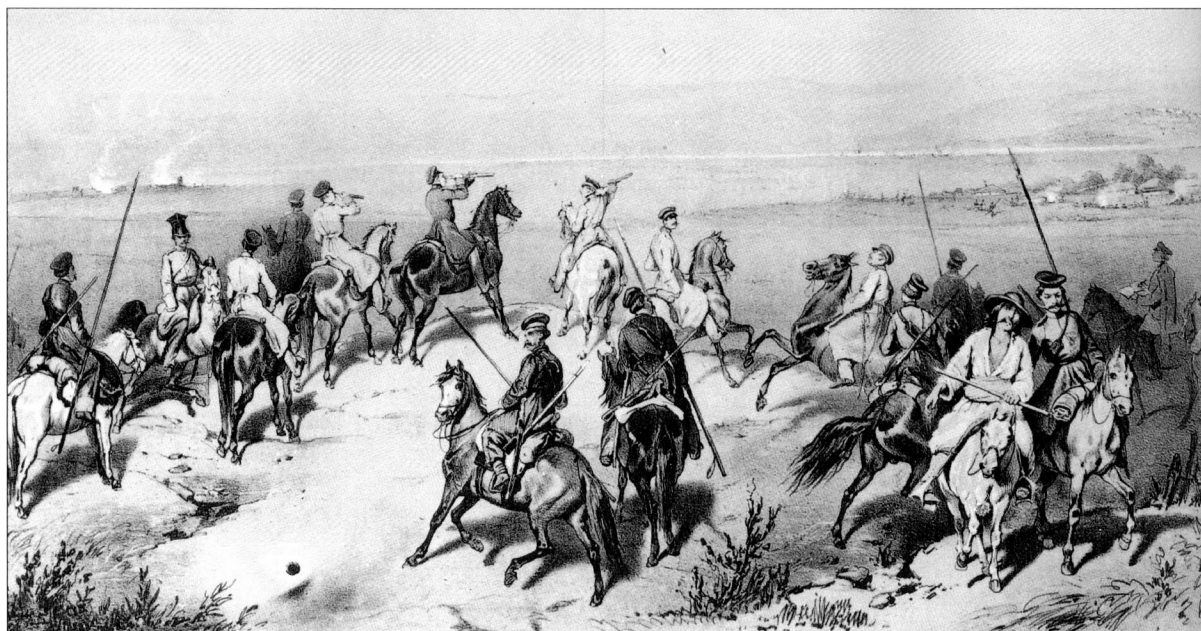
ORIGINS OF THE WAR

CASUS BELLI

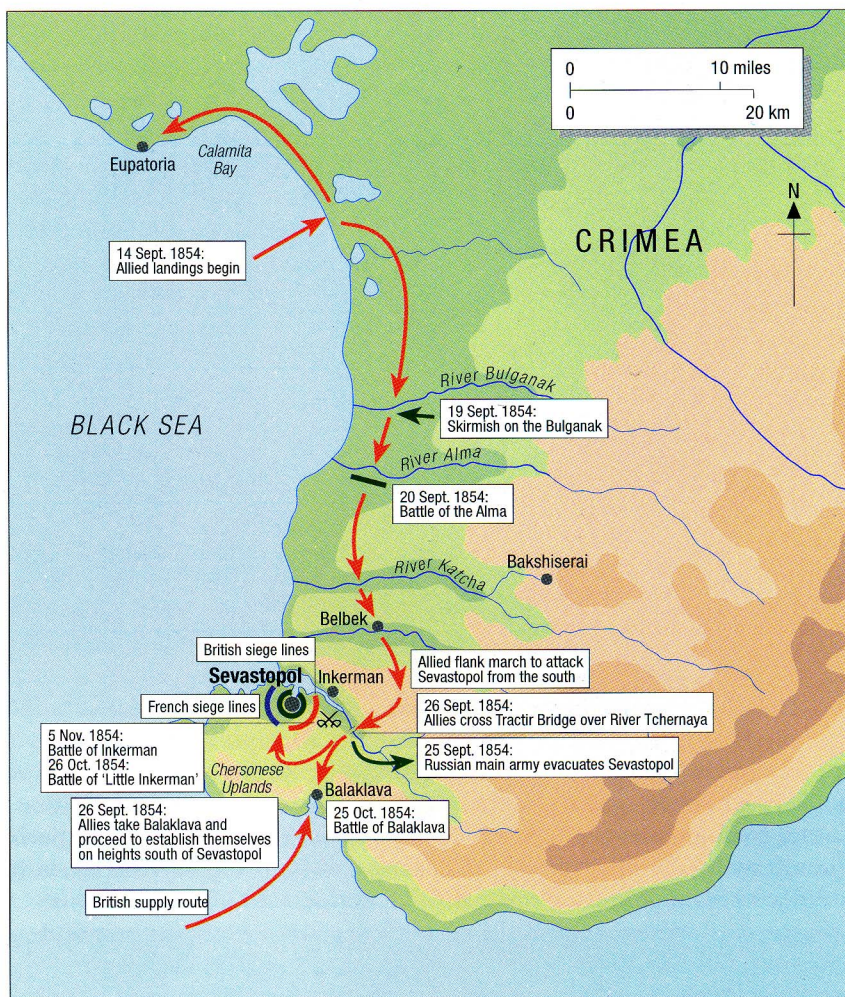
After the end of the Napoleonic Wars Europe's great powers manoeuvred to re-establish the political status quo. The most powerful nation to emerge was Great Britain, but, under the leadership of Louis Napoleon, France sought to further her cause, this time in alliance with Britain. Russia under Tsar Nicholas I had become increasingly bellicose in search of a warm water port and access to the Mediterranean. The so-called 'Eastern Question' – the problems raised by the weakness of the Ottoman Turkish empire – was of deep concern to all three. Turkey's Ottoman empire bordered Russian territories, was contiguous to France's North African empire and dominated the overland route to British possessions in India and the East. Furthermore, Turkey provided a crucial counterweight to the potential Russian threat to India via Persia or Afghanistan, a threat which had materialised with the Afghan War of 1839–42. Britain, therefore, traditionally supported the sultan in order to prevent the disintegration of the Ottoman empire.

Turkey and Russia's nearest, mutual and most powerful neighbour was Austria. While Austria found any Russian expansion into Turkish territories across the Lower Danube and into the Balkans difficult to contemplate with any enthusiasm, the fact that the tsar had restored the

Russian cavalry, a mixture of lancers and Cossacks, provide an escort for General Gortchakov and his staff during a reconnaissance of Turkish positions on the Danube in July 1854. (Author's collection)



AREA OF OPERATIONS



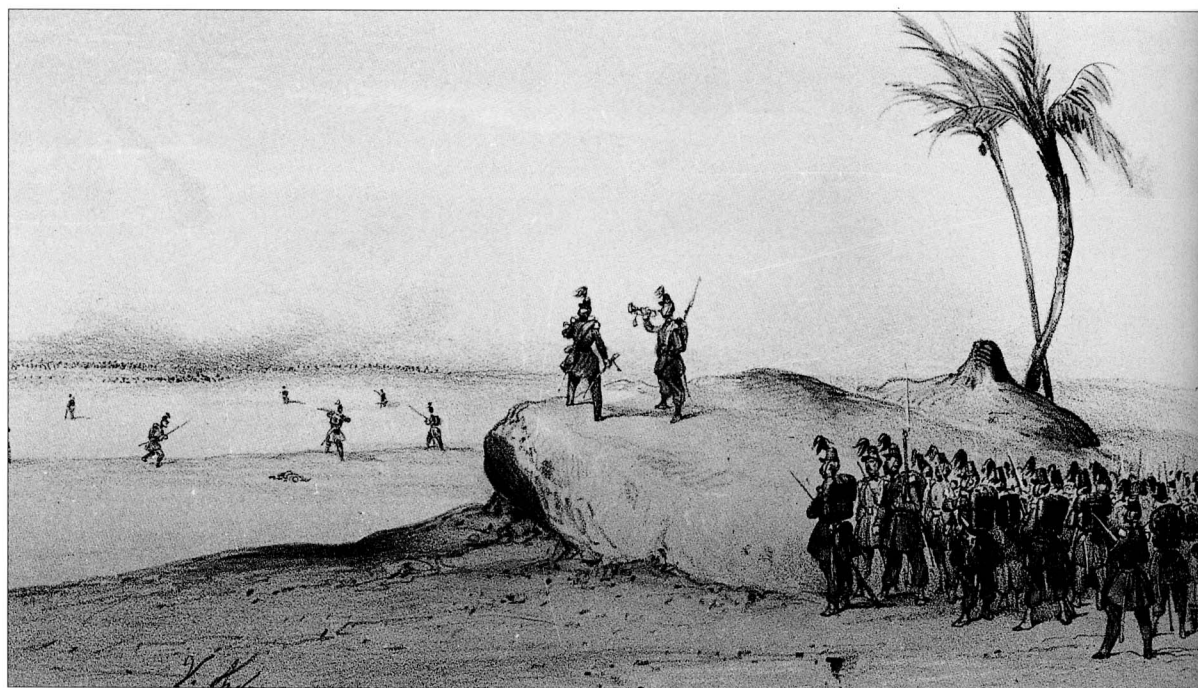
Hungarian kingdom to the young emperor Franz Joseph effectively neutralised Austrian opposition. Similarly, while Prussia was emerging as a power to be reckoned with, the country had no direct interest in the Eastern Question, and her king was related to the tsar by marriage. Therefore, if Russia were to expand and increase her international prestige at the expense of Turkey, the tsar had only to come to some arrangement with Britain and France. The former seemed the more likely to co-operate and stood to gain by any division of Turkish territories. In addition, both Britain and Russia were alarmed by Louis Napoleon's assumption of near dictatorial powers after the coup of 1851; a new Bonapartist imperialism seemed to be taking shape.

Grafted on to the tsar's territorial ambitions was the vexed question of the 13 million Greek Orthodox subjects of the Turks. The tsar saw himself as both their protector and their eventual liberator, having already fought Turkey in 1829 after Greece's independence from Turkey in that same year. The victories of Tsar Nicholas had not only won him influence in this quasi-religious question, but they had also left him with a pretext for further agitation as the need or desire arose. The spark

came in 1850 when Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox monks quarrelled over matters of precedence in the holy places of Bethlehem and Jerusalem, both within the Ottoman empire. The Catholics sought the intercession of Louis Napoleon with the sultan, while the Orthodox monks appealed to the tsar. After much wrangling, the sultan found in favour of the Catholics in December 1852, thus infuriating the tsar.

In the tsar's view, the time was now ripe to precipitate the dismemberment of the Ottoman empire. In early 1853 he approached London and reminded the prime minister, Lord Aberdeen, of the agreement they had reached in 1844. Despite the tsar's promise to cede Egypt to Britain in return for support, Lord Aberdeen remained lukewarm. The tsar misjudged this meeting, as he had done almost a decade before, and did not appreciate that British views were hardening in the light of hostile despatches from the influential British ambassador in Turkey. He sent his own emissary to Turkey to deliver ultimata, and took for granted tacit British support. The sultan, with support from the British ambassador, Redcliffe, refused the Russian demands for both the restoration of the Orthodox monks' privileges and for a Russian protectorate over all Christians within the Ottoman empire, further incensing the tsar. Despite the dispatch of British warships to the Dardanelles to join a French squadron already there, the tsar threatened to re-occupy the Danubian principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia unless the Turks agreed to his demands. Encouraged by the reassuring presence of the warships, the sultan again refused. On 3 July 1853 Russian troops occupied the principalities. Despite Austria's attempts at mediation via a conference in Vienna, Turkey declared war on Russia on 5 October, but on 30 November suffered a humiliating blow to her navy at Sinope. Under the command of Admiral Nachimov, who was later to distinguish himself in the Crimea, the Russian Black Sea fleet destroyed a Turkish

French infantry carry out manoeuvres during the pause at Varna. The original caption reads, 'Will they come close enough for us to strike?' (Author's collection)





A rare depiction of Russian infantry in the field. Here, in operations against the Turks on the Danube, a small water obstacle is crossed using an improvised bridge of carts. Note the furred battalion colour in the centre of the column. (Author's collection)

squadron at anchor, killing 4,000 Turkish seamen in the process.

The immediate effect of Sinope was to make Britain's divided coalition cabinet act. All that it had been able to agree upon to date was that British ships could remain in support of the French off Constantinople. Public opinion, however, was becoming increasingly jingoistic and vocal and this, combined with French pressure, made the government agree to a French plan to deploy a combined naval force into the Black Sea and to dispatch troops to the Mediterranean where they would be better placed for action. In March 1854 an Anglo-French ultimatum was sent to St Petersburg demanding the Russian evacuation of the Danubian principalities. When no reply was forthcoming, Britain and France declared war on 27 and 28 March 1854.

MOVING TO WAR

By May 1854 the fighting between the Russians and the Turks was warming up after a winter of inactivity. Taking the offensive, the Russians besieged the fortresses of Silistria and Shumla on the Danube. Allied forces, meanwhile, had landed at Gallipoli and then in June advanced to Varna, on the west coast of the Black Sea in Bulgaria, to support the Turks fighting on the Danube. Tsar Nicholas had hoped for a quick and decisive victory which would lead to a rapid Turkish capitulation, thus negating the presence of the Allies. But the Turks held out well in Silistria, and much against the tsar's expectations, the Austrians moved 50,000 troops up to their border and required the Russians to leave the principalities. Beset by difficulties, with no prospect of an easy victory

and with the threat of Austria joining the Coalition, the tsar withdrew his forces on 2 August, removing any reason for the Allies to remain in the Black Sea.

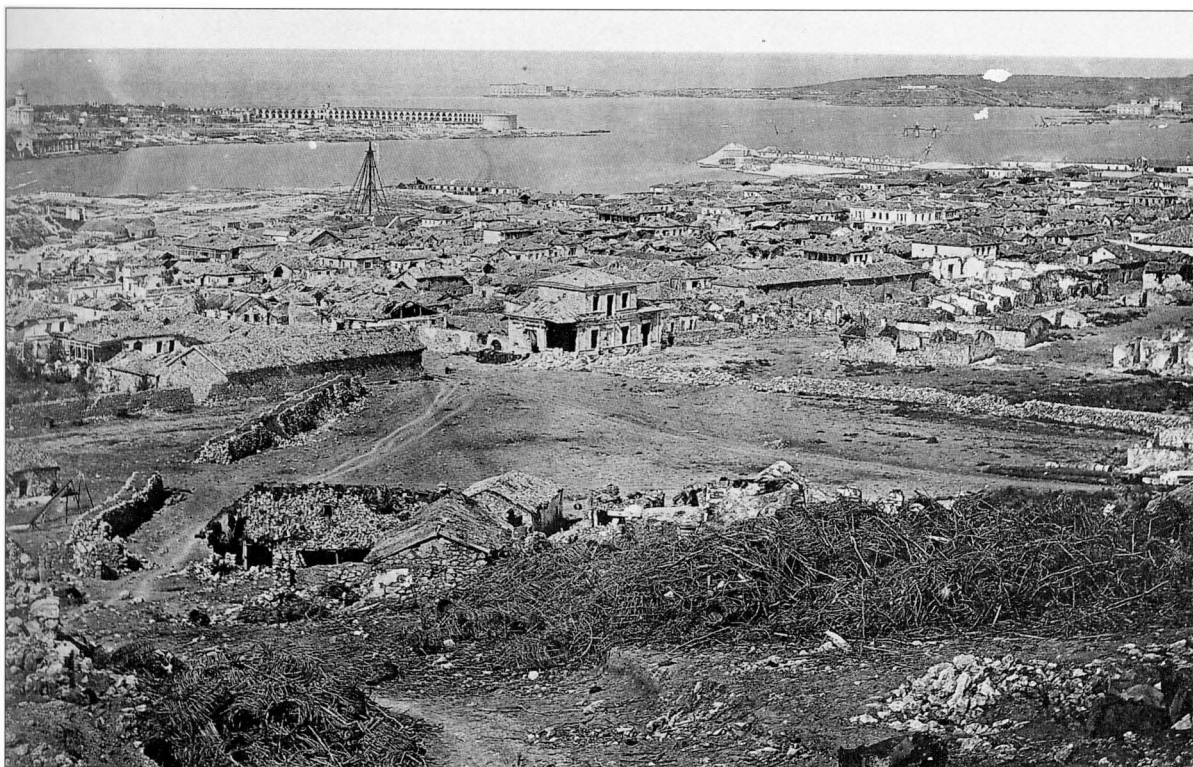
To see the issue in such simple terms, however, would be to ignore the very powerful forces and emotions which had caused the dispatch of British and French forces in the first place. These transcended monkish squabbles and had more to do with the desire of the Allies to maintain the status quo and to remove the threat of a more powerful Russia from the international scene. Since the time of Catherine the Great, the Black Sea fleet and its port of Sevastopol had been a symbol of Russian ambition and a threat to both Turkey and the Mediterranean. Indeed, this very fleet had carried out the 'massacre' at Sinope which had so inflamed British public opinion; it now lay within striking distance of an Allied force which had been assembled at great expense. Worse, it now seemed that the Allied fleet was on the verge of being sent home without firing a shot. In the face of pressure from the press, Britain and France conferred and agreed that their forces would land in the Crimea and reduce Sevastopol.

Little account seems to have been taken of the views of the Allied commanders. Boredom and disease had blunted the edge of their forces during their time in Turkey and Bulgaria, and they welcomed any move.

RIGHT Sevastopol from the south-east. This picture gives a good feel for the city from the outer line of the Russian defences. Note Fort Constantine and the Quarantine Battery guarding the approach to the harbour. (Staff College)

The unopposed landings at Kalamita Bay on 14 September. The artist correctly shows the British troops without their knapsacks; all of their kit had to be carried in an improvised blanket roll and it proved to be many weeks before the balance of their equipment was seen again. (Clifford)





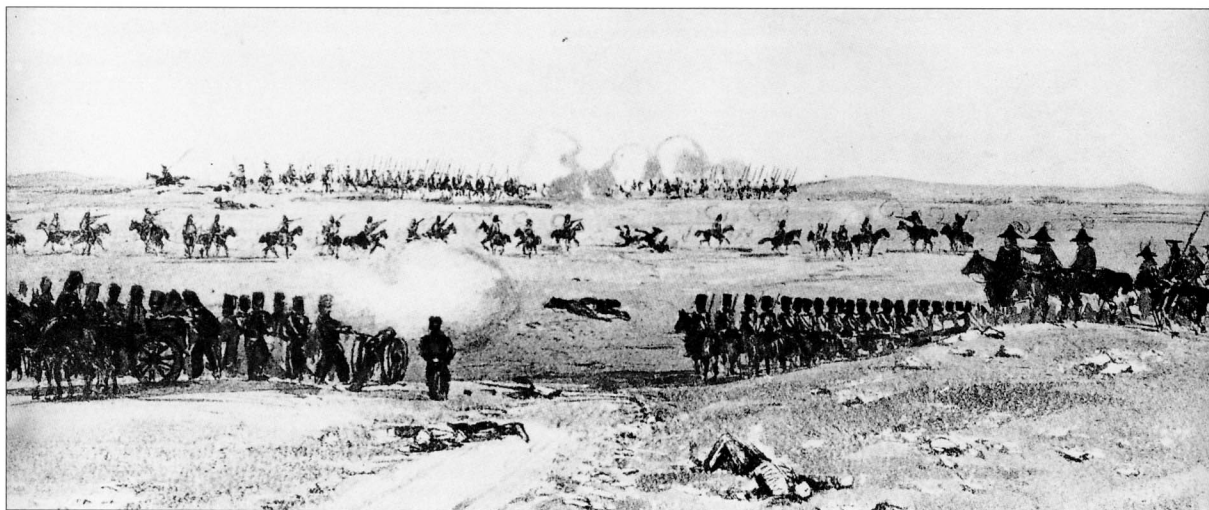
But maps and detailed intelligence of the Crimea and the forces it contained were sadly lacking, despite naval reconnaissance of potential landing places. Indeed, the selection of the landing place was to prove to be one of the most fundamental Allied mistakes of the campaign, for they chose to land well north of Sevastopol, at Kalamita Bay, rather than to the south of the city from where a speedy assault could be mounted. So, from the start, the Allies were always going to face an approach march to their objective which would, at best, betray their intentions and, at worst, allow the enemy to bring them to battle before they were within striking distance of their prize. On 14 September, however, some 30,000 French, 27,000 British and 7,000 Turks made an unopposed landing in the Crimea. They were in high spirits and spoiling for a fight with the months of frustration and tedium at last behind them.

Prince Menshikov, Commander-in-Chief, Crimea. After his failure at the Alma and his much criticised handling of the Black Sea fleet's resources in the defence of Sevastopol, Menshikov seems to have had no confidence that his plan of attack at Inkerman would succeed. (RMAS)

THE ALMA

Russian preparations to meet the Allied invasion had been patchy. Under the direction of the statesman turned amateur soldier, Prince Menshikov, few serious preparations had been made and, indeed, it seems that despite ample evidence of Allied naval reconnaissance, he was reluctant to believe that the Allied blow would fall on the Crimea at all. Defences had been thrown up around those that already existed in Sevastopol, and once it became clear that the Allies would land well to the north of the city, Menshikov elected to meet his enemies on the natural defensive line of the River Alma, some 14 miles to the north of Sevastopol. From 14 September Russian forces began to arrive at the





The inconclusive skirmish between British and Russian cavalry on the Bulganak on 19 September. (Clifford)

Within a short space of time the parade-ground appearance of the British infantry had given way to a form of dress more appropriate to campaigning. Shakos were soon abandoned, shaving was forbidden and, in most divisions, the hated leather stock that was worn around the neck was discarded. (Wood)



Alma, but beyond the creation of two strong batteries which covered the main bridge over the river and the north-eastern flank of the Russian position, no attempt was made to entrench an already strong position. The Russians correctly realised that the Allies would try to advance south with their right flank hard against the shoreline under the protection of the fleet's guns, and that they would be reluctant to stray too far inland and sacrifice the support of the ships. Accordingly, their left flank was positioned in such a way as to be either out of range or in dead ground to the ships' guns. The cliffs next to the sea appeared to be impassable to infantry and guns. However, Menshikov's planning (for it was he, almost single handed, who sited the position) was faulty, and he made no attempt to strengthen this vital flank. The centre of the Russian position opposite the bridge and the village of Bourliouk was well sited, however, with the redoubts dug at the optimum range from the river for canister shot. The ranges were carefully marked by posts topped with straw which could be lit at the critical moment by retreating skirmishers.

After an inconclusive clash between the Russian and British light cavalry on the line of the River Bulganak, the Allies advanced and spent the night of 19 September camped opposite the Russian positions above the Alma. Battle on 20 September was inevitable, and after remarkably little consultation or joint planning, the Allies advanced to the river at about midday. The French were aligned on the right next to the sea, with the British inland on the left. It was intended that Saint-Arnaud's infantry would push forward, gain the apparently unprotected cliff tops and then turn the Russian left flank. What the British, opposite the Russian centre and right, were to do was not planned in detail beyond an assurance from Raglan that he would respond to the needs of the French as the battle developed.

French casualties were light, despite the ferocity of the Russian cannonade, and they rapidly reached the tops of the cliffs and began to threaten the Russian left, which quickly became confused. Here, however, the French attack began to falter as they found it difficult to get guns up the cliff paths in time to exploit their infantry's initial success. The message was passed to the British to advance in order to distract the enemy from the French's imagined plight. Without pause to consider



manoeuvre or any attempt to outflank, Raglan committed his troops to a river crossing under fire and then an advance up a coverless, 600-yard slope into the primary arcs of the enemy's artillery. Casualties were understandably heavy, but the main position, the Great Redoubt, was taken by the first dash of the Light Division supported by elements of the 2nd Division. These troops were driven back by a counterattack, but the position was re-captured and held by the Guards and Highland brigades. With their left turned under enfilade fire from French artillery, and with their centre pierced, the Russians broke and streamed away to the south and Sevastopol.

While some of the enemy were in good order, many were not. The Allies had the chance to turn the retreat into a rout by unleashing their slender, but fresh, cavalry. Indeed, a rapid advance on Sevastopol would have found the city's defences in disarray and morale pitifully low after a defeat which the Russians had simply never contemplated. Instead, the Allies dithered on the Alma; the cavalry and horse artillery were recalled and all efforts were concentrated on dealing with the injured. Casualties were numerous: 362 British had been killed and 1,621 wounded, but there were over 6,000 Russian casualties. For many British this was their first taste of action, and the experience was sobering. Few had realised what damage their Minie rifles would create among the densely packed Russian columns. Fewer (perhaps fortunately) reflected upon the lack of generalship that had caused so many of their comrades to fall. Many, however, began to appreciate the mettle of the regiments and individual soldiers who had stormed a formidable position in the teeth of such opposition.

A fanciful depiction of the moment of victory at the Alma as Highlanders and Guardsmen seize the heights. Curiously, every artist's impression shows the Russian positions on mountainous ground. In fact, the land rises fairly gently on the south side of the river to a series of rolling hillocks. (Staff College)



Vice-Admiral Kornilov, with Nachimov, one of the principal architects of the defence of Sevastopol. He was to die from a sharpshooter's bullet in the Malakoff on 28 June 1855. (RMAS)

ESTABLISHING THE SIEGE

Spirits rose only slowly in Sevastopol and there was much disagreement between the stalwart sailors, Nachimov and Kornilov, and Menshikov over how the city should be defended. The port is effectively divided in two by a large roadstead, with the docks and naval base to the south. Under the guidance of Colonel Todleben, defences were growing by the day around the southern part of the city. After much debate, it was decided that the largely sail-powered Russian fleet would be no match for the steam-driven elements of the Allied navies and that resources would be better dedicated to the defence of the city by land. Accordingly, a line of block ships was sunk across the harbour mouth (some of which were still fully armed and victualled, so intense had been the argument about how best to use them), guns were dismounted from ships and their crews put ashore to man them. Menshikov, his prestige severely dented by the Alma, marched the bulk of his troops eastwards beyond the valley of the River

Tchernaya where, he reasoned, he might threaten the flank of the Allies and remain in a position to be reinforced from the rest of the Crimea.

The Allies were only now beginning to appreciate how difficult their position was. Having been mauled at the Alma, and equipped with poor intelligence, their commanders were increasingly cautious. They realised that they simply did not have enough men to besiege Sevastopol properly while at the same time maintaining their lines of communication and protecting their flanks and rear. Furthermore, they were in the wrong position to launch attacks against the southern half of their objective. The Allied positions were to the north of the city, while the harbours which they would need for supply were to the west and south. The only solution was to march to the east of Sevastopol, out of range and succour of the fleet and vulnerable to any Russian force at large within the interior. From there they would have to seize the ports of Balaklava and Kamiesch.

So with the so-called 'Flank March' the Allies swept around the east and south of Sevastopol, establishing the French in the west against the sea, and the British in the east on the open flank. The Russians, however, succeeded in keeping open a route from the city parallel to the roadstead, across the Tchernaya and into the interior of the Crimea, and this inevitably limited the effect of the siege. Indeed, one of the few pragmatic precautions taken by the Russians before the arrival of the Allies was to improve this route by the construction of a sturdy road which was labelled the Sapper Road by the British. The fact that the Allies allowed their enemy to keep this road open and in constant use seems incomprehensible. It was overlooked by the extreme right of the British above Inkerman and could surely have been blocked. Two things prevented this, however. First, there were not enough men to perform all the duties that the siege required, and any attempt to block the road



Officers and men of 6th
(Inniskilling) Dragoons, one of the
regiments of the Heavy Cavalry
Brigade.

(M A Hayes, RDG Collection)

would have been met by severe resistance. Secondly, any force positioned to overlook the road would have been immediately vulnerable to the guns of the Russian warships, which were kept in the extreme eastern part of the harbour. Thus the Russians were able to keep open an artery vital to their existence and which was to play a major part in the battle of Inkerman.

Despite the advantages of the deep and sheltered harbour of Balaklava, it was some seven miles from the British siege lines and was threatened by the Russian forces outside Sevastopol. Two lines of defences were thrown up to protect its approaches. The inner lines consisted of a number of earthworks and improvements to the existing Russian fortifications. The outer line was a series of redoubts built along the Woronzoff Road on the knolls which came to be known as the Causeway Heights and which dominated the two shallow valleys which made up the Balaklava Plain. The redoubts were given guns and manned by Turkish garrisons and one British gunner NCO each. Additionally, both the Heavy and Light Cavalry brigades were encamped close to Balaklava in an attempt to make up for the paucity of numbers by speed of manoeuvre. The port itself was garrisoned by Royal Marines, sailors and one battalion of infantry, the 93rd Highlanders, stationed a little way outside in the village of Kadikoi.

While the British were aware of the weakness of their lines of communication and their right flank above Inkerman, all their energies, in

Life for sentries in the trenches was initially novel but very quickly became both dull and enervating. As numbers dwindled through disease and casualties so duties came around more frequently and exhaustion set in. Things were made no easier by the unusually wet autumn and subsequent harsh winter. (Wood)



common with the French, were directed towards the siege. Conscious that they had missed an opportunity to assault Sevastopol after the Alma, and with evidence growing daily of the city's improved defences and stiffened resolve, the Allies began digging entrenchments and parallels from 9 October. However, by this date Sevastopol's garrison had been increased to 25,000 men, and a four-mile semi-circular line of defence had been constructed which connected six, well-armed bastions crewed by the expert gunners of the Black Sea fleet. On 17 October 73 British and 53 French guns began to bombard the city in earnest, and were later supported by the naval guns. Sevastopol was badly damaged and Kornilov was killed, but two French magazines exploded which pre-

vented their supporting the British effort the next day. The day after the French opened fire again, but after a week it became clear that the best efforts of the Allies to level the defences during the day could not equal the Russians' capacity to repair their damaged works by night. Breaches were not only repaired, but often improved, literally overnight. By 24 October the Allies had made very little progress and, worse still, they had begun to get a taste of winter on the windswept uplands.

BALAKLAVA

To add to the misery, Raglan had begun to hear rumours that extensive reinforcements were gathering beyond the River Tchernaya. Spies spoke of 25,000 men massed to attack Balaklava, but little was done either to verify the intelligence or to prepare for the attack. So, on the morning of 25 October when General Liprandi arrived with 25 fresh Russian battalions, 35 squadrons and 78 guns (the fabled 25,000 men) to advance on Balaklava with a view to cutting off the British from their port, few were ready to meet the attack.

Four redoubts fell very quickly and the Russians poured into North Valley. To their frustration, both cavalry brigades were ordered to withdraw from the fray and await the arrival of the 1st and 4th Divisions which Raglan had ordered up. Cambridge's troops moved smartly, but Cathcart's 4th Division vacillated and lost valuable time. There seems little doubt that the division's sloth was due entirely to the whim of its commander (who was to behave equally oddly at Inkerman), and it allowed the Russians to exploit a tactical advantage. With the cavalry

The stand of the 93rd Highlanders on 25 October, the 'Thin Red Line'. The number of casualties which the 93rd's three volleys inflicted has been much debated. However, they served to thwart the Russian cavalry's thrust towards Balaklava. (Orlando Norie, A & SH collection)





2nd Royal North British Dragoons lead the Heavy Cavalry Brigade into the midst of the Russian hussars.
(Felix Philoppoteux, RMAS)

hanging back where they could be covered from the guns on the Sapoune Ridge and the redoubts effectively neutralised, the way across the Causeway Heights, into South Valley and beyond into the Balaklava Gorge must have seemed invitingly clear to the Russians.

Indeed, the only thing that stood in the way of the Russian hussars who were ordered to exploit this situation were the 93rd Highlanders under their brigadier, Colin Campbell. The 93rd were 550 strong and they were augmented by about 100 sick and convalescents who had come up from Balaklava. It was a slender force to meet a substantial body of horsemen who had already tasted victory; and the infantry's formation of file was not the normal way to receive cavalry. However, the 93rd and their supporters were made of stern stuff; they too had experienced victory before and knew the lethal effect of their Minie rifles against massed targets. Their first volley was fired at 600 yards; they had time to fire two more before the hussars wheeled away over the Causeway Heights chased by British horse artillery. Balaklava had been saved, for a while at least.

A more substantial threat was developing, however, for 19 Russian cavalry squadrons were moving up fast to support their hussar screen. As they crossed the Causeway Heights they presented a perfect target for the classic cavalry spoiling attack – a head-on charge. Sir James Scarlett's Heavy Cavalry Brigade was in precisely the right place to attack, having been moved towards Kadikoi by Lord Raglan to support the defenders of Balaklava. As the Russian mass came on, Scarlett launched his ten squadrons into their face. The two bodies met; the Russians faltered, halted and slowly began to give way under the frenzied slashing and stabbing of the less numerous British. On the Causeway the Russians

attempted to rally, but C Troop RHA had rapidly unlimbered and sent their fire crashing into the writhing enemy. The Russians broke and streamed away up North Valley and out of sight, all discipline and cohesion gone. Here, however, was the chance for the remainder of the British cavalry to complete the job begun by the Heavy Brigade. A tightly controlled charge into the fleeing Russians could have converted a retreat into a bloody rout, but Lord Cardigan, the Light Cavalry Brigade's commander, failed to see his chance or to use his initiative. His brigade lay chafing but immobile at the west end of North Valley.

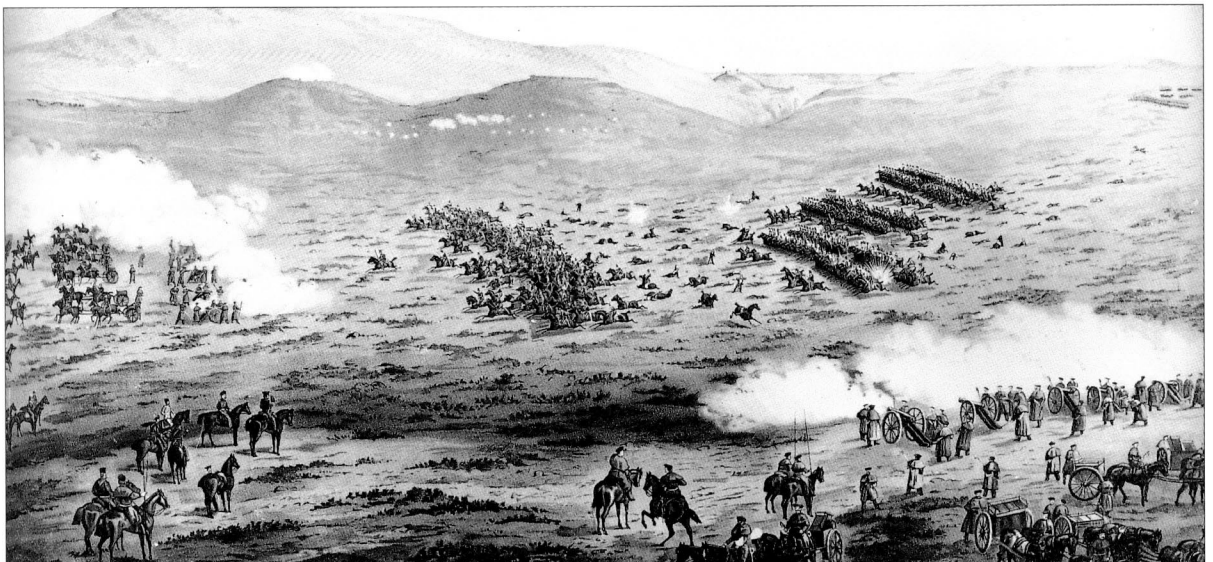
Cardigan's inaction gave the Russians the breathing space they needed to consolidate their positions. Not only did they move guns and troops into North Valley but they also rapidly decided which redoubts they would continue to occupy and which they would abandon. The Odessa Regiment was ordered to level the most westerly of the occupied redoubts and to remove its guns as the Russians intended to concentrate their gains more compactly at the east end of the Causeway Heights. Raglan, undecided as to how he could regain the lost ground, was stung into action at the sight of the guns being withdrawn. The Duke of Wellington, in whose shade Raglan lived, could never have contemplated such an action; something had to be done.

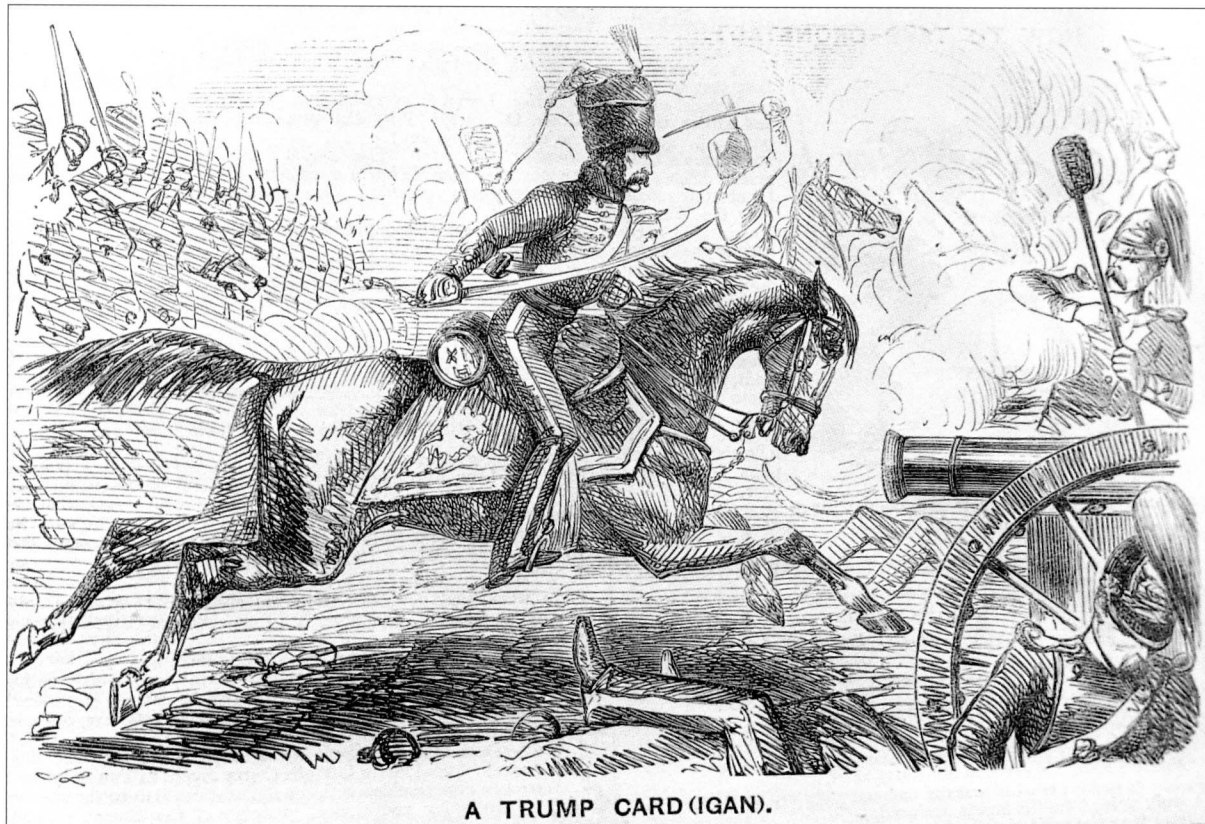
THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

The order which Raglan sent to the commander of the Cavalry Division, Lord Lucan, was a masterpiece of obfuscation; it told the cavalry to advance against an objective that they could not see with infantry that was not yet present and supported by an unspecified troop of horse artillery! To complicate matters, the ADC who carried the message, Captain Nolan, was an outspoken critic of Lucan who, in turn, detested his brother-in-law, Cardigan, whose brigade was to execute the order.

Chaos reigned; instead of moving into the South Valley and the cover of the Causeway Heights and then carrying out a parallel flanking move

The Light Cavalry Brigade charge the Russian guns in North Valley. Whilst the numbers and deployments shown are relatively accurate, the terrain is exaggerated; the Causeway heights are not so prominent whilst the valley is far broader than the artist suggests. (Staff College)





A TRUMP CARD (IGAN).

Punch's view of Lord Cardigan's conduct on 25 October. The truth was more prosaic for it seems that he chose not to close with any of the enemy and exercised no real leadership. (Punch, November 1854)

before crossing the Heights adjacent to the captured redoubts, the brigade was led headlong into the teeth of the massed Russian guns, infantry and Cossacks. No one can doubt the Light Cavalry Brigade's bravery or dash during the infamous charge. They wrought terrible damage on their foes, but regrettably, those foes punished their recklessness in equal measure and the ornament of the British Army in the Crimea was ruined. Of the 661 all ranks who had charged, 287 were killed, wounded or imprisoned. Similarly, most of their horses became casualties. The battle which had begun so promisingly for British arms had ended in disaster.

The British believed that the attack on Balaklava had been a deliberate attempt to capture the port. Russian accounts talk in much less decisive terms, however, indicating that their foray was no more than an armed reconnaissance. Whatever the aim, at the close of 25 October the Russians' first venture against Allied vulnerabilities had met with some success. The Balaklava Plain was no longer the sole preserve of the British; now enemy positions encroached upon theirs and re-supply from Balaklava to the siege lines was going to be much more difficult. Russian morale, so damaged by defeat at the Alma, had been bolstered, and Allied eyes had been distracted from their primary concern, the siege. With enemy ground, fortifications and guns in their hands the Russians saw that they could capitalise upon their gains.

OPPOSING ARMIES

THE RUSSIAN ARMY

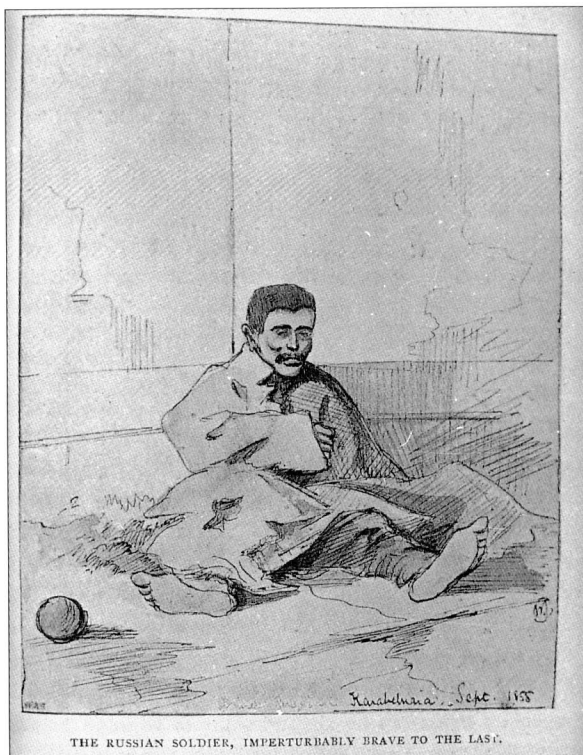
The writings of Tolstoy and the Polish deserter Hodesevitch have served to give a very poor impression of the Russian officer corps in the Crimea. Both, of course, were writing to their own agenda and had nothing to gain by being prosaic. That is not to say that Russian officers at the time were particularly good, but rather that many of their ills have been exaggerated. Certainly, the senior officers in the Crimea were not good, more of which later, but the regimental officers were brave and loyal, and did their best to overcome a system that was simply not adapted for modern war.

There were three ways to gain a commission in the Russian army. About one-fifth came from the officer cadet schools, and were mainly the sons of minor nobility. Military education here was not well developed, and these young men were not found to be any better qualified than the next category, the Junkers. They were usually officers' sons who served in the ranks for a number of years as quasi-sergeants and then passed an exam before being commissioned. The third category were soldiers who were commissioned after about ten years' service after passing a simple exam; they provided the bulk of the regimental officers. Their training was rigid and unimaginative and they, in turn, dispensed the same.

This system could have been made to work had there been an efficient general staff. Under the influence of Prussia, which pervaded the whole of Tsar Nicholas's army, a staff academy had been established some years before, but its graduates were few and tended to be mocked by the rest of the army. The effect of this was that general officers were almost devoid of competent staff in the field, tending to make their own assessments and then distributing orders through an informal group of aides-de-camp and gallopers appointed via patronage rather than proficiency. Had the generals been experienced and bold, this system might have worked, but on the whole they were not. They were capable of abiding only by the superficialities of the Prussian system and not the painstaking training and preparation for battle which might have led to victory.

An infantry soldier was conscripted for 25 years, usually serving in the same regiment

Whilst the Russians' tactical ability was never respected, their bravery always excited the admiration of the British. Their bloody defeat at Inkerman served, if anything, to underscore their immense capacity for stoical valour. (Wood)



THE RUSSIAN SOLDIER, IMPERTURBABLY BRAVE TO THE LAST.

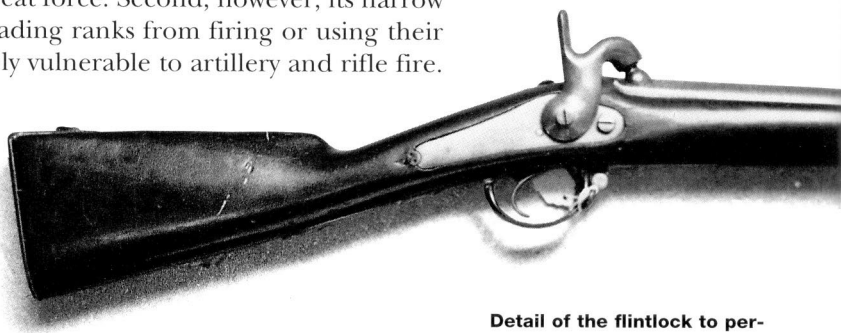
throughout. Pay and living conditions were poor but adequate, with ready supplies of drink. Again, the Russian soldier's daily existence was an incomplete copy of that of the Prussian's. Everything revolved around drill: perfection of the goose-step was the acme of achievement, with the drill-square or level, unobstructed field being the only arenas for tactical training. Soldiers were expected to be steady on parade above all else, and the penalties for not being so were public and often violent. Indeed, the tendency to humiliate was widespread, with even senior officers being openly chastised in front of their men.

Tactically, the maxim that, 'The bayonet is a wise man and the bullet a fool' held sway. Armed for the most part with a smooth-bore .700 musket accurate at no more than 150 paces, the Russian infantryman was expected to close with the bayonet whenever the opportunity arose. The bayonet charge was usually executed in a dense company or, more usually, in battalion column – about 800 men in a rectangle no more than 25 by 32 paces. The effect of this was threefold. First, the column was easy to handle, it stopped individuals from running away and could, potentially, strike its target with great force. Second, however, its narrow front prevented all but the two leading ranks from firing or using their bayonets, and third, it was intensely vulnerable to artillery and rifle fire. While skirmishing and line formation were taught, they were seldom practised as the Russians tended to rely upon the counterattack as their principal defensive tactic.

There were a limited number of rifle regiments who were armed with a .700 Littikhsky rifle of the Liège percussion design. Additionally, there were a number of rifles served out to each Line regiment which were, in theory, in the hands of the best shots. But until a later stage of the war the Russians seemed to pay little attention to skill-at-arms. There were usually no more than ten rounds per man per year available for training, and often most of this allowance was consumed in blank practice. Later on the Russians tried to rifle muskets and copy Allied projectiles, sometimes with great success. At Inkerman, however, the Russians were still fighting and firing in the way that they had found to be successful against Napoleon's armies 50 years before.

The Russians were organised along conventional lines of corps of three divisions of two brigades with four regiments in each. Each corps had a sapper and a rifle battalion attached, while each regiment consisted of three or four battalions. Battalions and even companies could be designated as grenadiers, fusiliers, chasseurs or musketeers, but the significance of these names was purely historical. Similarly, each regiment had a number, but these sometimes changed and so they were usually known by their territorial titles.

Each infantry division had an organic artillery brigade which had two 12-gun field batteries of six 12-pdrs. and six 18-pdrs., as well as two 12-gun light batteries of eight 6-pdrs. and four 9-pdrs. The guns were brass smooth-bores, mounted on pea-green-painted carriages, and could fire



**Detail of the flintlock to percussion conversion of a Russian .700" musket, typical of most of the weapons carried at Inkerman.
(Nottingham Castle Museum)**

about two rounds per minute at ranges of over 1,000 yards. The normal range of round-shot, canister and shell was available to all guns, and the *esprit de corps* existing in the artillery was envied throughout the army.

The Russian troops who met the British at Inkerman were, for the most part, more experienced than their foes. There was battle experience at general-officer level, some of it going back to Napoleonic times, but most had been gained in the several wars against the Turks. At a more junior level, many of the troops at Inkerman had already fought the British at the Alma; those that had not had probably seen action the year before against the Turks at the four-day battle of Kalafat or, in the case of Dannenberg's Corps, at Oltenitsa. All of these battles had one thing in common, however: they were defeats for the Russians. This familiarity with defeat may go some way to explaining the pessimism which seemed to grip most of the Russian command both before and during Inkerman.

THE BRITISH ARMY

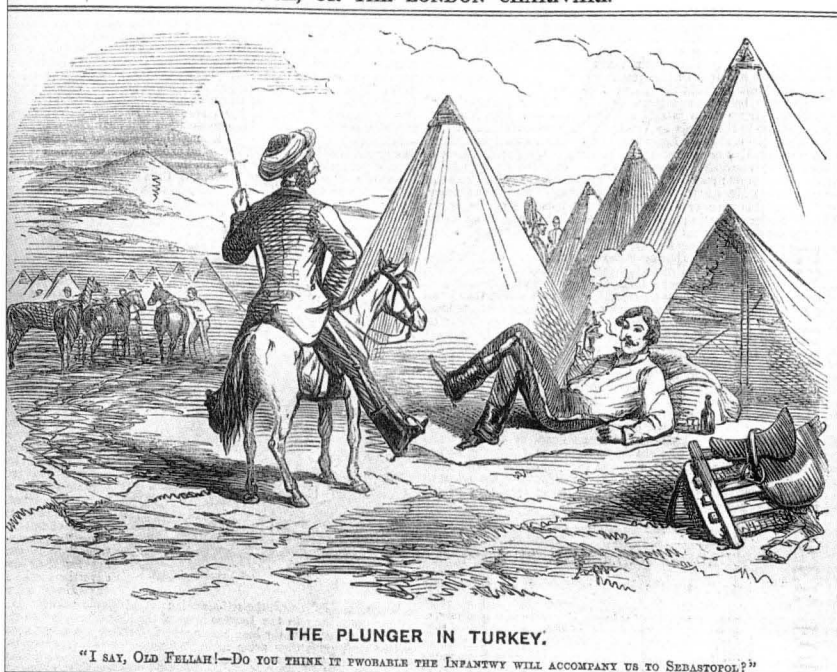
Some of the opening comments on the Russian officer corps could equally apply to the British. Much has been written to suggest that the officers in the Crimea were effete fools more interested in their social standing than success on the battlefield. Doubtless, there were some who fitted that description and, certainly, many of the senior officers were too old and too beset by selfish considerations to be of much use. The regimental officers, however, seemed to have performed well and bravely throughout, sharing the privations and dangers of the campaign with their men which created genuine mutual respect and affection. In most cases commissions and promotion had to be purchased. This was not the



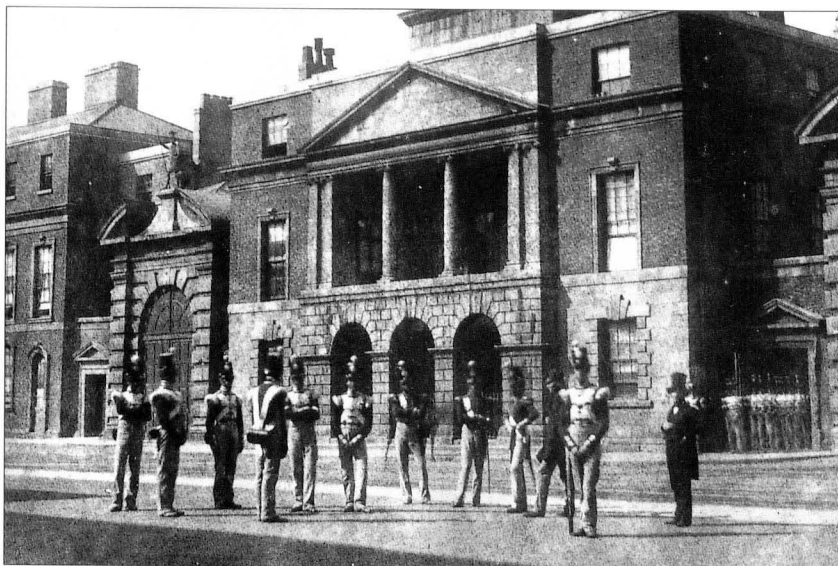
The Selenghinsk Regiment in action against the Turks at Oltenitsa, 4 November 1853. Here Sergeant Snozik, though wounded by shell fragments, stays at his post with the words, 'Whilst I live, I shall give up the colour to no other!'. One year later the Selenghinsk were to fight with distinction at Inkerman, mainly around the Sandbag Battery. (Author's Collection)

case in the Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers, however, whose entrants had to be educated at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, and for whom promotion came by length of service and merit. In the rest of the army, Sandhurst graduates were still very much in the minority, with several commanding officers claiming that they preferred young men who had not been so disadvantaged! Thus military education was entirely in the hands of the regiments, with the officers prospering or not according to the quality of the commanding officer. Battle, of course, brought the possibility of promotion without purchase as officers fell, or the chance for a brevet (the temporary award of a higher rank). Before the institution of medals for gallantry or distinguished service a brevet could be awarded which carried with it the pay of the rank it bestowed.

Staff training was still in its infancy and British general officers were only marginally better served than their Russian contemporaries. While certain specified staff appointments existed, a general officer's personal staff of ADC and brigade major would be left up to the choice and patronage of the senior officer. There was no formal training for these officers; they were expected to pick things up as they went along.



In mid-Victorian slang a 'plunger' was a swell, a man whose life was given over to gambling and reckless living; in *Punch's* view most were to be found amongst officers of the Army's more fashionable regiments. In this case a young cavalry officer draws his view on the usefulness of a socially less acceptable arm, the infantry. Certainly, cavalry officers needed more of a private income than their infantry colleagues and the popular press had made much of the several scandals that such regiments seemed to attract; in action, however, they proved their worth. (*Punch*)



Grenadiers of a British infantry regiment outside Dublin Castle in the period immediately before the war. The uniforms that they are wearing for these ceremonial duties are precisely the same as those worn on campaign. (Barthorp)

The British soldier was a volunteer who would normally serve a minimum of 10 years with the colours. Since Waterloo the army had seen no European fighting and had evolved into a colonial force whose troops could expect to see much active and garrison service overseas. Living conditions were beginning to improve as the army gradually came to be regarded as a steady source of modest pay and an escape from the spreading industrial slums. On the whole, the regimental officers believed that their men were fine specimens who responded well to their leadership; the earlier attitude that the British soldier was 'the scum of the earth' seems to have disappeared by this time. Indeed, unfit soldiers were all carefully weeded out before the regiments set sail, numbers being made up by volunteers from units that were not embarking.

In the early 1850s a new small-arm had been introduced, the Minie rifle. Until this time rifles had been the preserve of the rifle regiments, with the remainder armed with smooth-bores. Now most regiments were equipped with a weapon that was accurate over 300 yards and could be used for effective volley fire up to 1,000 yards. While some regiments were equipped with it before they left Britain, others were issued in Scutari. The 4th Division, however, still had the 1842-pattern percussion musket, which, while it did not have the accuracy or hitting-power of the rifle, was marginally quicker to load.

Despite the revolution in tactics which the rifle should have caused, the British infantry was still deploying as if armed with smooth-bores. Unlike the Russians, the standard British formation was the line. It allowed maximum firepower to be brought to bear, and usually meant that British formations outflanked and overlapped their opponents while giving the impression of great numbers. In fact, the line was an inherently weak formation that was difficult to control and required great firmness and discipline under fire. There was some surprise at the Alma when the British troops began to realise the superiority they enjoyed over the Russians with their new rifles, but after that battle, skirmishing tactics, with which most regiments were familiar, were employed more often.

Training had begun to improve with the start of manoeuvres on a large scale in 1853 at the Chobham Camp of Exercise. Training standards had previously depended entirely upon the commanding officers; as a result of the camps at Chobham, most regiments had experienced manoeuvres at brigade and divisional level.

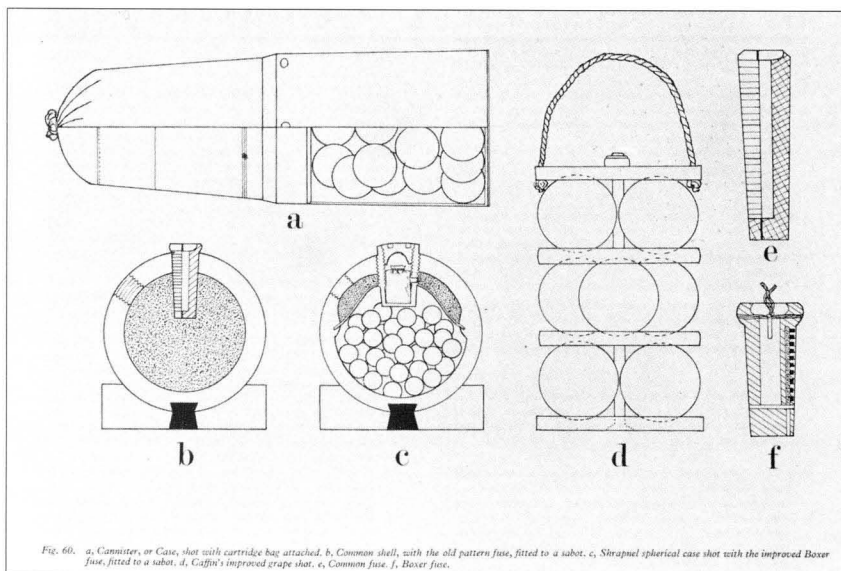
Six divisions, five infantry and one cavalry, deployed to the Crimea, with each infantry division consisting of two brigades of three battalions each. Most battalions had eight companies of which one was referred to as 'grenadier' and another as 'light'. Like the Russians, however, these titles were largely historical, though the

Off-duty infantrymen in Ireland again, just before the war. Note the seated figure, who is wearing the 1850-pattern waist-belt (with which only some of the regiments were equipped) and his percussion cap pouch secured in the lace on the lower right part of his chest. (Barthorp)



Artillery was probably the most influential arm of the campaign. Analysis of the casualties shows that much greater damage was done by the guns of both sides than by small-arms or bayonets. Canister was designed to act like a vast shotgun and did great execution at Inkerman. Cannon shell relied upon the bursting casing to create fragments whilst shrapnel rounds had a similar effect to canister but at a greater range. (RMAS)

Henry Clifford VC. As ADC to Buller (a Light Division brigade commander) he was to win the VC for leading part of the 77th in a headlong charge against Russians emerging from the Wellway ravine in the early stages of the battle. He had fought with 1st Rifle Brigade in the Cape, thus he was one of the few who had seen recent, active service. (Clifford)



men cherished them and invested great pride in their distinction. Each battalion was about 950 strong (though by the time of Inkerman this was considerably less) and bore both a regimental number and a county or honorific title. In practice, the number was the way in which a regiment was identified; its territorial title meant little.

Each division had one or two batteries of artillery attached which were armed with four 9-pdr. guns and two 24-pdr. howitzers. Additionally, the Siege Train provided guns at Inkerman, two 18-pdr. howitzers having a decisive effect on the battle. All Royal Artillery guns were smooth-bore and they fired the same types of ammunition as the Russians. However, a new, rifled gun of the Lancaster design was in the hands of the Royal Navy, whose crews used it to great effect from Victoria Ridge during the battle.

Many of the British commanders had seen action. Some, like the Russians, had fought during the Napoleonic wars, but others had had extensive battle experience in the many conflicts in India and South Africa. There was less experience among the troops. Five of the battalions in the Crimea had seen active service during the late 1840s, but only one, the 1st Rifle Brigade, had seen action in the preceding four years. They rapidly gained experience in the Crimea, however. Most of the regiments at Inkerman had been at Alma, and all of them had been involved in siege operations either in the trenches or on picquet. These varied experiences had hardened them considerably and it was a tough, self-reliant, spirited and increasingly wily body of men whom the Russians met on 5 November.

OPPOSING COMMANDERS

THE RUSSIANS

The Russian forces in the Crimea were commanded by General Adjutant Prince Menshikov, a man whose career was as varied as it was unmilitary. A courtier and a man of vast wealth, he had been entrusted with the diplomatic mission to Constantinople which had ended in war. His failure was rewarded with the military appointment as commander-in-chief, Black Sea fleet and the Crimean garrison, a position which he accepted with alacrity, probably believing that the Allies would not invade the Crimea. His optimism turned to pessimism after the débâcle of the Alma of which he was the principal architect. Indeed, he was never convinced that Sevastopol or the Crimea itself could be held, and he was only goaded into offensive action by constant pressure from the Tsar. Having signally failed at Inkerman, he was removed from command amid much recrimination.

The influence of the Tsar was felt throughout the campaign until his death in 1855. He saw the Allied invasion for what it was: a direct attempt to thwart his expansionist ambitions. Accordingly, he was minutely

Grand Princes Michael and Nicholas despatched to the Crimea on their father's orders to act as a fillip to Russian morale. Their distinctive yellow coach was to be seen visiting Russian troops on the other side of the Tchernaya Valley from British positions immediately before Inkerman. (Staff College)





Prince Gortchakoff had performed badly in command of 6 Corps at the Alma. Had he acted with more vigour from his positions on the Balaklava Plain and attacked the French on the Sapoune Ridge, he might have prevented both the Brigade of Guards and most of the French troops from moving up to the Inkerman position as reinforcements. (RMAS)

involved in day-to-day affairs, even sending his two sons, Grand Princes Michael and Nicholas, to the front before Inkerman in an attempt to bolster dented Russian morale. The princes were dubbed 'the two cubs' by the British press, which had great fun at their supposed discomfiture after Inkerman.

Prince P. D. Gortchakoff was another commander who had proved incompetent but was to be given a crucial role to play at Inkerman. A veteran of the Napoleonic wars and 64 years old, he had commanded 6 Corps at the Alma where he had failed to show any aptitude and, despite claiming to have led the counter-attack of the Vladimir Regiment, he was widely known to be a coward. At Inkerman his task was to lead his corps up from the Balaklava Plain into the Allied flank and link-up with Dannenberg.

He failed to show any initiative and made a significant contribution to the defeat.

General P. A. Dannenberg, commander of 4 Corps, was chosen to spearhead the attack on Inkerman. Although not present at the Alma, Dannenberg's corps had valuable experience from the campaign on the Danube in 1853. Unfortunately, this experience was of defeat, for on 4 November 1853 Dannenberg had been comprehensively beaten by the

Turks at Oltenitsa. Dannenberg went hesitantly into action on the first anniversary of his last defeat. Despite this, he showed bravery and tenacity and had a greater feel for tactics than most of his contemporaries. Lieutenant General Pauloff was in charge of 11 Division, and Soimonoff, who fell at Inkerman in the midst of a series of impulsive attacks, commanded 10 Division.

Perhaps the most competent commanders were only indirectly involved in the battle. The admirals Nachimov and Kornilov, the commander and chief-of-staff of the Black Sea fleet, were responsible for the defence of Sevastopol. They defied Menshikov's pessimism, kept the



Lt. Gen. Pauloff led 11 Division at Inkerman. Part of Dannenberg's 6 Corps, 5 November was to be the division's first taste of action in the Crimea. (RMAS)

Allies at bay for a long period, and maintained a secure base into which Dannenberg's troops could retreat after Inkerman.

Lastly, the talented engineer Colonel Todleben must be mentioned. Ignored until after the defeat of Alma, he threw himself into the creation of defences of the city to great effect. He was present at the closing stages of Inkerman, exercising a cool and calming effect as the troops withdrew from Shell Hill under increasing British fire.

THE ALLIES

The British Army was commanded by the 66-year-old Lord Raglan, who, as Wellington's ADC, had lost an arm at Waterloo but had not seen action since. Most of his service had been as a staff officer, in which capacity he was competent. He lacked the necessary qualities to weld the army and the Alliance together, however; he was almost painfully self-effacing, never quite losing the habit of referring to the French as 'the enemy'. At Alma he had behaved bravely, but had shown little generalship. At Inkerman, beyond ensuring that reserves were on their way and ordering up two heavy guns, he exercised little influence, content to leave the conduct of the battle to a brigadier.

The Duke of Cambridge commanded the 1st Division. At 35, he was the youngest British general, but he had no experience of active service. At the Alma he had been accused of following up Sir George Brown's Light Division too slowly and allowing the Russians to regain the initiative. While showing no great tactical skill at Inkerman, he led his embattled Guards Brigade bravely.

The 2nd Division was commanded by Sir George de Lacy Evans, who, at 67, had considerable battle experience. He had performed well at the Alma and handled the division admirably during Little Inkerman on 26 October. However, he was not present at Inkerman as he was sick in Balaklava after a fall from his horse. His place was taken by his senior brigadier, the popular, and foul-mouthed Pennefather, who had seen action before, most notably as the commanding officer of the 22nd (Cheshire) Regiment at Meeanee in India in 1843. Much of the credit for the



ABOVE General Dannenberg was in command of 4 Corps at Inkerman. A veteran of the previous year's campaign on the Danube against the Turks, his Corps had not been in action against the British before. After an exhausting march from Bessarabia, 4 Corps was ordered into action immediately in darkness over ground with which they were not familiar. Dannenberg was allowed a day's grace when he pointed out that he was to attack on the first anniversary of his defeat at Oltenitsa. (RMAS)



Lt. Gen. Soimonoff commanded 10 Division, also part of 6 Corps. His division marched out of Sevastopol before first light on 5 November and was the first into action. He was to fall at the head of his troops. (RMAS)



Colonel Todleben, an engineer of German extraction, had been responsible for much of the defensive work around Sevastopol. Whilst he was to act with great coolness during the latter stages of Inkerman, he is best remembered for his competence and daring during the siege operations of late 1854 and 1855. (RMAS)

Admiral Nachimov, commander of the Russian fleet at Sinope and, later, one of the linchpins of the defence of Sevastopol. He was beloved by his men in whose qualities he believed most fervently, 'We must stop looking upon ourselves as landlords and upon sailors as slaves. We must teach and stimulate common sailors to be brave and heroic.' He was killed by a round-shot on 17 October 1855. (Author's collection)

victory of Inkerman must go to him and his indomitable style of leadership. Commanding the 4th Division was the experienced 60-year-old Sir George Cathcart.

He had recently successfully concluded the Eighth Kaffir War in South Africa. Despite being junior to Sir George Brown, he had secretly been appointed the successor to Lord Raglan should anything befall him. This so-called 'Dormant Commission' was to cause Cathcart great difficulty, for he felt he should act with a degree of tactical independence which would prove his suitability for command when the time came. He had been humiliated by arriving too late for the Alma after taking the wrong road from the disembarkation beaches, and had made little contribution at Balaklava due, once again, to his being late. He and most of his staff were to fall at Inkerman after a headlong charge against superior numbers contrary to Raglan's orders.

THE FRENCH

Marshal of France Le Roy de Saint-Arnaud was born in 1789, the son of a tribune of Napoleon's. Early in his life he had been an infantry officer but had fallen from grace, left the Army, fought in the Greek War against the Turks and then fled to England where he became a comedian and singer! Re-instated in the Army, he fought in Algeria in 1836 and led an expedition to eastern Algeria, the Petite Kabylie region, in 1852 and was appointed Minister of War in 1853.

Selected to command the Crimean expedition due to his fluency in English as well as his military talents, he had long suffered from an intestinal complaint which many believed would not allow him to command properly. He died in the Crimea after the battle of the Alma.

After the death of Marshal Saint-Arnaud in September, Canrobert had been appointed to command the French forces. After the French failure to advance during the later stages of Inkerman,





ABOVE Lord Raglan, Commander-in-Chief of the British forces, was, at 66, past his prime. Having shown little generalship at the Alma he was to perform no better at Inkerman. His sole contribution to the battle was the ordering-up of siege artillery; other than that he was content to allow his subordinates free rein. (RMAS)



RIGHT The Duke of Cambridge was, at 35, the youngest of the divisional commanders. At Inkerman he fought at the head of the Guards Brigade throughout the day. (RMAS)

he was, perhaps unfairly, referred to as 'Robert Can't' by the British. Born in 1809 Canrobert was the son of a soldier and was first commissioned into an infantry regiment in 1826. His first military experience was in Algeria in 1835, and he was promoted to command a regiment in 1845 and commanded of the French 1st division in the Crimea. He had an exotic reputation enhanced by his long, flowing hair and frequent bouts of 'pink eye' – rumoured to be the result of drug abuse!

Commanding the French division which first came to support the British at Inkerman was General Bosquet, who had much experience in North Africa. Acting on his own initiative, he marched his troops to the sound of the guns, only to have his offer of help refused by Cathcart and Brown.

OPPOSING PLANS

THE BATTLEGROUND

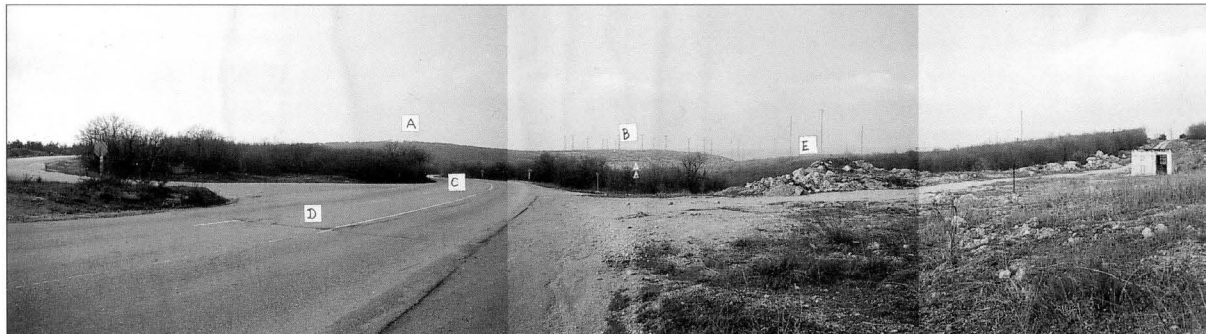
No account of Inkerman can make any sense unless the reader has some idea of the broken, precipitous and jungly nature of the ground over which it was fought. The ravines are so deep and the undergrowth so thick in places that substantial bodies of troops could be almost within touching distance without knowing that the others were there. Similarly, the slopes are sheer; climbing them while encumbered with full kit and under fire would challenge the fittest of men. Many accounts speak of the Russians' hesitation to advance when confronted by British troops. So many times, though, this happened at the end of a stiff climb when whatever fears the Russians felt would have been increased by physical exhaustion. Added to this, 5 November was foggy; the fog combined with the dense brushwood to limit fields of fire and severely hampered both sides' artillery.

Sevastopol is surrounded by a plateau known as the Chersonese. This is bounded in the north-east by the Tchernaya Valley and comes to an abrupt end in the south-east in the Sapouné Ridge, below which the ground falls away to the Balaklava Plain. As we have seen, the plateau runs parallel to the great harbour of Sevastopol with the Sapper Road running between the two. The plateau was bisected by two main roads, the Woronzoff Road, which connected the city with the interior, and the Post Road, which ran down from the plateau to the Inkerman Bridge across the Tchernaya. The two roads met in mid-plateau, with a windmill close to the junction.

The Chersonese Plateau is divided by deep fissures or ravines which were to give the Russians excellent, covered routes and proved difficult for the British to observe. The main ravine, the Careening, ran south-east from Sevastopol, being bounded on its south-west by the Victoria Ridge and ending below the main British positions. These positions were sited on a reversed L-shaped feature, the northerly spur of which was

A contemporary, panoramic view looking north from the centre of the British position towards the Russian positions. The pictures are taken from a spot slightly forward of Home Ridge and just to the rear of the Barrier. The camera has distorted the relative distances; everything seems much further than it actually is. Note: Shell Hill (A), East Jut (B), the Barrier (C), the Post Road (D) as it emerges from Quarry Ravine and Fore Ridge (E). Just over the brow of the hill at (F) lay the Sandbag Battery.

(M. Moriarty)



known as Fore Ridge and the westerly spur as Home Ridge. This ridge looked north-north-west across a saddle to a hill of equal height slightly over half a mile away, Shell Hill. To the north-east of Fore Ridge ran a spur known as the Kitspur, which was separated from another, larger spur to its north-west, the Inkerman Tusk, by the St Clement's Ravine. To the north-west of the Tusk was the major ravine running up from the Tchernaya, the Quarry Ravine. The old Post Road was in the bed of this ravine, and in 1854 a simple track; along its northerly slope ran the more recently constructed new Post Road. The track joined the Post Road at the top of the Ravine, where it was overlooked by Fore Ridge.

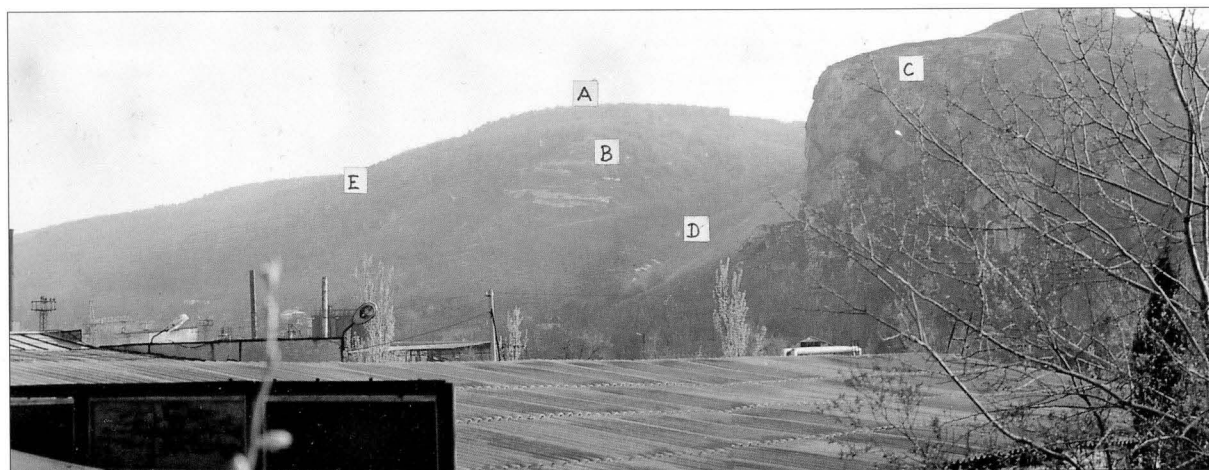
The most striking feature of the field of Inkerman is its small size. It is five minutes' brisk walk from the forward positions at the Barrier, to the rear positions at the back of the 2nd Division's camp. The opposing guns on Shell Hill and Home Ridge were within rifle shot, while the dangerous gap that was to open between the Barrier and the Battery was only about 275 yards wide. The main area of the battle was little over four kilometres square, and the combatants were very densely packed.

THE BRITISH POSITIONS

The British chose to call their position Mount Inkerman, though the village of Inkerman lay below the plateau close to the Tchernaya. De Lacy Evans's 2nd Division was entrusted with its defence and, therefore, the security of the Allies' right flank. Despite the important nature of this task, fortifications were few. The camp of the 2nd Division straddled the Post Road south of Home Ridge, on the top of which, facing north, had been built a low breastwork from behind which the divisional artillery could fire. Where the Post Road joined the track which emanated from the bed of the Quarry Ravine, another low bank had been built, known as 'the Barrier'; the road within range had been broken up and made impassable to guns and vehicles.

To the north-east of Fore Ridge, at the top of the Kitspur, lay a disused two-gun battery which was to assume an undeserved importance. Known as the Sandbag Battery, it had originally been built to protect two guns temporarily placed there to silence a Russian gun that was

Another contemporary view that the Russians would have seen as they approached the north-eastern part of the British position. These pictures are taken from the banks of the Tchernaya looking south-west and show: the Sandbag Battery (A), the Kitspur (B), Inkerman Tusk (C), St Clement's Ravine (D) and up the slopes down which Cathcart charged (E). Seen from this point of view it is perhaps easier to understand why the Russians felt so daunted at the prospect of attacking an apparently impregnable position. (M. Moriarty)

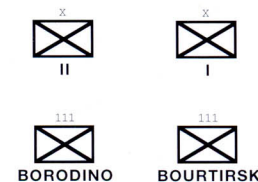


'LITTLE INKERMEN'

Viewed from the south-east.
About 13.00hrs, 26 October
1854

THE RUSSIANS SORTIE OUT OF SEVASTOPOL
AND ENCOUNTER THE
BRITISH PICQUETS

13.00hrs An under-road column of
marines move forward in support of
Federoff's attack



13.00hrs In an attempt to ease the pressure on Liprandi's
troops near Balaklava, probe the British right flank and draw
Allied attention from the siege of Sevastopol, Federoff
marches from Sevastopol with six battalions. This is with a
view to carrying out an armed reconnaissance of the British
position. Entrenching tools carried by the Russian infantry
suggest that he may have tried to dig-in and establish a
forward redoubt which could cover a more determined attack
in the future

TO SEVASTOPOL

SEVASTOPOL
ROADSTEAD

SHELL HILL

13.00-13.30hrs A gun-line
is quickly established and
the British picquets
engaged

CAREENAGE
RAVINE

THE BARRIER

SANDBAG
BATTERY

14.15-14.45hrs The under-road
column is held by Goodlake's
Sharpshooters. The Russian
advance falters



13.30hrs The British picquets resist Federoff
rather more vigorously than is customary,
fighting well forward, initially buying time for
the 2nd Division to fall-in, but then masking
the fire of their own guns on Fore Ridge. De
Lacy Evans refuses to reinforce the picquet
commanders, ordering them to withdraw, but
Eman and Champion only obey once heavily
outnumbered



BREASTWORK ON
HOME RIDGE

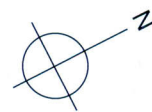
14.45hrs The Russian
guns limber-up and
their infantry begins to
retire. With the guns
firing over their heads,
Evans unleashes the
30th, 41st and 95th
who drive the Russians
from Shell Hill. The
British advance only
halts once fire is
experienced from
Sevastopol and ships
in the Roadstead

- BRITISH ARMY**
1. PICQUET 41ST
 2. PICQUET 49TH
 3. PICQUET 30TH
 4. PICQUET 95TH
 5. 'G' BATTERY
 6. 'B' BATTERY
 7. CAMP OF 2ND DIVISION
 8. CAMP OF 1ST BRIGADE LIGHT DIVISION (CODRINGTON)
 9. CAMP OF GUARD'S BRIGADE (BENTINCK)
 10. MAIN BODY 41ST
 11. MAIN BODY 30TH
 12. MAIN BODY 95TH
 13. DE LACY EVANS
 14. GOODLAKE'S SHARPSHOOTERS
 15. EMAN, PICQUET COMMANDER IN WEST
 16. CHAMPION, PICQUET COMMANDER IN EAST

- RUSSIAN ARMY**
- A. UNDER-ROAD COLUMN
 - B. TWO BATTALIONS OF BORODINO REGIMENT
 - C. TWO BATTALIONS OF BOUTIRSK REGIMENT
 - D. FEDEROFF
 - E. RUSSIAN GUN-LINE



14.15hrs The British guns come into
action with full effect. Federoff is
wounded and the fire goes out of the
Russian attack as the British guns and
rifles begin to tell



harassing Fore Ridge from across the Tchernaya. Their job done, the guns had been withdrawn but the battery remained. Some nine feet high with two embrasures but no firestep, it was of no tactical significance, but it did serve as a sheltered gathering place for the 2nd Division's picquets posted on that flank.

This crucial site was held by a spirited but understrength division with few fortifications. Ironically, their task of providing security to this flank was so demanding of time and manpower that little was done to improve the defences. Even more lamentably, the Staff failed to put to work the 6,000 Turkish troops under British command, apparently because the conduct of some of their number at Balaklava made them unworthy of any military duties whatsoever.

The Picquets

The 3rd, 4th and half of the Light Division found the manpower to man the trenches and prosecute the siege. The rest were committed to the defence of the open flanks and the lines of communication to Balaklava. So, a brigade of the Light Division was positioned on Victoria Ridge in company with the naval crews of the Lancaster Battery protecting the north-western sector. Moving anti-clockwise, the 2nd Division held the ground from the Careening Ravine, over Shell Hill, then running south-east along the edge of the Sapoune to a point level with the divisional camp. From there the ground became the responsibility of the Guards whose picquets linked up further down the Sapoune with Bosquet's troops.

It is worth examining the picquet system in some detail. Picquets were meant to act as an outlying chain of observation and defence. One picquet would normally be one company strong, in other words, at this stage of the campaign, about 60 men. The main body would rest in as sheltered a spot as could be found, while a number of pairs of riflemen would be posted some way ahead according to the ground and the visibility. An officer-led patrol would then move up and down the pairs of sentries both to make sure that they were alert and to act as a quick reaction force. As the enemy came into sight, one of the riflemen would delay them as long as possible while the other ran back to alert the rest of the company. The main body would then stand to and, having sent word back, would try to buy as much time as possible for the division to get under arms and move to their battle positions.

The 2nd Division mounted eight picquets at any one time, four from each brigade, with each four being under the command of a field officer; the duty lasted for 24 hours. This does not sound particularly onerous until the windswept nature of the ground, the increasingly inclement weather and the lack of cover behind which to shelter is noted. In addition, the troops' diets had become meagre and monotonous as the



Picquets, as this illustration shows, had little defence against the weather. There was no waterproof clothing available at this stage of the campaign and there were few features behind which to shelter. The task was unpopular and monotonous and it was difficult for even the best troops to remain alert. (Wood)

inadequacies of the commissariat began to tell. As their diet deteriorated so did the soldiers' resilience. This led to more sickness and fewer men to perform the increasingly demanding duties. Picquet duty quickly became deeply unpopular, and it is easy to see how difficult it would be to keep sentries alert and inquisitive under such conditions.

Sharing the chores with the routine picquets was a novel force of 'sharpshooters' picked from the Guards Brigade. About 60 strong, this group had a roving commission to snipe at targets as the opportunity arose. Originally intended to operate against the enemy's gun detachments, under the enterprising leadership of Captain Goodlake of the Coldstream Guards, they became more of a fighting patrol. They were to prove themselves time and again in the fights that lay ahead.

LITTLE INKERMEN: THE SORTIE OF 26 OCTOBER

Despite the apparent successes of 25 October, Menshikov still had no faith in the Russians' overall ability in the field. However, morale in Sevastopol was high and pressure from the Tsar unrelenting, so he decided on another sally the next day. The aim was to take pressure off Liprandi's troops near Balaklava, further distract the Allies from the siege and probe their exposed right flank above Inkerman. Accordingly, Col. Federoff, with six battalions of the Borodino and Bourtirsk regiments, about 4,300 men and four guns, was ordered to move out of the city, cross the Careening Ravine and then make his way up to Mount Inkerman via the Sapper Road. To protect his flank a column was to

Picquets in action to the right of the British position. Whilst their fortifications are rather more substantial than they would have been in reality, this picture gives a good idea of the way in which Russian warships in Sevastopol harbour could influence events with their fire. Thus, the Sapper Road was dominated by the ships' fire, making it impossible for the British either to close the road or to advance their picquets as far as they would have liked on Shell Hill. (Author's Collection)



advance up the ravine itself. What he was to do once he was there was not clear, but a number of the men carried entrenching tools. The column reached the top of Shell Hill at about 1pm unobserved by the and got very close to the most advanced picquet before the British realised that they were Russians. The Russians were wearing soft round caps rather than their usual distinctive leather helmets, and these, combined with their long grey overcoats, made them look similar to their British foes.

The first picquet they encountered was Captain Connolly's of the 49th. A brisk fight ensued which was typical of the whole engagement. The picquet fought hard – Connolly broke his sword slaying Russians and then set about the others with his telescope – holding their ground until ammunition began to fail. To support the left-hand picquets, Major Champion of the 95th brought his four picquets up from the right and aligning them either side of the Barrier, exhorted his men with cries of 'Slate 'em boys' quite at odds with his pious nature! Whether it was instinctive aggression or inexperience that caused these troops to fight like men possessed is difficult to gauge. The fact is that they did not behave in the normal way of picquets. Having bought time, De Lacy Evans, who now had the division at its stand-to positions on Home Ridge, could have expected them to fall back and allow him to deal with the sortie with his guns and massed rifles from the high ground of the ridge. Instead, he was bombarded with requests even by the division's senior staff officer, Colonel Herbert Percy, to reinforce the picquets. He quite rightly refused, with the oft quoted phrase, 'Not a man!' while fuming at his artillery's inability to act due to the risk of hitting his own men.

However, as the full mass of the enemy appeared on Shell Hill, Evans sent forward two companies, the 41st's Light Company to the left picquets and one of the 30th's to the right. As they moved forward, the three batteries began to engage the Russians' depth, hitting the reserve columns. Meanwhile, Goodlake's men had held the column advancing up the Careening Ravine. After some initial skirmishing between the Guardsmen's sentries and the Russian scouts, during which Goodlake himself had had a narrow escape, the Russians had pushed on until they came upon the little band ranged across the ravine. A succession of Minie volleys checked the enemy, and they tumbled back down the gully a spent force.

Back on Shell Hill, the Russian reserves were suffering badly. The left-hand column ran forward into the cover of the Quarry Ravine and then melted away down it, while the other two columns reeled back across the crest into dead ground. With his supports giving way, Federoff ordered a retreat. Initially the leading columns fell back in good order, but when Federoff was wounded and fresh British troops started to pour down from Home Ridge, they began to lose confidence and coherence. The fresh troops were four companies of the 30th, seven of the 95th and the rest of the 41st. The frustration of being held back while the picquets fought was suddenly unleashed and the British dashed at the Russians. Indeed, it was only the fire of the ships in the Roadstead which, according to Private Beddo, stopped the 95th's Light Company, 'driving the Muscovites to Sevastopol itself!'

The British were mightily pleased with themselves. Certainly, the 2nd Division had behaved well: the disciplined fire of rifles and artillery, and

LIEUTENANT J. A. CONNOLLY,
49TH REGIMENT, 26 OCTOBER
1854

Connolly's picquet of the 49th were the first to be engaged by the Russians on 26 October. Rather than firing and falling back, the picquets held their ground, almost too well, and prevented the British artillery from coming into action for fear of hitting their own men! Connolly's men fought the Borodino Regiment; having broken his sword, Connolly continued to resist the Russians by wielding his telescope, thus earning himself the Victoria Cross.



Lt J. A. Connolly 49th (Hertfordshire) Regiment. On 26 October he was in command of the first picquet to encounter the enemy. When his sword broke he belaboured the Russians with his telescope, thus earning the Victoria Cross. (RMAS)



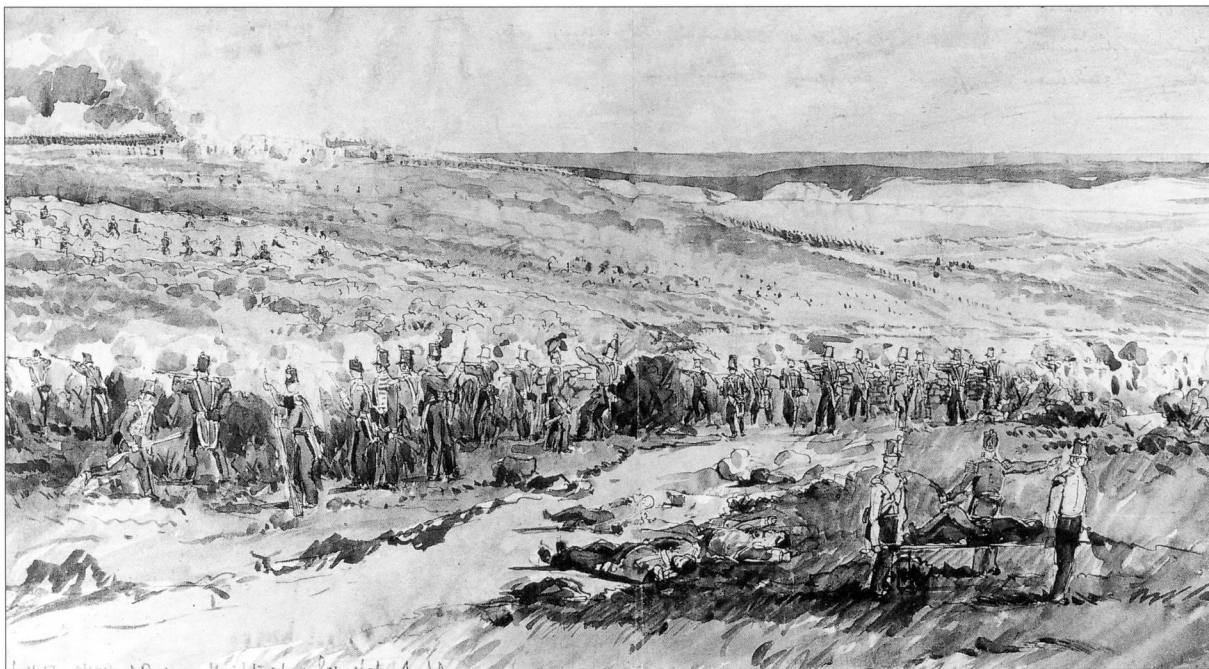
each man's desire to hold his ground won the admiration of the rest of the army, and it had been done at remarkably little cost with only 12 killed and 72 wounded. But the Russians had gained vital intelligence, although it had cost them 270 casualties. They now knew just how weak this flank was and how easily it could be approached; they had also seen that few reinforcements had reached the British quickly. The British would have had more to be pleased about if they had learned the lessons which this engagement should have taught. Had proper arrangements been made for the speedy movement of French reinforcements from Bosquet, or had decent redoubts and breastworks been constructed, then the Russians might have been deterred from exploiting what they now knew to be a weak spot.

THE RUSSIAN PLAN OF ATTACK

As the French trenches came closer and closer to the walls of Sevastopol, the bombardment continued and an assault seemed increasingly imminent, so the Tsar's pressure on Menshikov became irresistible. The Tsar wanted an attack that would, at best, lift the siege and, at worst, hold off the Allies until winter. Menshikov knew that French reinforcements were on the way and that the Allies could swell their numbers more quickly from Europe than he could from Russia. He also knew that the 10th and 11th Infantry Divisions from Dannenberg's 4 Corps were due to arrive on 3 and 4 November, and that with their arrival he would enjoy a superiority in numbers for the first time. But his superiority would not last long and he was determined to attack on 4 November.

Capt Goodlake of the Coldstream Guards in action at Inkerman with a detachment of Guards Brigade sharpshooters. For his conduct on 26 October and 5 November he was to be awarded the Victoria Cross. Each division found a number of specially trained sharpshooters whose primary task was to be the harassment of enemy gunners. Those of the Guards seem to have interpreted this rather more liberally and roamed fairly freely around the exposed Inkerman position. (Staff College)





An Illustrated London News view of the action of 26 October. Under the protective fire of artillery on Shell Hill, Russian infantry fall back covered by their skirmishers. In the foreground British reinforcements come to the aid of the hard-pressed pikets. (ILN)



ABOVE Lt-Gen. De Lacy Evans commanded 2nd Division. At 67 he was elderly but experienced, having commanded a sizeable force in the First Carlist War 1836-37. On 26 October he handled the division well, despite the impetuous behaviour of his forward pikets. On 5 November he was not present having been incapacitated by a fall from his horse. (RMAS)

However, no matter how strong his tactical plan, the foundations were weak. First, Menshikov intended to use untried troops who did not know the ground and who would be tired from their march from Bessarabia. Second, there was going to be very little time for reconnaissance, planning or orders. Third, Dannenberg betrayed his complete lack of confidence in the venture by asking Menshikov to delay the attack by one day. His reasons were that his troops needed time to rest but, more importantly, it was the first anniversary of his defeat at the hands of the Turks at Oltenitsa on the Danube! Lastly, Menshikov regrouped in such a way as to make formation fight under commanders whom they did not know and with complex command and control arrangements.

So, Soimonoff's 10th Infantry Division was brought up to corps strength by the addition of the 16th Division and the Bourtirsk Regiment from the 17th Division – about 19,000 men. Pauloff's Corps was to consist of his own 11th Infantry Division, plus two regiments of the 17th Division – about 16,000 men. To complicate matters further, overall command would be maintained by Menshikov until the whole force had come together on Mount Inkerman. Only then would command be assumed by Dannenberg, who was to march with Pauloff. The confusion that these arrangements caused was demonstrated when Soimonoff received contradictory orders from both Menshikov and Dannenberg, neither of which left him sufficient time to reconnoitre ground which he had never seen before. It was not an auspicious start.

The tactical plan, however, was straightforward. Soimonoff's column was to move out of Sevastopol, cross the Careening Ravine and then approach Shell Hill via the Sapper Road. A column of marines would be in the bed of the ravine to give him flank protection. In other words, he was to follow the same route and plan as Federoff had done on 26 October, but on a much larger scale. Pauloff was to approach from his

**GOODLAKE'S
SHARPSHOOTERS**

The flank of Federoff's forces was protected on 26 October by a column of naval infantry which Captain Gerald Goodlake and about 60 men of the Guards Brigade sharpshooters stopped

dead by dint of fast and accurate rifle fire. Goodlake and Sergeant Ashton had been scouting ahead of their men in the bed of the careening Ravine when the column approached and were, for a while, cut off. Hurling themselves into the midst of the Russians, they made good their escape, eventually rejoining their sharpshooters and leading the repulse of the Russians. Goodlake later received the Victoria Cross for his heroism.



Capt. Anthony Morgan, 95th (The Derbyshire) Regiment, here with his grandson at home in Ireland in 1904, wearing the clothes and smoking the pipe that he wore on both 26 October and 5 November. With his Grenadier Company picquet he was at the forefront of the fighting on 26 October and from his diary he seems to have concluded that it was not a serious attack but rather an armed reconnaissance. One wonders, if regimental officers were aware of what the Russians might do, why the Staff were so horribly surprised on 5 November? (Authors collection)

Maj Gen. Timovieff, the Sevastopol garrison commander ordered to mount a series of feints against the French in order to prevent them from going to the assistance of the British on 5 November. (RMAS)



position on the other side of the Tchernaya Valley, repair the bridge over the river at Inkerman village and then move up to rendezvous with Soimonoff at the top of Shell Hill. Only at this point would Dannenberg take command. With their combined guns in battery, the Russians then planned to unhinge the British from the north.

To draw off the Guards and Bosquet on the Sapoune, the troops on the Balaklava Plain, now under the command of Prince P. D. Gortchakoff, would make a series of demonstrations and feints and, once the main attack was succeeding, push cavalry, guns and infantry up the few paths that existed to link up with Dannenberg and exploit the situation. Furthermore, on 26 October the Russians had noticed French movements in the siege works, and believed that they were attempting to relieve the pressure on the British. To prevent this, Timovieff, the garrison commander, was ordered to mount a series of sallies against the French extreme right. If things went according to plan, the depleted 2nd Division would be isolated from reinforcements and would have to face upwards of 40,000 fresh Russians coming at them from both their front and flank with overwhelming artillery support. With a plan as strong as this, Menshikov should have been full of optimism.



THE BATTLE

Punch's view of the Russian fighting spirit! Whilst alcohol was certainly issued to the Russians in the same way that rum was to the British, there is little to suggest that the Russians went into battle drunk. Perhaps their stoicism under fire caused the British to conclude that they must have been drunk; precisely the same accusations were made against the British by the Russians after both Alma and Balaklava! (*Punch*)

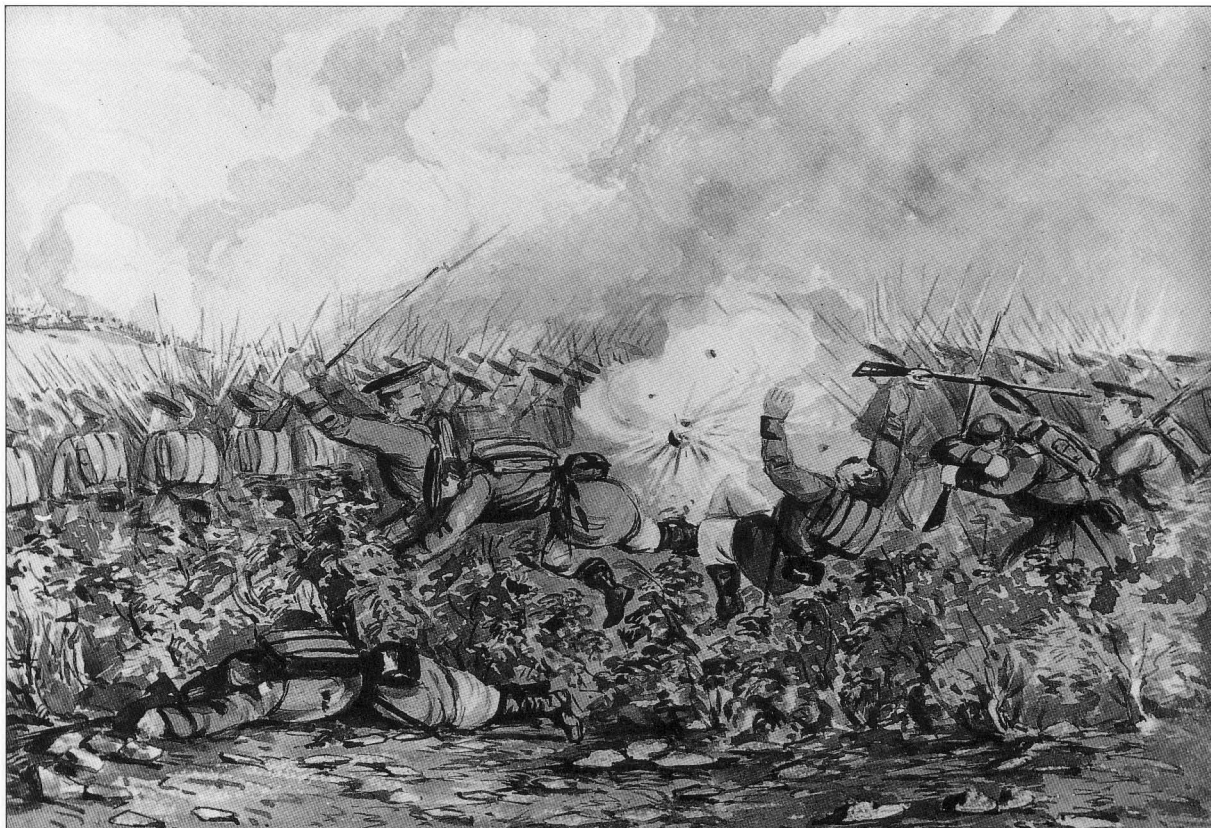
To some of the regimental officers the lessons of 26 October seemed obvious; the enemy had found a weak spot and would try to take advantage of it unless the position were reinforced or further fortified. The 2nd Division was too busy to undertake these improvements themselves, no work parties were forthcoming and there were to be no re-deployments. Other than a little extra work to improve the gun positions on Home Ridge, nothing was done, despite increasingly urgent reports from spies, deserters and even official sources in St Petersburg that an offensive was imminent. Added to this, troop and administrative movements were obvious to the picquets on the heights across the Tchernaya Valley, and on 4 November a distinctive, yellow carriage was seen in the enemy's camp being cheered by the

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PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.



HOW THE HOLY MEN OF RUSSIA INSPIRE THEIR SOLDIERS.



assembled soldiery. While the British could not know that this was the arrival of the Tsar's two sons, it was clear that the enemy was preparing for something. That night a thick, damp fog rolled in, which made the picquets' task even more difficult and uncomfortable. Despite its deadening effect, wheels could still be heard rumbling in the valley below and there were some who understood the ideal opportunity the weather afforded the enemy.

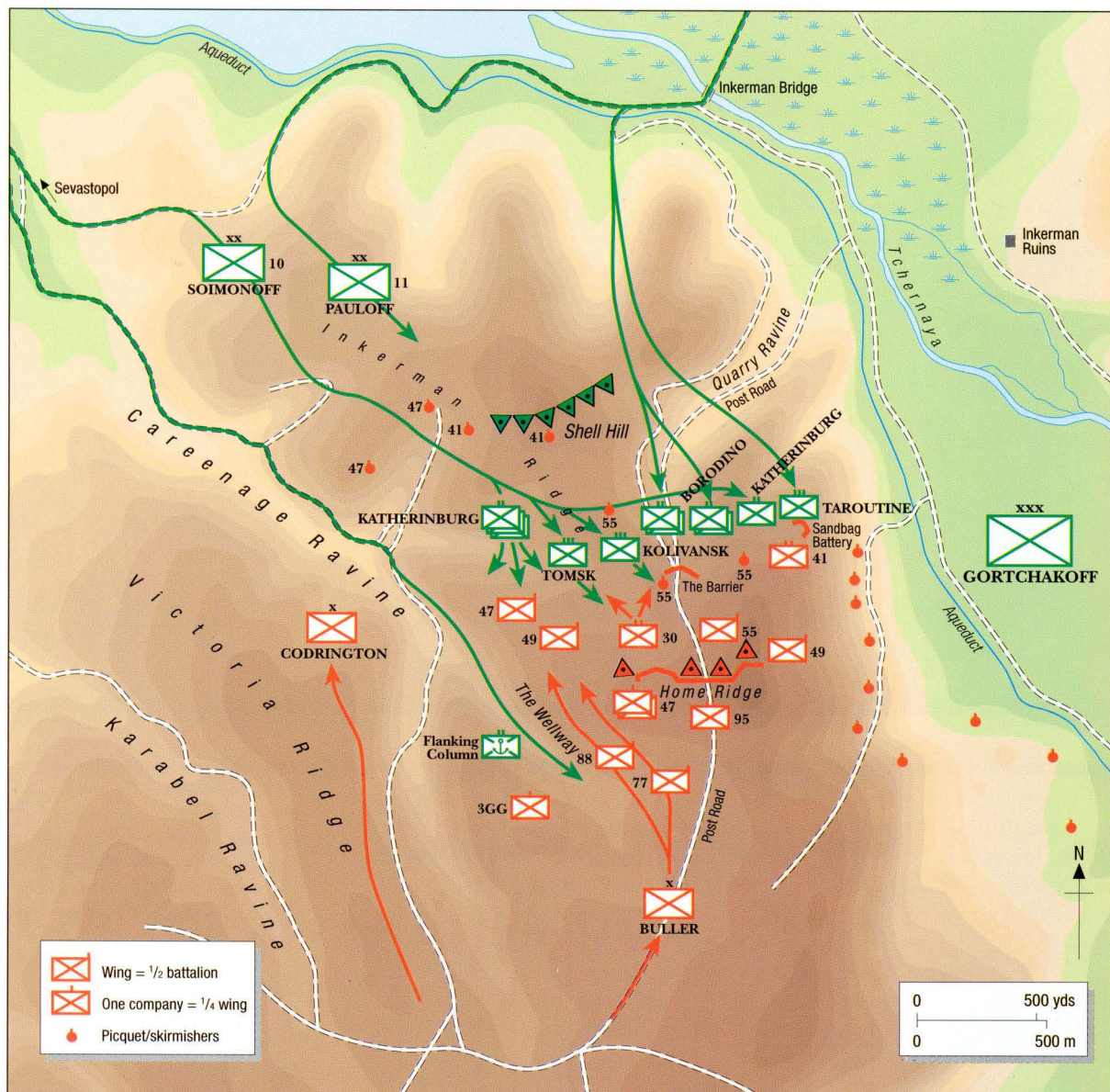
The eyes of the Allied commanders were firmly fixed on the siege, however; an assault was planned for 7 November and a council of war was called for the 4th to discuss the details. They discussed French reinforcements for the 2nd Division in the event of their being attacked again, but only gained a very general assurance of help. Had De Lacy Evans been there rather than sick in Balaklava, more concrete arrangements might have been made. His division, however, was in the able hands of his senior brigadier, Pennefather, but he was not present at the conference, although his abilities were soon to be tested to their utmost.

THE OPENING MOVES

Soimonoff's column had moved off earlier than ordered, leaving Sevastopol at about 2am and arriving at the foot of Shell Hill some three hours later. With the 6th Rifles leading, eight battalions of the Tomsk and Kolivansk Regiments led the van with the Katherinburg in support.

The Russians as they actually were. Most of the casualties on both sides were caused by artillery, but the solid Russian columns made them particularly vulnerable. Here shrapnel fire bursts amongst infantry now clad in soft, round caps rather than the spiked, leather helmets that had been worn up until Inkerman. (Clifford)

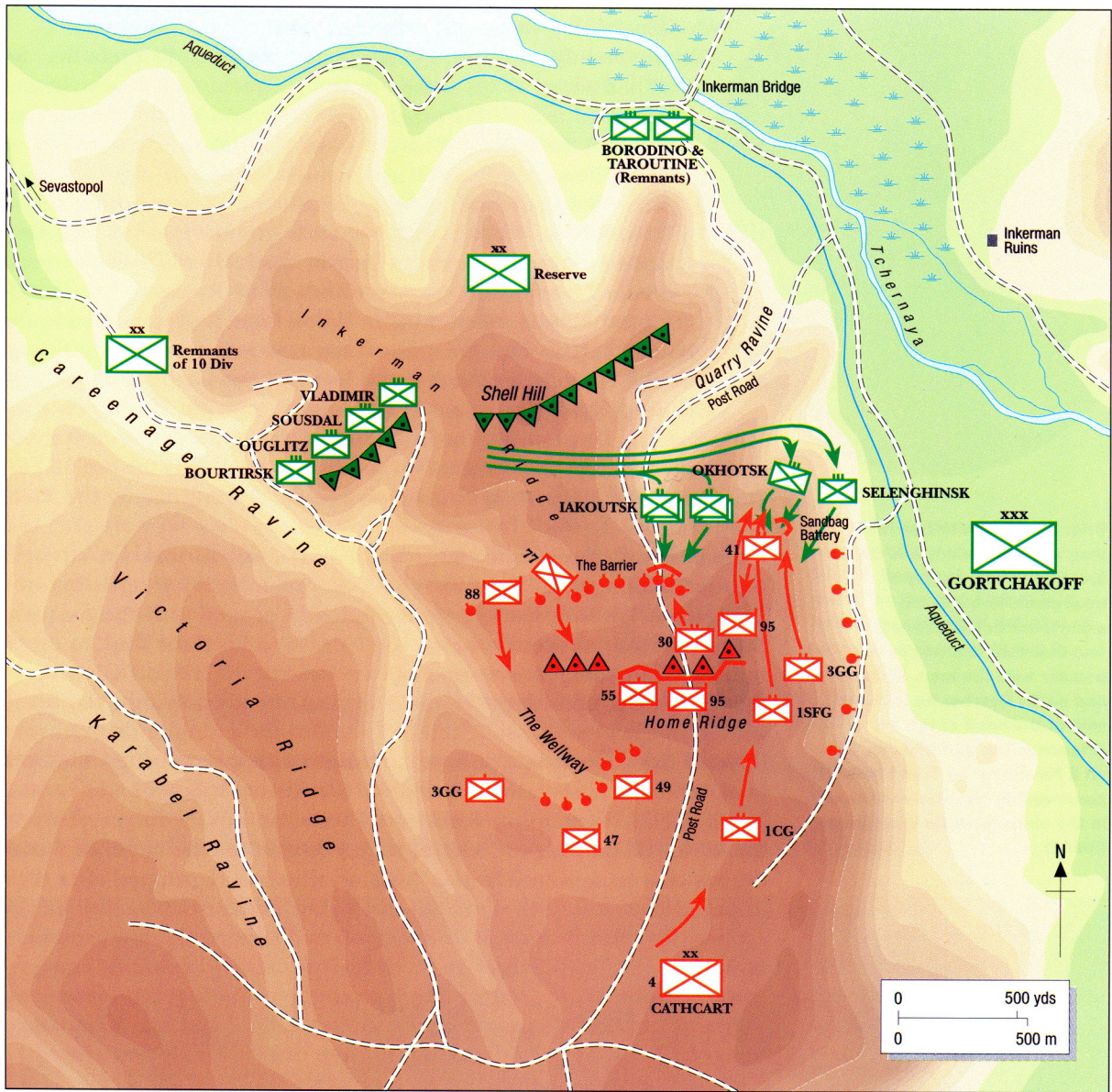
BATTLE OF INKERMANN - SITUATION 05.45-07.30



With them were 22 12-pdrs., while the other 16 battalions and 16 guns were held back. Furthermore, moving up the Careening Ravine was a flank protection force of a few hundred men.

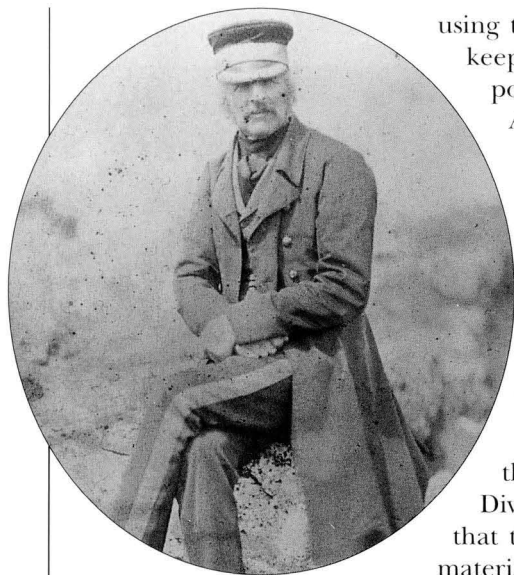
As dawn lit the fog at about 6am, the first shots were exchanged. The new picquets, four of the 55th on the right and two each of the 41st and 47th on the left, had just taken over, and they were soon in action against overwhelming odds. To their horror, many of their rifles misfired due to sodden charges, but their determined firing was enough to alert the main body of the division, including the wet, hungry and tired picquets who had just come in and who were still trying to draw the soaked charges from their weapons. Against much greater numbers than on 26 October, the picquets had to give ground and it soon became obvious to

BATTLE OF INKERMAN - SITUATION 07.45-08.45



Pennefather that this was to be a general engagement rather than just another sortie.

Pennefather, however, chose to fight this battle in a way altogether different to Evans on 26 October. With the Russian artillery quickly in position and bringing accurate fire to bear on both the camp and Home Ridge, Pennefather moved up the main body of the division, the balance of six battalions, and lay them down in dead ground behind the ridge while the picquets continued to resist. With the two 9-pdrs. that were kept in harness for just such an eventuality, he was able to assess the situation and realised that reinforcements would have to come up if the position were to be held. Accordingly, he elected to fight the battle well forward, trusting to the fog and brush to conceal his lack of numbers and



Brig. Gen. Pennefather, more than any other man, was the architect of the victory at Inkerman. Having much experience in India he was foul-mouthed and immensely popular with the men. At Alma and on 26 October he behaved well at the head of the 2nd Brigade of the 2nd Division, but on 5 November he found himself commanding the whole division in the absence of De Lacy Evans. (RMAS)

using the picquets as his main line of defence. In doing this he would keep as much distance between the enemy and Home Ridge as possible, buying time until assistance came.

As the enemy advanced in increasing numbers, Pennefather dispatched most of his troops to the picquets, keeping a slender reserve of two 47th companies, the portion of the 55th not on picquet, the 95th and his 12 guns. Soon all the forward troops were heavily engaged in formless knots of fighting men wreathed in fog and gun-smoke. The windless morning served to hold the smoke and fog close to the ground and this, combined with the thick brush, made it difficult to direct events. Despite the greater numbers of Russians, the British troops held their ground well. When Lord Raglan arrived at the scene at about 7am, he saw no reason to interfere. He confirmed that the Guards were under way, however, and had seen the Light Division preparing to move as he himself came up. Having ensured that the 4th Division had been alerted, he made a decision that was materially to affect the outcome of the battle. He called up two 18-pdr. guns from the siege train to counter the increasing enemy fire from Shell Hill.

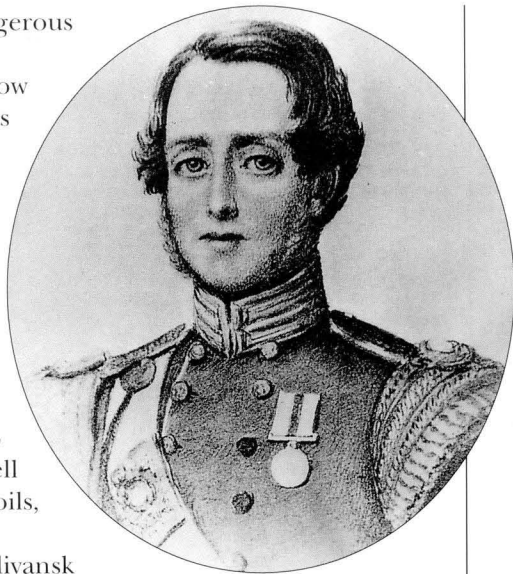
Soimonoff, meanwhile, had decided to push forward in strength without waiting for Pauloff, who had been delayed crossing the Tchernaya. With his leading troops fiercely engaged with the picquets, Soimonoff sent a reconnaissance force down to his right flank to probe into the Careening Ravine and up towards the Mikriakoff Glen. Here they might link up with the column that was already providing flank protection in the ravine. But he did not account for a wing of the 49th sent forward from Home Ridge, who met them with a shattering volley and brisk bayonet charge which caused the Russians to splinter and flee back up Shell Hill. A gap in the fog allowed Soimonoff to see this reverse and the 49th, still gasping for breath, found themselves the target of a ponderous charge delivered by the Russians, who had regrouped after their initial skirmishes. The 49th fell back, but the Russians, now under artillery fire, lost formation in the scrub and hugged the low ground to avoid the whistling canister shot. As their right-hand columns emerged from the Mikriakoff Glen so they encountered the first reinforcements of the Light Division, four companies of the 88th, the Connaught Rangers. Both sides were surprised in the poor visibility and a scrappy, confused fight ensued. Part of the 88th pushed part of the Russians back up West Jut; the remainder fell back covered by P Battery RA, which had been sent up by the 4th Division. But the Katherinburg's numbers told and three guns were overrun after a sharp fight. This caused two Katherinburg battalions to halt, delighted with their trophies, but lacking the initiative to exploit their gains.

To these battalions' right, however, there had been less success. Another Katherinburg battalion had been smashed by rifle fire of the 47th. Similarly, as the original Careening column was emerging from the Wellway where it was ideally placed to lance into the rear left flank of the 2nd Division, they met the Light Division's Brigadier General Buller leading the 77th, who fell upon their head and checked them. Further down the ravine an out-lying picquet of the Guards moved forward and completed Buller's work by pouring concentrated Minie fire into the

columns below. Nothing more was seen of this force and a dangerous threat was countered.

As Soimonoff's right hook held, the Tomsk and Kolivansk now pushed south-east against the picquets and 30th reinforcements who had been in constant action. This slender force should have been no obstacle, particularly as the first of Pauloff's troops, the Borodino and Taroutine Regiments, were beginning to arrive on Shell Hill. But the Tomsk were suddenly confronted by Thomas Egerton's four companies of 77th, fresh from overthrowing a Katherinburg battalion. Disciplined volleys met them followed by Egerton's call, 'Prepare to charge, charge'. The Tomsk crashed back, and were saved from being chased straight back to their start point by the Russian guns firing into the 77th from above. Seeing their demise, the remnants of the two Katherinburg battalions around the two captured guns also fell back, plagued by the rifles of the 49th, but leaving behind their spoils, which they had made no serious attempt to spike.

The fortunes of the rest of the Tomsk and elements of the Kolivansk to the left of this thrust seemed to be much better. They had forced the 2nd Brigade's picquets back who, in turn, had masked the fire of G Battery on Home Ridge. The Russians were near to their prize when Sergeant Conway leapt forward and told the retiring picquets to get down. The guns pelted the Russians with canister; they stopped and then began to spill back. This reversal brought three of the Kolivansk battalions to a halt, but the fourth, to the east, threatened the centre of the British position on the bend of Home and Fore Ridge. Luckily there were 180 men of the 49th under Bellairs waiting for them. With a cheer they launched themselves into their foes, firing and stabbing left and right. Their rout marked the end of Soimonoff's first line. Everywhere unwieldy, rigidly drilled columns had been met by scattered clumps of British fighting like demons; everywhere these men had triumphed. As



James Eman pictured as a younger officer in the 41st (Welch) Regiment wearing the medal for the 2nd Afghan War. He was to command the 41st at Inkerman and fell in action in 1855. (IN)

The 88th Connaught Rangers photographed in 1855. (Staff College)



THE RUSSIAN PLAN OF ATTACK

Viewed from the south-east. First light, Sunday 5 November, 1854

THE RUSSIANS MOUNT A SURPRISE ATTACK BY SUPERIOR NUMBERS AGAINST A WEAK POINT IN THE ALLIED DEFENCE. UNEXPECTEDLY, THE RUSSIANS ARE TO BE ASSISTED BY DENSE FOG, BUT THE ATTACK DOES NOT GO ACCORDING TO PLAN

PHASE III Simultaneously, Timovieff sallies from Sevastopol to attempt to pin down the French troops and prevent them from going to the assistance of the British

PHASE II Dannenberg is to take command and lead the assault from the crest of Shell Hill. But although Pauloff's men have yet to arrive Soimonoff's men exchange fire with picquets from the 55th, 41st and 47th Regiments of Pennefather's 2nd Division. The rest of the division is alerted and Pennefather engages Soimonoff's force to try and keep them as far away from Home Ridge as possible and to buy time until assistance arrives

FRENCH ARMY
4. SIEGE LINES
5. BOSQUET'S 'ARMY OF OBSERVATION'

BRITISH ARMY
1. SIEGE LINES
2. DE LACY EVAN'S 2ND DIVISION
3. BENTINCK'S GUARD'S BRIGADE

RUSSIAN ARMY
A. GORTCHAKOFF'S FEINT
B. GORTCHAKOFF'S EXPLOITATION
C. PAULOFF'S FORCE
D. SOIMONOFF'S FORCE
E. SOIMONOFF'S 'UNDER-ROAD COLUMN'
F. TIMOVIEFF'S SORTIE*
G. DANNENBERG TO TAKE COMMAND ONCE FORCES COMBINED

* TIMOVIEFF - COMMANDER OF THE SEVASTOPOL GARRISON

XX 2
PENNEFATHER

XX
BOSQUET

X
GUARDS
BENTINCK

XX 10
SOIMONOFF

CAREENING RAVINE

PHASE I In darkness, Pauloff marches from the interior and Soimonoff from Sevastopol to link up at dawn at the foot of Shell Hill. Pauloff's column is delayed crossing the Tchernaya. Soimonoff leaves early and arrives first. A protecting flank column breaks off and moves up the Careening Ravine

XX 12
PAULOFF

INKERMAN HEIGHTS

TRAKTIR BRIDGE

THE ROADSTEAD

THAPOUNE RIDGE

THE INKMAN PL.

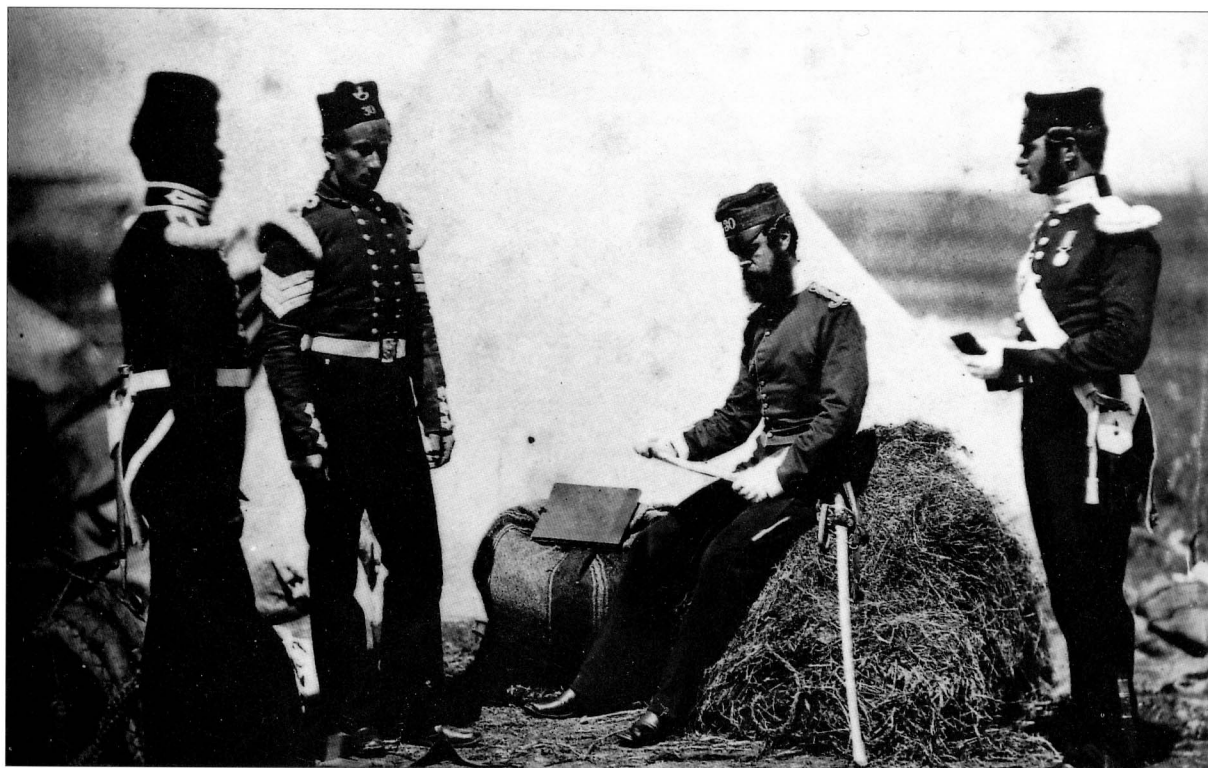
TCHERNAYA RIVER

BALAKLAVA PORT

XX II
GORTCHAKOFF

PHASE IV The next stage should have been for Gortchakoff's feint to turn to exploitation as Dannenberg pushed the British southward. This was to be a surge up onto the Sapouné ridge hitting an already confused and retiring British force in the flank. Thus the allies would be rolled back on the uplands, Balaklava would become untenable, and the Allies would be confined within the western extremity of the Crimea. From there, they would have to evacuate or be besieged. By 07.30 all of the Russians attempts to execute this plan had been repulsed. The Russian surprise attack has failed and the battle is only just beginning

PHASE III Gortchakoff demonstrates on the Balaklava plain trying to hold the attention of both Bosquet and the British Guards with the intention of preventing them going to the aid of the beleaguered 2nd Division. By this time, however, the Guards are already underway and two 18-pdr guns have been called up from the siege train to counter the increasing fire from the Russians at Shell Hill



Capt. Mark Walker VC photographed here as the Adjutant of the 30th (Cambridgeshire) Regiment. He was to lose an arm at the storming of the Redan in 1855. (Staff College)

if to demoralise the Russians further, Soimonoff fell mortally wounded. His three successors were to fall in the space of a few minutes.

Over to the east of these actions, Pauloff's first troops had come into action. The Borodino and Taroutine, regiments that had both seen action at the Alma, had picked up a stray Katherinburg battalion, then with Taroutine leading, descended into Quarry Ravine and marched up and out to the south-east. Here the Taroutine fell upon the Sandbag Battery held by only a handful of the 55th under a sergeant. Jubilant with the capture of what they believed to be a tactically crucial position, the Taroutine stopped there to bask in their success. This was to be the opening round in a series of bloody contests from which much British regimental folklore was born.

The Borodino had turned south up the ravine towards the Barrier, where a 55th picquet and a wing of the 30th awaited them. As the enemy came close the 30th's Colonel Mauleverer gave the order to fire. What should have been a concerted wall of flame and smoke proved to be a few isolated reports as the damp cartridges of the Minies failed to fire. Followed by his adjutant, Mark Walker (who was to go on to win a VC in 1855), Mauleverer leapt forward at the enemy, leading his men into a down-hill charge which broke their resolve.

It was to be a similar story at the Battery. Led by Brigadier Adams, the 41st were launched at the Taroutine and their Katherinburg supporters who were no match for the fire and steel of the British. Having been shaken by what they believed to be Borodino fire in their rear, and then the sight of that same regiment's repulse at the Barrier, they tumbled down the Kitspur, and Adams barely managed to restrain his men from pursuit.

So, by 7.30am all of the Russians' first attempts had been repulsed with heavy casualties. Pennefather's idea of fighting forward and 'feeding the picquets' seemed to have paid off. But while some reinforcements had materialised, others had not, and with Dannenberg now in command, 16 of Soimonoff's battalions in reserve, 87 guns on Shell Hill and Pauloff's 12 fresh battalions coming up, the British realised that the main battle was only just beginning.

'QUEL ABATTOIR': THE FIGHT FOR THE SANDBAG BATTERY

Pauloff's arrival brought the number of guns on Shell Hill up to 90, and it was under the cover of these that his 10,000 fresh troops began their attack. Four battalions from the Okhotsk, Selenghinsk and Iakoutsk Regiments, with sappers in support, swarmed down from Shell Hill heading east-south-east with the aim, it seemed, of turning the British right. Adams's troops held them off for a while, but sheer numbers told and he was slowly outflanked and forced to retire. His troops fell back to Home Ridge covered by a newly arrived battery under Hamley, but the Sandbag Battery fell once again into Russian hands. These same columns also put the Barrier's defenders under pressure. We have seen how the 30th dealt with the Borodino Regiment, but the overwhelming numbers of four battalions of the Iakoutsk emerging from Quarry Ravine were to prove too much. The 30th, now short of ammunition, retired fighting doggedly, halting as they reached Home Ridge. The situation was beginning to look dire when Pennefather launched the first of his reserves.

A wing each of the 1st Rifle Brigade and the 95th were deployed into line and sent against the Iakoutsk; they advanced firing and drove them back into Quarry Ravine. But the Iakoutsk's right-hand column overlapped the left of the 95th and moved with great determination up the northern slope of Home Ridge, to their rear. The only troops available to deal with this potentially awkward threat were the already exhausted 30th, many of whom, despite the din, had fallen asleep behind the breastwork. With practically no ammunition bayonets had to suffice and the 30th wielded them superbly. The unfortunate Iakoutsk were dashed by troops of whom too much had already been expected, but such was the spirit of Inkerman that they joined the rest of their mauled comrades in the sanctuary of Quarry Ravine.

During this fighting, Pennefather had noticed that a gap had opened between the Barrier and the Battery which was almost devoid of defenders and proved almost their undoing. The tenacious Iakoutsk had regrouped in the Quarry Ravine and under concentrated artillery fire they plodded out of their covered forming-up point towards the right of Home Ridge. Most of the 2nd Division's reserves had been spent in the first counterattack against this regiment, and only a very few infantry were available to support the guns which barred the Russians' way. Once again the situation looked ugly, but

Maj. Gen. Sabashinsky commanded all three battalions of the Selenghinsk at Inkerman. They were to be one of the hardest-hit Russian regiments that day – being involved in the fighting around the Sandbag Battery and the main victims of Cathcart's charge. (RMAS)



deliverance was on hand. What remained of Goldie's Brigade from the 4th Division, one wing each of the 20th and 57th, moved up firing with their smooth-bores. The fire was nothing like as murderous as the Minies' but it was followed by the cold steel of the bayonets. Echoes of past glories were evoked by the 20th's Minden Yell (which was practised covertly under the tutelage of NCOs and junior officers) and the 57th's cries of 'Die hard!' first heard at Albuhera. The bloodied Iakouts returned whence they came and the situation in this sector was stabilised by about 8.30am.

There was one column of the Iakoutsk still unaccounted for, however. As the main body pushed forward and were dealt with by the 20th and 57th, so another column veered off to their left, through the

THE FIGHT FOR
THE SANDBAG BATTERY
At the height of the battle,
troops from the Grenadier and
Coldstream Guards and from the
41st (Welch) Regiment contested
every inch of the ground with the
Taroutine Regiment from
Pauloff's 17th Division.





The hand-to-hand fighting around the Sandbag Battery at its height. Here 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards mount another onslaught against the Battery supported by Zouaves. Several regiments claim to have had their Colours in action against the Battery that day, including all three Guards battalions, the 20th (East Devonshire) Regiment and 95th (The Derbyshire) Regiment. It seems likely, however, that all remained cased rather than uncased as in this picture. (Staff College)

gap and across the top of the Kitspur, becoming a part of another contest entirely. This column joined others to threaten the entire right flank; to understand why it is necessary to examine the bloody fight which had been raging around the Sandbag Battery.

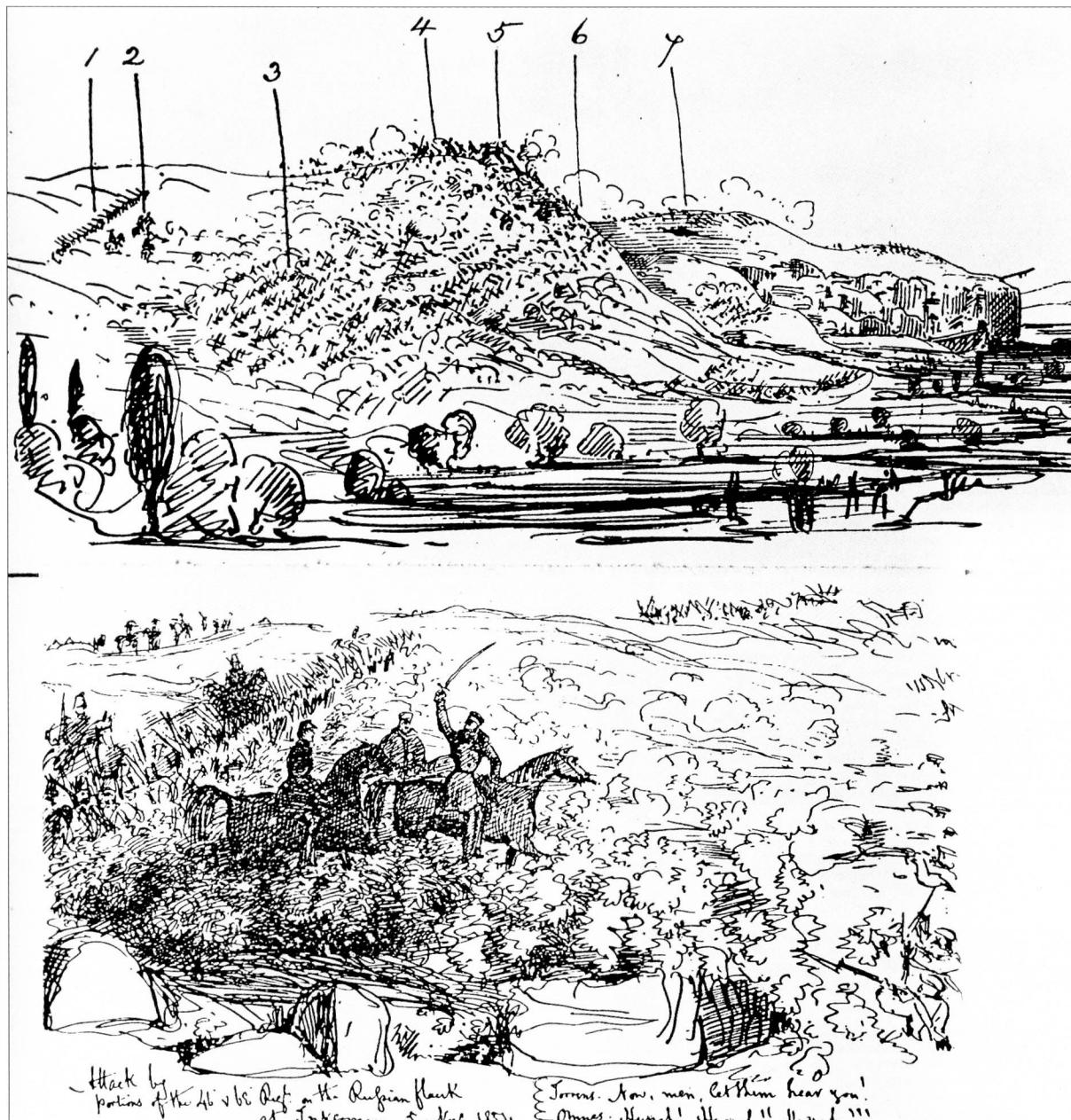
The battery remained in the hands of the Okhotsk, with the Selenghinsk coming up to their left rear. Still no substantial reinforcements had arrived. Cathcart had moved his 4th Division up, but it had been whittled away, with Goldie's Brigade and the 63rd being committed to the left and centre, and a wing of 1st Rifle Brigade and the 20th being put at Pennefather's disposal. Only six companies remained; four of the 68th and two of the 46th. With them Cathcart met Sir George Brown to discuss the situation when Bosquet appeared with two of his battalions. Bosquet had correctly concluded that Menshikov's actions below the Sapoune were a distraction, and he was mystified when the two British officers told him that things were under control and that the French were not needed. Mercifully, he paused there with his troops.

Marching at best speed, however, were the Guards Brigade and two batteries. The 3rd Grenadier Guards led with 1st Coldstream Guards, who had just come in off picquet. The Grenadiers were immediately launched at the Sandbag Battery, charging from the slopes of Fore Ridge. They smashed into the Okhotsk and pushed them over the lip of the Kitspur. Like Adams's men before them, they realised how foolish it would be to pursue their enemies and there they paused, ready to defend their useless prize.

As the other two battalions arrived, the Guards were faced with the remainder of the Okhotsk and the Selenghinsk, who were now lapping around the Kitspur and threatening to outflank them. But instead of

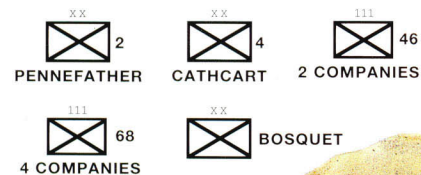
pushing on down the valley and trying to seek a gap, the battery exercised a fatal fascination to the Russians, who kept coming at it time and again. The defenders soon ran short of ammunition and had to rely upon their bayonets; when they broke, twisted or became irretrievably stuck in a corpse, stones, boots and fists were used. Each time the Russians toiled up the steep slopes of the Kitspur they were met by a gaggle of British, who would fire, then, without pausing to reload, charge home, pushing their assailants back over the lip. Sometimes numbers were too large to resist and the battery would be given up; but each time it would be recaptured by frenzied British troops. In the space of about three-quarters of an hour of an hour the battery changed hands four

Cathcart's charge as sketched by Capt. Torrens (present as ADC to his father Brig. Gen. Torrens). The upper picture shows: 1 and 2, 46th and 68th led by Brig Gen. Torrens. 3, Russians attacking. 4 and 5, Sandbag Battery. 6, Russians attacking the Battery. 7, Russians on East Jut. The lower shows Cathcart and his staff at the head of what remained of his division. (Staff College)



CATHCART'S COUNTERATTACK

Viewed from the south-east. 'The false victory' 08.00, Sunday 5 November 1854



SITUATION AT ABOUT 08.00hrs
Since first light the battle has been raging around the Sandbag Battery and the Barrier. The Russians have been held by the 2nd Division and the Guard's Brigade, but more and more fresh Russians are threatening to drive the British from their tenuous defensive positions. French help is on its way under Bosquet, and Sir George Cathcart has marched the rump of his 4th Division up from trench duty to reinforce the defence. He has despatched most of his troops to hard-pressed parts of the defence until he is left with only six companies over-looking the Tchernaya valley where, despite the fog, he can see Russian leading elements steadily outflanking the British who are holding the high ground above the Kitspur. An undefended gap has become evident between the Barrier and the Battery. Raglan passes a message for Cathcart to plug the gap, but he ignores it and decides to take different action

08.00-08.30hrs Cathcart launches his few troops into a furious downhill assault and cuts through the Selenghinsk Regiment's skirmishers

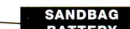
c.08.30hrs. Cathcart soon realises that he is in the midst of a numerous enemy who are firing at him from all sides. He orders a retreat, but as he is trying to lead his men out of the jam into which he had led them, he and most of his staff are struck down

c.08.20hrs The defenders of the battery see Cathcart in the valley below. Frustrated by not being allowed to chase successive waves of repulsed Russians down into the gles below, and thinking, perhaps, that there were no further, fresh, Russian forces to come up, the defenders follow Cathcart's example and, giving up the advantages of height, charge downhill into the fog and brushwood, leaving only a few in the battery under the Duke of Cambridge

c.08.30hrs. The force at the battery consists of only 100 or so guardsmen, the Colours of the Grenadiers and the Duke of Cambridge. They fight a retreat through the Russians. The Russians drive out the remaining troops and the British in the valleys below are cut off

c.08.00hrs. One column of the Iakoutsk has marched away from the rest of their regiment which is advancing to the barrier. The column heads up the Kitspur towards the Sandbag Battery

c.08.30hrs. With most of the defenders gone, elements of the Iakoutsk and Okhotsk Regiments advance on the Battery



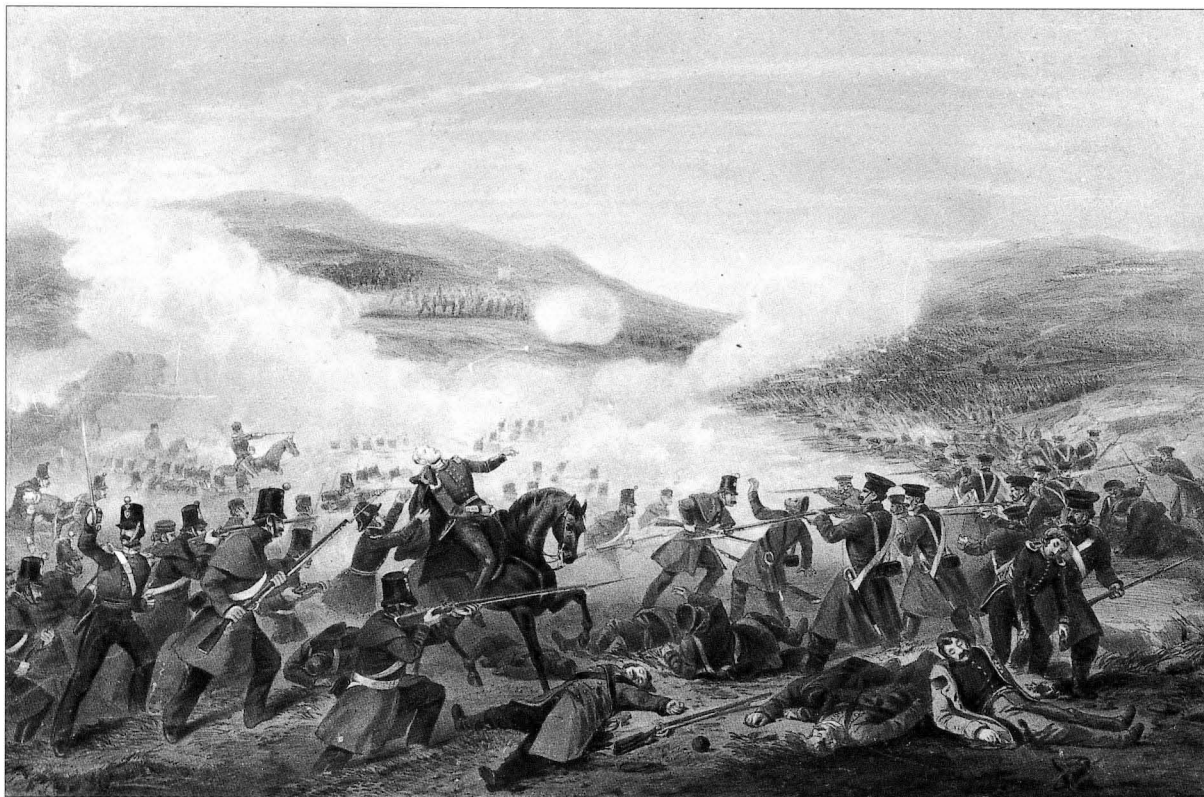
08.00hrs. The Selenghinsk can be seen through the fog apparently turning the right flank of the British

c.08.40-09.00hrs. In the valleys the British realise that their victory has been a false one: the Battery has fallen into Russian hands and they are cut off. Cathcart's impulsive example had cost the British dear and most now try to get back up the slopes towards Home Ridge using the fog and brushwood to disguise them from the Russians. Some choose to remain in the bed of the valley. Luckily, at about 09.00 the situation is restored by a French counterattack

RUSSIAN ARMY
A. THREE BATTALIONS, IAKOUTSK REGIMENT ATTACK THE BARRIER
B. ONE BATTALION, IAKOUTSK REGIMENT
C. FOUR BATTALIONS OKHOTSK REGIMENT ASSAULT UP ST. CLEMENT'S RAVINE
D. FOUR BATTALIONS SELENGHINSK REGIMENT OUTFLANK BRITISH RIGHT AND HEAD TOWARDS GOTCHAKOFF'S FORCES ON THE BALAKLAVA PLAIN.

BRITISH ARMY
1. REMNANTS OF PENNEFATHER'S 2ND DIVISION
2. CATHCART'S CHARGE WITH SIX COMPANIES OF 46TH AND 68TH.
3. SITE OF CATHCART'S DEATH
4. ADVANCE OF 1 BATTALION COLDSTREAM GUARDS
5. ADVANCE OF 3 BN GRENADEIER GUARDS
6. ADVANCE OF ONE WING 20TH REGIMENT
7. ADVANCE OF 1 BN SCOTS FUSILIER GUARDS
8. ADVANCE OF ONE WING 96TH REGIMENT
9. BARRIER HELD BY ONE WING 30TH REGIMENT
10. ONE WING 47TH REGIMENT
11. ONE WING 49TH REGIMENT

FRENCH ARMY
12. 7TH (LIGHT) REGIMENT
13. 6TH OF THE LINE REGIMENT
14. BOSQUET



Cathcart's death. Quite which wound killed him is unclear, for he was struck from his horse and then overrun by enemy infantry. Most accounts speak of a wound to his head, but his family have a leather letter wallet that has a bullet hole through it and has been soaked in blood; this suggests a further wound to the body. (Author's collection)

times; each time the casualties rose but the fighting continued unabated.

Seeing the threat to the Guards' left, Cambridge approached Pennefather for reinforcements to extend their flank and go some way to plugging the gap between the battery and the Barrier. The remaining wing of the 95th, and a wing each of the 20th and 1st Rifle Brigade were sent forward. But the fighting around the battery proved as magnetic for these troops as it had done for their enemies. The 95th moved to the left to support the Scots Fusilier Guards, with the Rifles moving to their left to the head of St Clement's Ravine, while the 20th supported the Grenadiers. The fresh troops were soon fighting as desperately as the Guards in the maelstrom around the battery. Each time the Russians were repulsed, however, their officers managed to check their troops, understandable wish to pursue their enemies into the Ravine below. Chasing them out of their sheltered forming up point, however, would be disastrous and sacrifice all the advantages of high ground for the enervating climb back up.

Events to the battery's right soon changed this and put the British flank in jeopardy. Sir George Cathcart was still watching developments with six companies. First he was approached by the Duke of Cambridge, who asked for his troops to plug the gap to the Guards' left at the top of the Kitspur; he refused. Second, General Airey, the Quartermaster General, sent orders directly from Lord Raglan telling him to do the same thing. But these entreaties could not have been borne by two individuals whom Cathcart despised more. With the issue of the 'Dormant Commission' rankling, and his late arrival at both the Alma and Balaklava still in mind, Cathcart had both a reputation to retrieve and

superior tactical judgement to prove. Below him he could see the Selenghinsk through the fog, apparently turning the right of the battery's defenders. What he did not appreciate were their numbers, and the fact that they could be covered by the guns on East Jut. Additionally, neither the 46th nor the 68th had yet seen any action outside the trenches and they were spoiling for a fight. So Cathcart charged down the slope, cutting a swathe through the Selenghinsk at first, but soon finding himself surrounded and under fire from the high ground.

While trying to retrieve the situation he was shot from his horse, and most of his staff perished with him. Troops on the wing of the 20th on the Kitspur had seen their divisional commander's and their comrades' plight. Fighting without greatcoats in their scarlet, the 46th and 68th were obvious to friend and enemy artillery alike, and they were now in trouble. The 20th poured down the slopes; the three Guard battalions and the 95th followed suit, apparently trouncing the enemy and ending continued Russian advances against the battery. Once in the bottom of the valley, however, this mixed bunch of Guards and Line found themselves out of ammunition, under plunging artillery fire and cut off from above by apparently fresh Russian infantry. Some toiled back up the slope, some melted into the brushwood and lay low awaiting their chance to escape and some fell; but all realised that this had been a rash move and a false victory.

Sgt. Major Henry of G Battery Royal Artillery receiving 12 wounds in the defence of his guns, an act that was to win him the Victoria Cross. (RMAS)

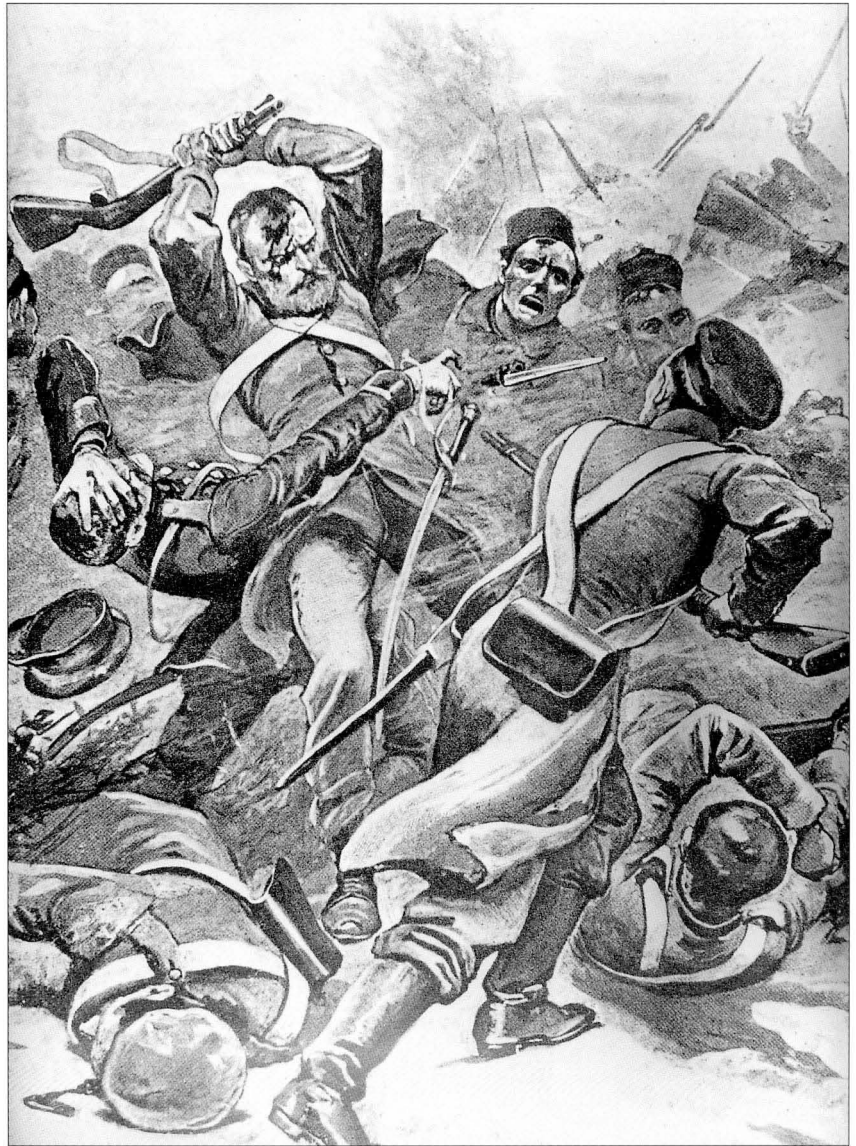


CAPTAIN McDONALD AND THE IAKOUTSK

Captain McDonald was the Adjutant of the 95th (The Derbyshire) Regiment at Inkerman though he still appears to have been wearing the accoutrements of the Light Company from whose ranks he had been promoted after the Alma. Whilst riding back up the Kitspur to rally troops from the Guards' 2nd and 4th Divisions, he was shot off his charger and overrun by the Iakoustk Regiment. Private Patrick Murphy came to his aid and the two men fought the Russians off for a while until the wounded McDonald realised that the situation was hopeless. Murphy was then ordered to the rear despite Murphy's complaining, 'How can I show my face in the Regiment again if I leave you, Your Honour?' McDonald received over 20 bayonet wounds but lived to tell the tale.



The success of the 55th (Westmorland) Regiment's counter-attack on the Iakoutsk owed much to the gallantry of men like Sgt. Walker, 'a fine, powerful man' according to an officer of his regiment. (Author's collection)



The Russians on the top of the Kitspur were, in fact, two battalions of the Okhotsk who had emerged from St Clement's Ravine, and the column of the Iakoutsk who had marched obliquely away from the rest of their regiment who were attacking the Barrier. These three battalions now had only 100 or so Guardsmen, the Colours of the Grenadiers and the Duke of Cambridge to face near the battery. This little group fought a savage withdrawal through the midst of the Russians, saving their colours and most of themselves, but leaving the battery devoid of defenders with most of the British scattered in the valley below. Once again things looked precarious, but help was at hand, this time in the shape of the French.

The 6th Line and the 7th Light had come up with Bosquet earlier, but had been snubbed by Brown and Cathcart as we have seen. Despite subsequent attempts by British staff officers these battalions had refused to move without orders from their commanders. Luckily, General

Bourbaki appeared to lead the 6th Line forward, and their arrival could not have been more timely. Their former reluctance overcome, they leapt forward with great élan, sweeping the Okhotsk and Iakoutsik into St Clement's Ravine. With the mist as dense as ever, the French troops occupied the Tusk, a move which they were later to regret as its precipitous easterly end made manoeuvre impossible. However, with the Barrier holding, the right flank restored, its defenders rallying and the French now on the field, there was a lull.

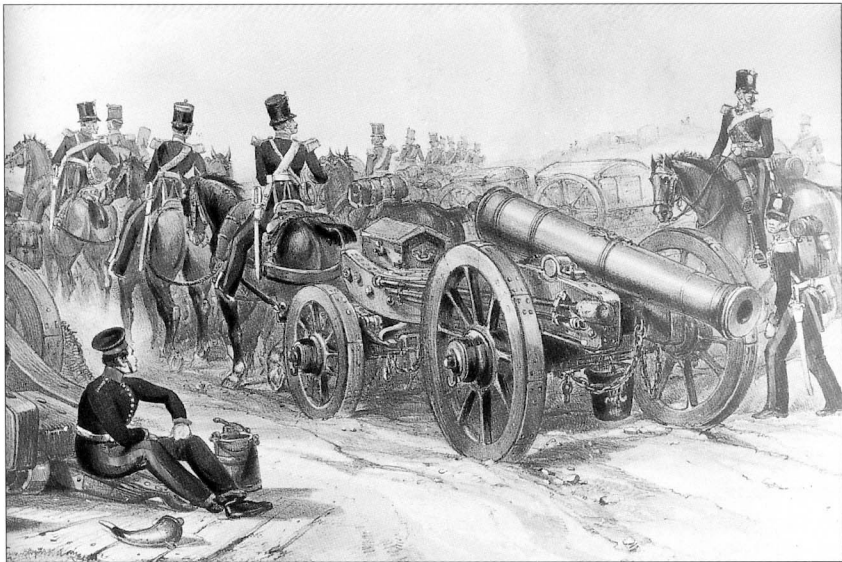
HOME RIDGE THREATENED

By 8.30am the lull was nearly over. Despite the casualties they had suffered, the morale of Pauloff's troops was high. With over 100 guns in support, 16 battalions in reserve, Gortchakoff waiting to link up with him and no sign of substantial reinforcements for the British, Dannenberg still believed that the battle could be won even though he had made no substantial gains. He directed the four battalions of the Iakoutsik to form into echelon and attack straight up the line of the Post Road, directly onto Home Ridge. The main thrust was to be supported by clouds of skirmishers and flank protection up to another eight battalions strong, probably from the remnants of Soimonoff's troops. The British remarked that in this attack the Russians seemed to be carrying their colours and that in the centre of the column was one flag bigger than the rest; Colonel Percy Herbert noticed that large numbers doubled down to the forming-up point in Quarry Ravine from Shell Hill at a pace that was unlikely to leave them fit for much else.

Pennefather's troops had been augmented only by the 63rd and a wing of the 21st in the centre, and he realised that to stand any chance against this thrust he would again have to fight well forward. To meet the enemy's skirmishers he pushed out his own: a mixture of 20th, 30th, 49th, 95th and Rifles who had to meet the enemy among the thick scrub which was obscured by smoke hanging in the reeking air. A sharp skir-

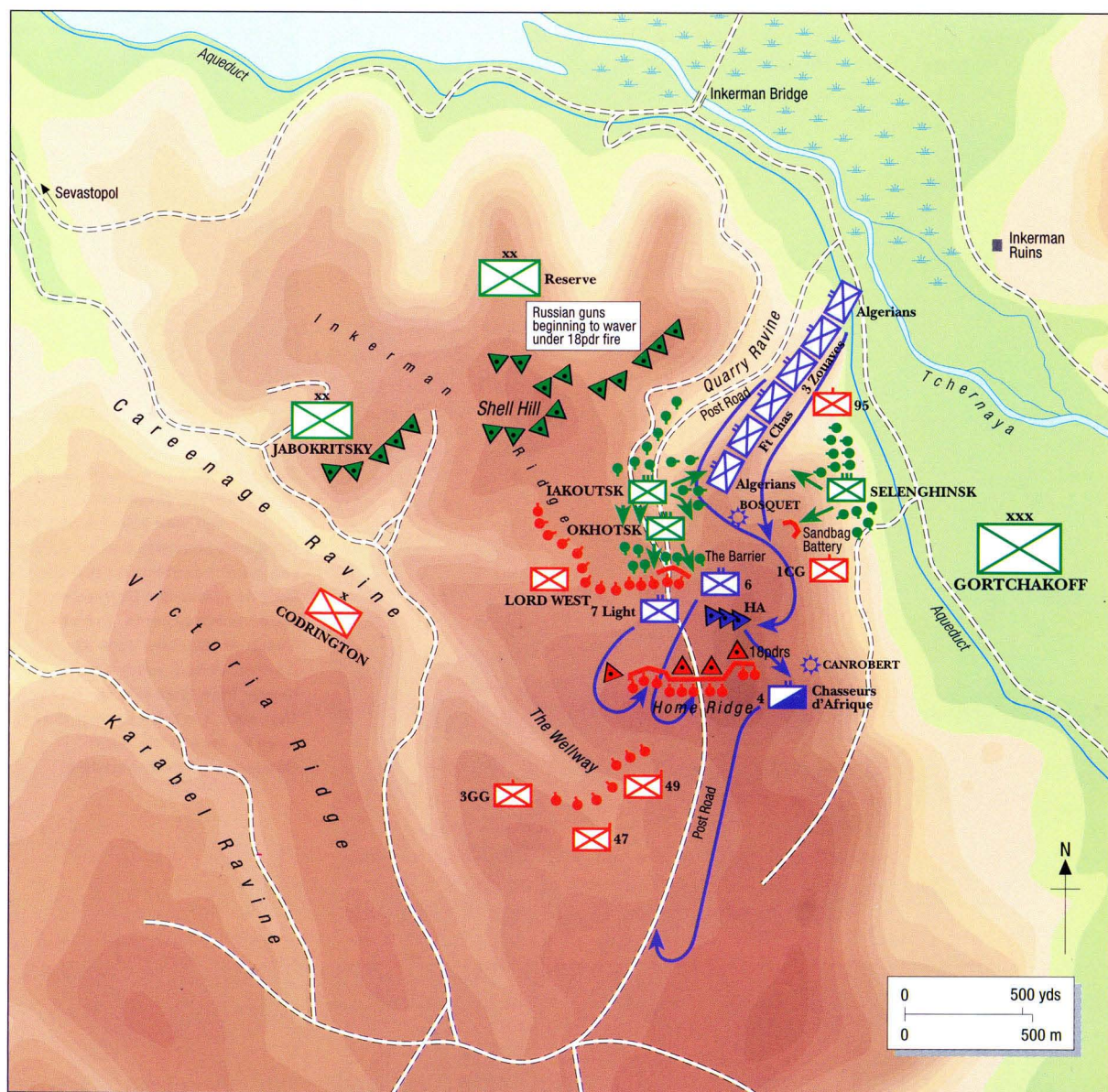


Ensign J. H. Clutterbuck, 63rd (West Suffolk) Regiment. Clutterbuck was killed below the 63rd's Regimental Colour as the regiment counterattacked the Iakoutsik near the Barrier. In a letter to his parents, Private Evans of the 63rd says of Clutterbuck, 'I never saw a braver man than him in the field that day; it is with sorrow that I have to record his death.' (Manchester Regt Museum)



An 18-pdr. howitzer and limber such as the ones that wrought such damage amongst the Russian artillery on Shell Hill. (RMCS Shrivenham)

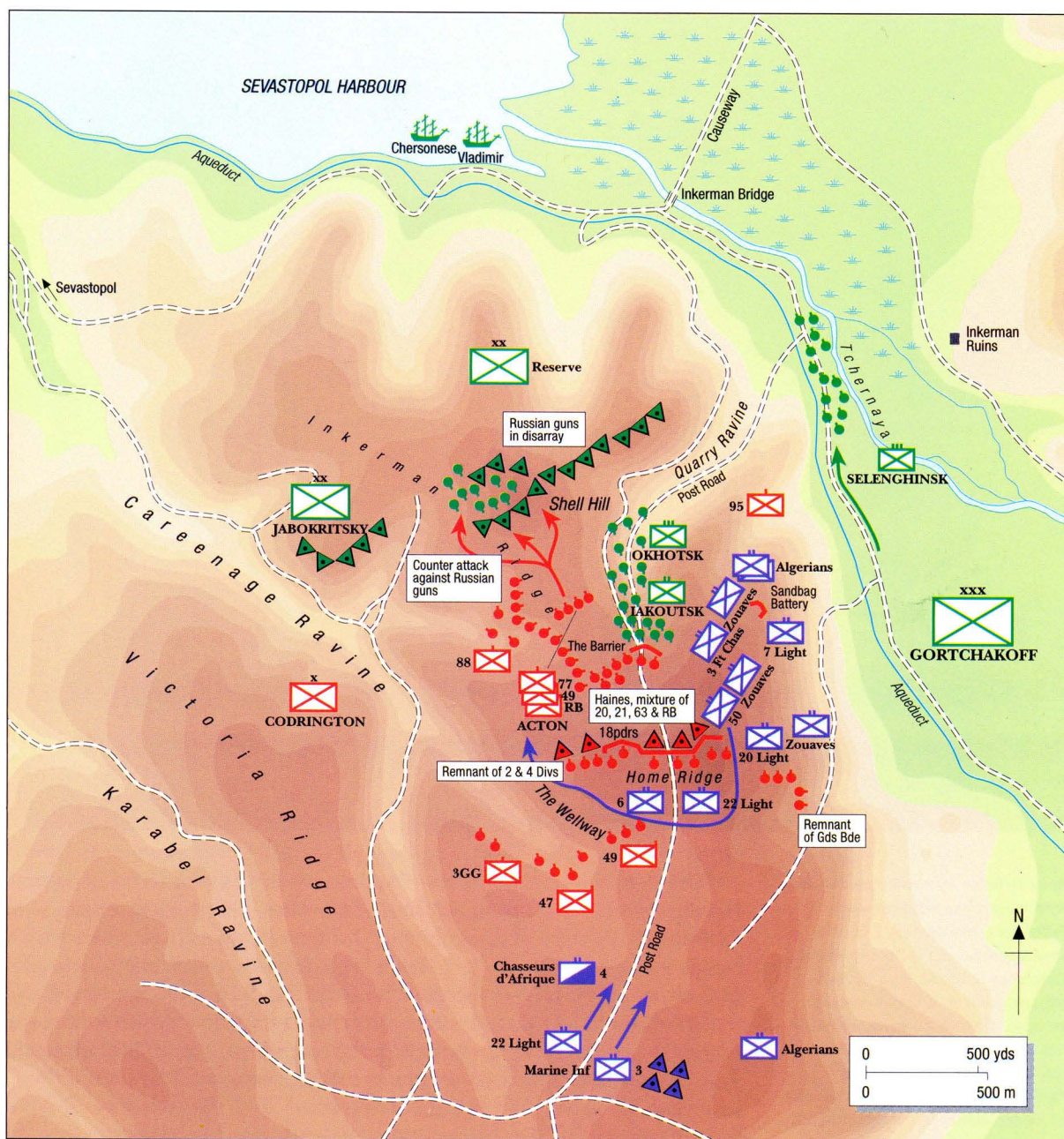
BATTLE OF INKERMAN - SITUATION AROUND 10.30



minging action followed, but knots of enemy managed to by-pass the British and soon groups of Russians, again often mistaken for British in their greatcoats, were lunging on to Home Ridge.

On the ridge Pennefather's resources were slender. Elements of the 47th and 55th were to the left of the breastwork, with the 57th and two companies of Coldstream who had not been at the Sandbag Battery, to the right. Moving up to the rear of the ridge among the ruins of the 2nd Division's camp were the 900 men of the 7th Light who had yet to come into action. The first surprise came to the west of the position when one of the Russian columns stole out of the fog and overran three guns of Turner's Battery which had no infantry support. Despite the detachment's valiant defence with their swords (which was to win

BATTLE OF INKERMAN - SITUATION AROUND MIDDAY



Sergeant-Major Henry the VC) the guns were captured, but not for long. In an incident typical of the battle an errant group of Zouaves appeared as if from nowhere and brushed the Russians aside before they had time to spike their trophies. Similarly, a group of 55th a little further east were surprised as they were assisting a howitzer detachment to get its gun back into action, and lost some of the few prisoners to be taken by the Russians during the battle. Indeed, the situation was beginning to look desperate as groups of Russians infiltrated not just onto the Ridge, but in some cases onto its southerly slopes.



Zouave infantry similar to those who were greeted with such relief on 5 November. Despite their colonial dress, many were European. Indeed, one British officer records a conversation with an English Zouave, whilst in hot pursuit of the Russians at the bottom of St Clement's Ravine, which showed the soldier to be 'an educated man'! (RMAS)

The sight that lay before the Russian troops was an encouraging one. Having got this far, the only British defenders were heavily engaged to their flanks; in front of them the way was clear down to the 2nd Division's camp, except for the French 7th Light. Initially the French advanced well, then, as if uncertain of their unusual line formation, hesitated and halted. A nameless British staff officer, realising that the situation was critical, harangued the French as did their own officers. They advanced again but musketry struck the line, the British officer fell and the French scattered back down the slope. The rallied 55th bought time for the French with a brilliant counterattack, helped by the fact that the Russian gunners brought their own advanced guard under fire. Meanwhile, the 77th had moved forward onto the left of the French and formed line, exercising a calming influence. When the French regiment's officers had restored order, the line went forward together, volleying well and driving the leading Russians back off the ridge.

To the left, the 21st and 63rd had advanced with the Post Road as their axis, past the recaptured guns, and had driven the Russian skirmishers back into the scrub. As they came under artillery fire they melted into the same bushes and awaited the onslaught of the main column roughly in line with the troops to their east.

They did not have long to wait, but the Iakoutsk were masked by British skirmishers doggedly falling back from the initial, confused fight. The artillery was badly hampered by their presence, and a number of French officers ran forward to make the skirmishers break clean and move out of the way of the troops on the Ridge. By the time this had happened the Russians were extremely close to the French who, despite the 57th to their right and the reassuring presence of the 77th to their rear, once more began to waver. Fortunately, Lieutenant-Colonel Daubeney and 30 or so men of the 55th launched a perfectly timed, miniature counterattack into the flank of the second column. This combined with howitzer fire further into their depth, and the Russians faltered and then disintegrated as the 7th Light and the British on the ridge pushed them back down into Quarry Ravine.

Meanwhile the 21st and 63rd had re-formed on the left and were herding the Russian right flank obliquely back in the same direction. As they advanced so the enemy were compacted and savage fire was exchanged. Above the throng floated the 63rd's colours, although a succession of ensigns were struck down. Both regiments met sturdy resistance as they came up against the Iakoutsk's rear battalion. Moving ahead of the French pursuit, the two 4th Division regiments pushed beyond the Barrier and came to rest where the road had been broken up. Here they stood punishing the confused Russian withdrawal, protected from the guns on East Jut by the steepness of the ground. Now under command of the 21st's Lord West, the little group gave ground in the face of a Russian counterattack, but halted at the Barrier, where a knot of mixed regiments stood. With them the Russians were held; at 9.15am the Barrier and Home Ridge were, for the time at least, secure.

DANNENBERG'S LOST OPPORTUNITY

During the next hour and three-quarters the nature of the battle changed and its outcome was to hang in the balance. The arrival of the two 18-pdr. siege guns that Raglan had ordered up almost two hours before had a significant effect. Their arrival had been delayed by the staff officer misdirecting the message. When he got to the siege train, Colonel Gambier who, after 26 October was prepared for such an eventuality, immediately ordered the two guns to move. Their teams did their best over the long and uneven journey but eventually the guns had to be manhandled, further delaying their arrival. By 9.30am, however, they were in position on the bend of Home and Fore Ridge sited by Lieutenant-Colonel Collingwood Dickson, who had taken command once Colonel Gambier was wounded. By 10am their remarkable detachments had materially affected the battle by dominating the Russian guns on Shell Hill. The longer range and heavier, more powerful projectiles of the 18-pdrs. wrought rapid destruction among the Russians, inflicting heavy casualties and forcing them to change positions. The Russian fire diminished, and despite many dead and wounded among the British detachments, their guns were not struck.

The 12 guns of Boussinière's French horse artillery who had been covering the 6th Line on the Tusk supported the British, but despite this the 6th Line found themselves under renewed attack, which marked the

end of the comparative stability on the right flank. To assist them Bosquet had moved the 7th Light down from Home Ridge, but in spite of their fire and that of the guns, Bourbaki sent word back that more reinforcements would be needed to avoid further retreat. Bosquet had intended to move 4,600 infantry supported by cavalry and the remnants of the British Light Cavalry Brigade up to Home Ridge to consolidate their favourable position. But in the face of Bourbaki's plea he immediately changed his plan and sent two battalions of Zouaves and Algerians with the 50th Line towards the Tusk.

THE ADVANCE OF THE 18-POUND HOWITZERS
After the sortie of 26 October the commander of the siege train, Colonel Gambier, had ordered two 18-pdr. siege guns to be kept ready to move up to the exposed Inkerman position. Lord Raglan ordered the guns forward and, after the message

was at first taken to the wrong place, the guns were manhandled forward over very rough ground. After more than two hours' delay, the guns eventually reached Home Ridge where they immediately began to take effect on the Russian guns. Despite heavy casualties amongst the gun-numbers, so effective was their fire that they were generally considered to have been a major factor in the breaking of Russian resolve to continue the battle.

Cheered by this sight, the French Zouaves and Algerians led the van back into the attack. British stragglers around the Sandbag Battery and St Clement's Ravine spoke of the French advancing 'like panthers', and certainly they quickly ejected the Selenghinsk from the battery and drove them back down the Ravine as far as the aqueduct. Accompanied now by parties of British who had been lying low in the scrub since their ill-judged pursuit some 1½ hours before, the French returned to the Kitspur and joined up with their main body, bringing the French totals to about 8,000 men concentrated on Fore Ridge and the Kitspur.

The 21st and 63rd who were grimly hanging on to the Barrier had been subjected to attack after attack. Now, helped by the 18-pdrs., and partially sheltered from Shell Hill by the steepness of the ground, they had received dribbles of reinforcements as groups of 20th, 95th, Rifles and Guardsmen had been attracted by the noise of battle. West and Haines of the 21st had commanded throughout, except when Brigadier Goldie had come forward, only to be mortally wounded. As the various attacks had gone in against the adjacent French, so this group had launched counterattacks

Despite the retreat of the 6th Line from the Tusk, the Russians had failed to capitalise on their success and were now milling about on the edges of the ridge obscured by the fog. However, this hesitation allowed the Russians a much greater opportunity, for the French moved forward into just the same vulnerable position in which the 6th Line had found themselves. The French were immediately attacked by two strong columns: the Iakoutsk from Quarry Ravine and the Selenghinsk from St Clements. On strange ground which their comrades had been unable to hold, under well-directed fire and wreathed in fog, dash turned to dismay and the French fled as quickly as they had advanced. The unstable 6th Line and 7th Light returned to the sheltered southern slopes of Home Ridge which they had been so reluctant to leave earlier on in the day. The right and centre were, once again, almost devoid of defenders and open to a determined thrust.

Now Dannenberg could have decided matters. If he could have found the same grit and strength that he had shown in the centre earlier, he could have driven a wedge right through Home Ridge. Timovieff's sallies would have prevented further French interference from Sevastopol, and he could have linked up with Gortchakoff. But the inertia that seemed to beset the Russians whenever they had achieved a partial success struck again, and their uncertain columns were subject to intense fire from both the 18-pdrs. and Boussinière's guns.



GRAHAM TURNER '97



The defence of the Barrier. Here Lt.-Col. Haines's right wing of the 21st (Royal North British) Fusiliers hold the improvised breastwork against overwhelming odds. Whilst the 21st are accurately portrayed, the Russians seem to be clad in curious fur hats rather than the round, cloth field-caps that were, in fact, worn. (Staff College)

into the Russians' flanks. Throughout they had plagued the gunners on East Jut with rifle fire and they had resisted every enemy attempt to shift them until their assailants lay four or five deep in front of their breastwork. By about 11am they were reinforced by the remains of Acton's 77th company, the remnants of Horsford's wing of rifles and a company of the 49th. So, with the French massing on the right and the centre in good hands, the time appeared to be ripe for the Allies to move onto the attack.

STALEMATE

Once again Pennefather showed his intuitive gifts as a commander. The division of which he was temporarily in charge and the reinforcements that he had received had been subject to an unrelenting series of spirited attacks by vastly superior numbers. They had been badly knocked about to the extent that of the 7,000 or so British who had been in action since the break of day, over one-third, a high proportion of whom were officers and NCOs, had become casualties. There was hardly a formed body of men on the field and they were heavily engaged in the centre by a Russian force which still had plenty in reserve. Yet now Pennefather assessed that an attack would be successful, believing the fight to have gone out of the Russians. He told Raglan that with reinforcements he would 'lick them to the devil'. The question was, though, from where would these reinforcements come?

All the British troops that could be spared were already in the field, so the only alternative was the French, whose commander, Canrobert,

initially agreed with Pennefather's suggestion to launch his 8,700 relatively fresh troops supported by his 24 guns. When it became clear, however, that Canrobert had only the jaded 2nd and 4th Divisions to support him and that no further British troops were expected, his opinion changed. The French would remain on the defensive, hold and dominate the right flank and reach out to Shell Hill with their guns in unison with the British; but advance they would not. Raglan had no alternative but to accept. The French had honoured their agreement to support the Inkerman position and, arguably, they had saved the day; no more could be demanded.

The picture was not dissimilar on the Russian side. From the British perspective the Russians had advanced in potentially crushing numbers which would only fail by some miracle. The Russian view, as we have seen, was rather different; the plan was ill-conceived from the start and the commanders' morale and confidence were low. Now, despite five hours' fighting and appalling casualties, little had been gained; the British had used the almost impregnable ground and their well-sited artillery to advantage, and Dannenberg was fast running out of resources. While he still had 16 of Soimonoff's battalions in reserve, his guns had lost their domination and he was reluctant to throw away more infantry without their cover. Moreover, his one covered approach to the plateau, Quarry Ravine, remained blocked by numbers of troops that were difficult to assess and, because of the ground almost invulnerable to his artillery. While Timovieff's efforts from Sevastopol against the French right were now underway, there was no sign that Gortchakoff was moving up from the Balaklava Plain and no direction from Menshikov. Dannenberg saw little alternative but to dig-in, to continue to probe the Barrier and to await developments. Most of the Allies were doing the same.

THE RUSSIANS WITHDRAW

In one crucial area, however, the initiative was being sought. At the Barrier the epic battle continued. Every attempt, principally by the Iakoutsk, had failed, even when the covering fire of the 18-pdrs. had slackened and then died as the ammunition ran out. As more ammunition came up and the Russian guns again became targets, Haines saw his chance. He ordered Captain Astley with his company of 49th and Lieutenant Acton with the remnants of his 77th company to move up Shell Hill and try to harass the enemy's gun-line further. Astley and Acton chose to interpret these orders as a deliberate assault onto the enemy's guns rather than a longer range sniping action and beckoned their troops forward. Their numbers must have seemed impossibly small; there was some cover to be had around the Barrier and much had been asked of these men already. Initially there was some reluctance by the 77th to follow, but Acton set off by himself with supreme confidence. His example was infectious and soon his tired little force was dodging from bush to bush up the slopes behind him. The 49th and 77th were joined by Horsford and some of his Rifles, and soon Minie rounds were whistling among the gunners at uncomfortably close quarters.

The Russian gunners had fought well and stubbornly all day and

THE DEFENCE
OF THE BARRIER

By late morning the Russians were still holding their ground but were concentrating their efforts on breaking the British defences at the Barrier. Here elements of the 4th Division,

namely 21st (Royal North British) Fusiliers and 63rd (West Suffolk) Regiment, supported by troops of 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade from the Light Division repulse the 3rd Battalion Okhotsk Regiment from Pauloff's 11th Division.

latterly experienced the attention of the 18-pdrs. and the French horse artillery. But the fear of losing their guns was drilled into them just as surely as it was into their enemies, and in the same way that the Russians had lost no time in withdrawing their guns from the Great Redoubt at the Alma, so now they limbered up and were away before any of the British could reach them. Astley captured two limbers, but the rest showed a clean pair of heels. At about 12.45pm, in much the same way that the defenders of the Barrier had followed Cathcart, the Russian guns began to withdraw. The British force was tiny; the original number were joined by a company of the 21st, but even then there were no more than 400 bayonets within easy reach of the Russian reserves.

At about 1.00pm Dannenberg took the decision to withdraw. Without consultation with Menshikov, who later remonstrated with him and tried to get him to reverse his orders, Dannenberg threw forward the Vladimir Regiment to cover the move and ordered the hardest hit

batteries to withdraw first covered by the remaining eight battalions. His decision may seem strange with so many men still uncommitted, but several factors influenced



him. First, he had no confidence in himself or his cause as his remarks about the first anniversary of Oltenitsa had shown. Second, due to the imperfect orders that he had received before the battle he expected, quite wrongly, an attempt by Gortchakoff to link up with him. Third, his troops, despite valiant attempts, had achieved almost nothing; everything that they had gained had been lost and they had taken appalling casualties in the process. Fourth, he had received no guidance at all from his commander once battle was joined. Lastly, he was facing an enemy who not only held a formidable position, but who also fought like the very devils. To top it all, the French had arrived in strength and now seemed massed to take the offensive. The time had come for Dannenberg to salvage all that he could from this ill-starred venture.

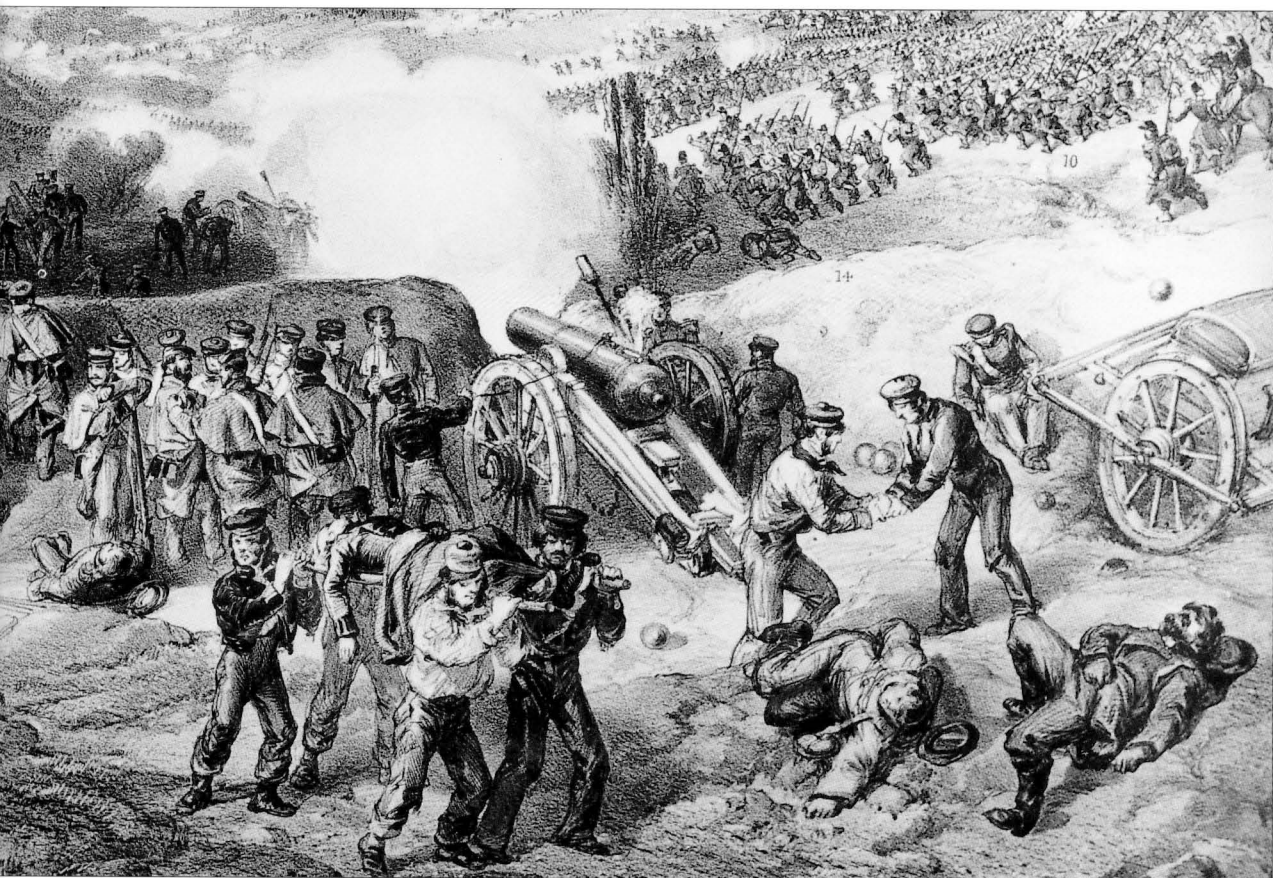
Whether the commander of the Vladimir was trying to better his regiment's celebrated but ill-fated counterattack at the Alma, or whether he was just doing what he thought the circumstances demanded is not clear, but instead of covering the withdrawal by fire he chose to attack. The four battalions of the Vladimir, so far untouched at Inkerman but still under strength from the Alma, plodded forward down Shell Hill. In their dense columns they made perfect targets for the Allied artillery on Home and Fore Ridge. Great furrows were cut in this tragic regiment who, for a time, continued on their course as their ranks thinned. The fog had receded enough by this stage for every shot to count, and eventually the Vladimir turned and sought cover behind Shell Hill.

The two 18-pdrs. begin to dominate the Russian artillery on Shell Hill. Whilst much of the technical detail of this illustration is excellent, the topography is, typically, most misleading. The majority of the fighting would have been obscured by fog and undergrowth whilst fields of fire such as that depicted simply did not exist at Inkerman. (RMAS)



The enemy was off balance and only needed a shove from the Allies for a bloody rout to ensue. But who was available to deliver the blow? The British infantry was spent; the ground was unsuitable for the Light Cavalry Brigade even if they had had sufficient numbers; however, the French were on hand and in strength. With 8,000 infantry and the Chasseurs d'Afrique who were trained for just this sort of country, Canrobert had only to order a general advance for the Russians to be pushed all the way back to Sevastopol. In exactly the same way that an opportunity had been lost after the Alma, so this time the Russians were allowed to get away. The French remained where they were, only advancing at about 3.00pm as the last Russian gun disappeared.

The last shots of the battle were probably fired by a company of the 50th Foot who had hurried up to Victoria Ridge when they were released from the trenches. As the Russian batteries on West Jut limbered up, Colonel Waddy led them down into Careening Ravine and up the other side, sending rounds into gunners and horses who were uncovered by infantry. The gunners had experienced quite enough lead for one day and panic was beginning to spread, as first one team-horse was hit and then another. Luckily, the calming influence of Colonel Todleben was on hand; he ordered forward a company of the Ouglitz followed by all four battalions of the Bourtirsk. In the face of this opposition Waddy's men melted back into the scrub. So the Russians withdrew and this great and curious battle came to a close.



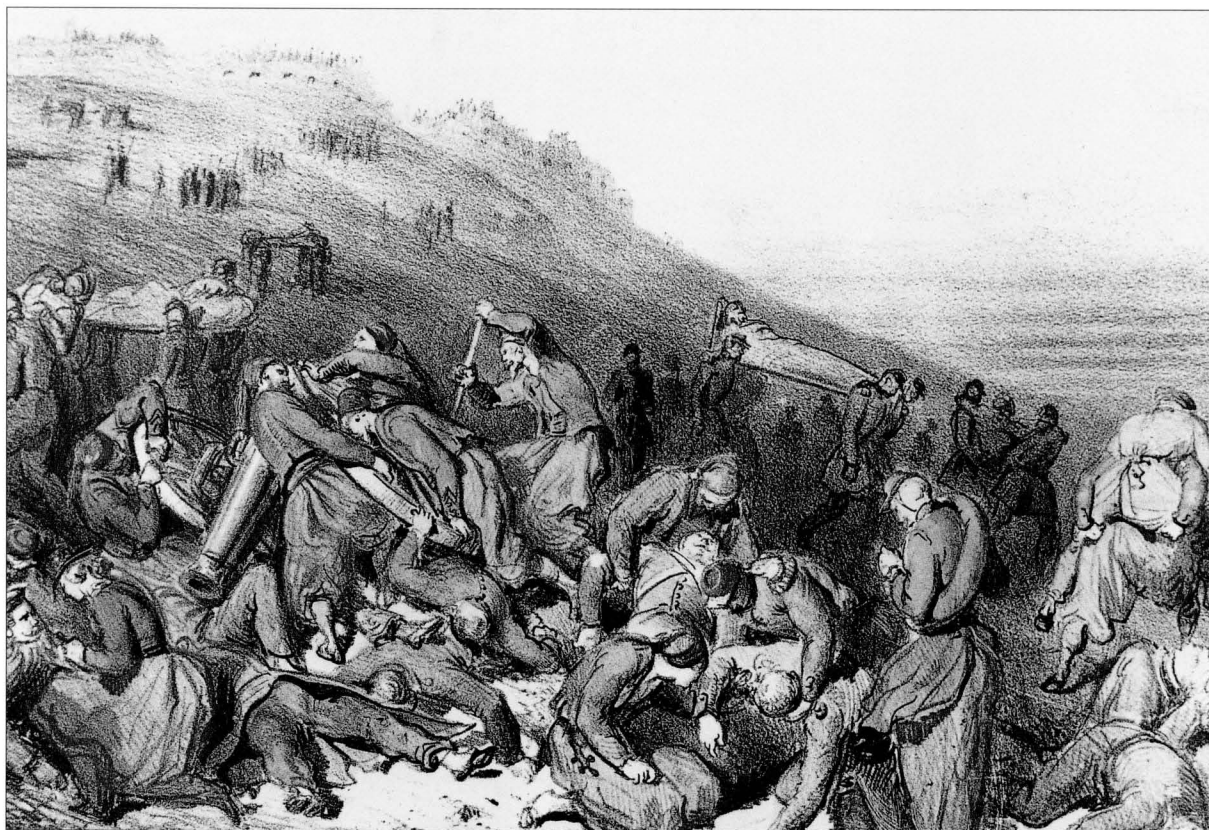
AFTERMATH

CASUALTIES

Clearing the dead from the field of Inkerman. The job of burying the dead fell entirely to the Allies as the Russians declined to help on the grounds that, by custom, it was the task of the victor. Many British corpses were found to have been pierced time and again by bayonets. This led Lord Raglan to assemble a court of enquiry which, in turn, submitted a written protest to the Russians. The protest was rejected; the Russians claimed that any such acts must have been isolated and were excusable by soldiers inflamed with religious fervour! (Clifford)

The numbers involved at Inkerman, the limited area which they contested, the amount of artillery, the Russians' dense columns and the ferocity with which both sides fought made high casualty figures inevitable. Throughout the day 7,464 British, 8,219 French and 40,210 Russians fought over a very small battlefield. The French escaped lightly with 143 killed and 786 wounded. The British took 2,357 casualties, of whom 597 were killed. Their officers suffered disproportionately: 130 were wounded and 39 killed; of the ten general officers who started the day, all were killed or wounded, while five of their successors met similar fates. Furthermore, 17 out of the 18 commanding officers or commanders of detachments were struck down. The Russians lost 10,729; their proportion of officer casualties was also high, 256 overall, of whom six were general officers and another six regimental commanders.





The repercussions for the Russian field army were severe. Of the battalions committed to the fight 16 were unscathed, 12 were utterly ruined, 12 had to be withdrawn from the order-of-battle and ten were deemed fit for duty but at reduced strength. For the British though, who had achieved so much with so little, the casualties were crippling. The worst blows were taken by the 2nd and 4th Divisions and the Guards Brigade, all of whom were required for continuing, strenuous duty. These men did not have the relative safety of Sevastopol or the valleys across the Tchernaya in which to lick their wounds. The immediate result of Inkerman was that the Allies' hopes of a speedy assault on the city and its reduction before winter were dashed. The British were simply not strong enough to play their part and speedy reinforcement was not a reality. What Balaklava had done for the British cavalry Inkerman had now done for the infantry. Until winter was over, it would be a question of the Russians keeping the Allies at bay from Sevastopol, while the Allies tried merely to keep their enemies bottled up and to survive the miseries of life in the trenches and on the windswept plateau.

French troops bury their own and Russian dead in front of the Mamelon after Sevastopol has fallen. Note the woman in the foreground; each French regiment had its own female sutler, or cantinière, on its strength who went with it into action. (Author's collection)

WHY DID THE RUSSIANS LOSE?

The Russians reconnoitred the ground, chose their target and then committed two reinforced corps against two weak divisions; the attackers outnumbered the defenders five to one. Why then did they lose? In Britain the newspapers hailed the battle as a near miracle, describing it



THE CZAR TO HIS CUBS.

Czar. "WELCOME, MY CHILDREN; INKERMANN IS A GLORIOUS VICTORY FOR YOU."

Cubs. "AH SIRE, IF THAT IS VICTORY, WE SHOULD LIKE TO HAVE A DEFEAT THE NEXT TIME!"

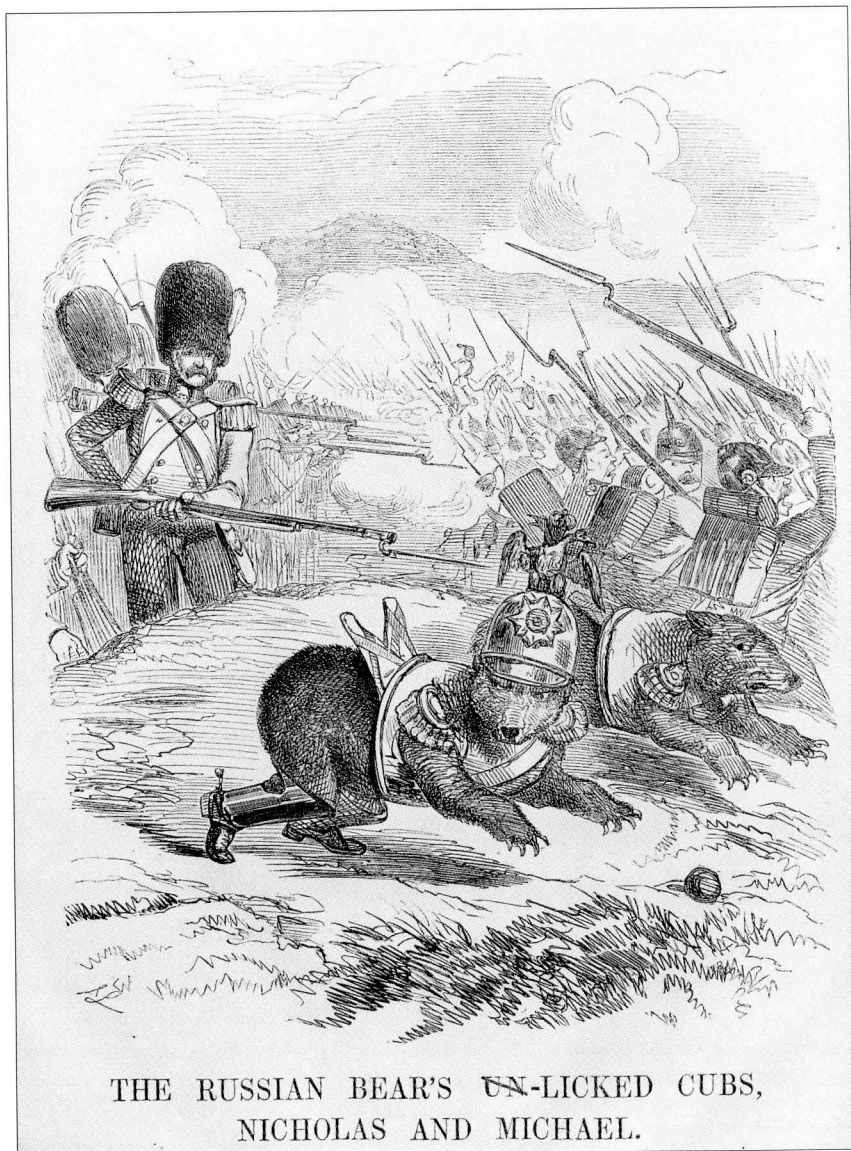
Punch had much fun at the expense of the Tsar's personal interest in the war. The fact that he had the confidence to send his two sons to oversee what he assumed would be a crushing victory for the Russians was duly derided. (*Punch*, November 1854)

in heroic terms and generating much of the mythology that surrounded it and its survivors in future years. That is not to detract from what the British achieved; few had beaten many and a wonderful feat-of-arms had been performed. But the Russians did not view it like that. Clearly, they were not going to trumpet a defeat, but for the Russians the task had been a bold and difficult one, their troops had behaved bravely and they had come close to success. Their plan was weak and badly executed, but the Russians' failure lies beyond that.

First, the ground bestowed all the advantages on the defenders. It was not known to the majority of the Russians and the thick brush broke up the dense columns in which they preferred to fight. Second, those very columns prevented the best use of the Russians' weapons. Despite the limited range of the muskets their volleys were effective so long as they could be brought to bear. When ranged against a thin line of British soldiers mostly armed with rifles, the columns were going to suffer. Furthermore, they were the ideal target for the Allied artillery, and the penetrative power of the Minie bullet frequently meant that each round would inflict more than one casualty. Thirdly, the fog initially helped the Russians to get into position but later hampered their artillery, and perhaps prevented them from appreciating the thinness of the lines and knots that opposed them. To a soldiery drilled to near stupefaction, it

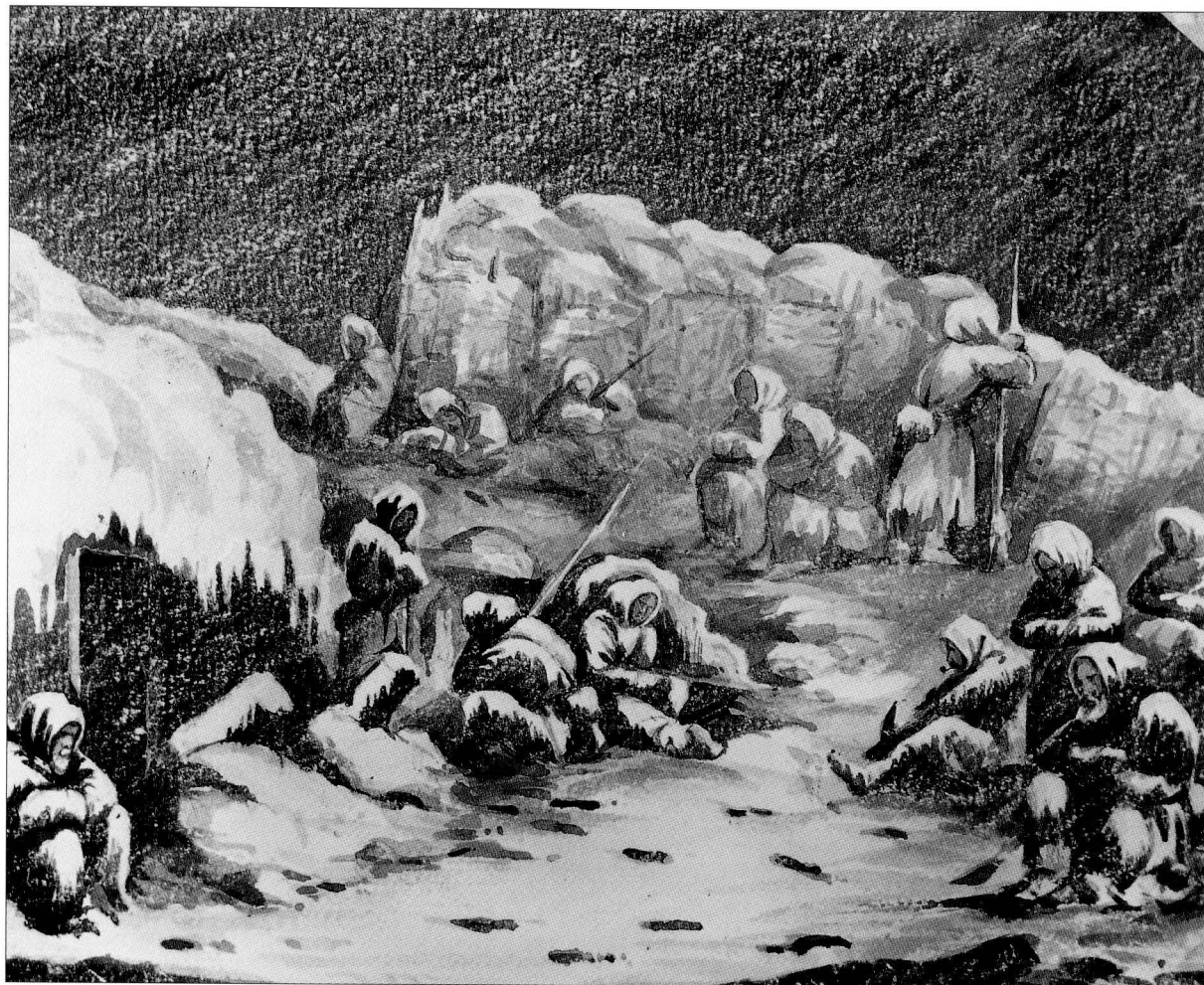
Punch's view of the defeat of the Russians on 5 November. In fact, despite playing no active part in the battle, both princes were decorated for their 'coolness under fire'!

(*Punch* November 1854).



must have seemed logical that their opponents were merely the front ranks of great columns.

The last point is both the most important and the least easy to assess. The British believed that they showed great dash and vigour against brave but stolid enemies who would fight well shoulder-to-shoulder, but who lacked any form of initiative; the 'Muscovite serf' was no match for the Briton. Certainly, at the Alma the Russians had come away referring to the British as 'red devils' and at Balaklava the British cavalry had earned the Russians' respect for conduct that they believed to be madly brave. But, nonetheless, they had still chosen to attack the ally whom they believed to be the less formidable. There had been no lack of bravery among the Russian soldiery and many of them were more experienced than their foes. Some had already met the British at the Alma and many had seen action before against the Turks. Indeed, the British noticed that many of the Russian corpses showed signs of previous



The winter was a harsh one and the ill-prepared British suffered badly in the prosecution of the siege. Some regiments became almost ineffective due to the ravages of disease rather than by the actions of the enemy.
(Clifford)

wounds. Why then could they not overcome a force one-fifth of their number?

The answer reflects social conditions as much as military ones. We have seen how the Russian army was trained, and the disparaging term of 'serf' in reference to the average Russian soldier is probably not too far from the mark. They were conscripts not free men, and from birth they had been trained to obey. When their officers fell, or their column became dispersed they were not conditioned to show initiative. While the British were hardly natural warriors, the Crimean army was the pick of the bunch and they were all volunteers of a sort. Furthermore, the 2nd Division and the Guards had already triumphed at the Alma and been lionised: they had a reputation to maintain. There was also the question of experience. The Alma and Little Inkerman had shown the British that the Russians could be beaten. Hard fighting and the harsh conditions of picquet duty had taught them to fend for themselves, and had not wearied their spirits. The British were still callow enough in the ways of war to contest every inch of ground while on picquet; they were still game enough for acts of daring. It was not that these qualities were absent in the Russians, it was simply that the civil and military culture from which they came had never expected or encouraged them.

WINTER

What little grace the weather conditions had given the British came to an abrupt end on 14 November when a tempest swept over the southern Crimea. Quite apart from the havoc which it caused in the camps, a number of ships were sunk off Balaklava. Predictably, these contained vital stores, especially much of the clothing and comforts with which it was hoped that winter would be made more tolerable.

Combined with these shortages the commissariat, which had never performed adequately, came to an almost total standstill. The Russians' positions near Balaklava meant that the most direct routes up onto the Plateau could not be used and this, combined with the lack of transport, meant that units had to undertake much of their own re-supply. Troops who were already exhausted by trench and picquet duties were faced with a long trek to and from Balaklava to bring up their own supplies. That might have been excusable had those supplies been adequate; the diary of Private William Beddo of the 95th's Light Company probably sums up the privations of the winter best:

'In trenches at night, no bacca, no rum.'

'On fatigue burying dead from hospital. Very cold.'

'All the men sick, only one officer to be found in the Regiment.'

'Almost eaten to death with lice. Have to scrape them out of shirt and trousers with knife.'

'Offered 20 shillings for bacca, couldn't get it.'

Under these conditions there was no offensive action taken beyond the routine pursuit of the siege.

The assault on the Malakov, 8 September 1855. Here Zouaves and French infantry successfully carry the fortress whilst the British assaults on the Redan fail. By the spring of 1855, the main effort in the Crimea lay with the French. Little had been done by the British effectively to reinforce the army depleted by the battles of the previous autumn and by the effects of the winter. (Author's collection)



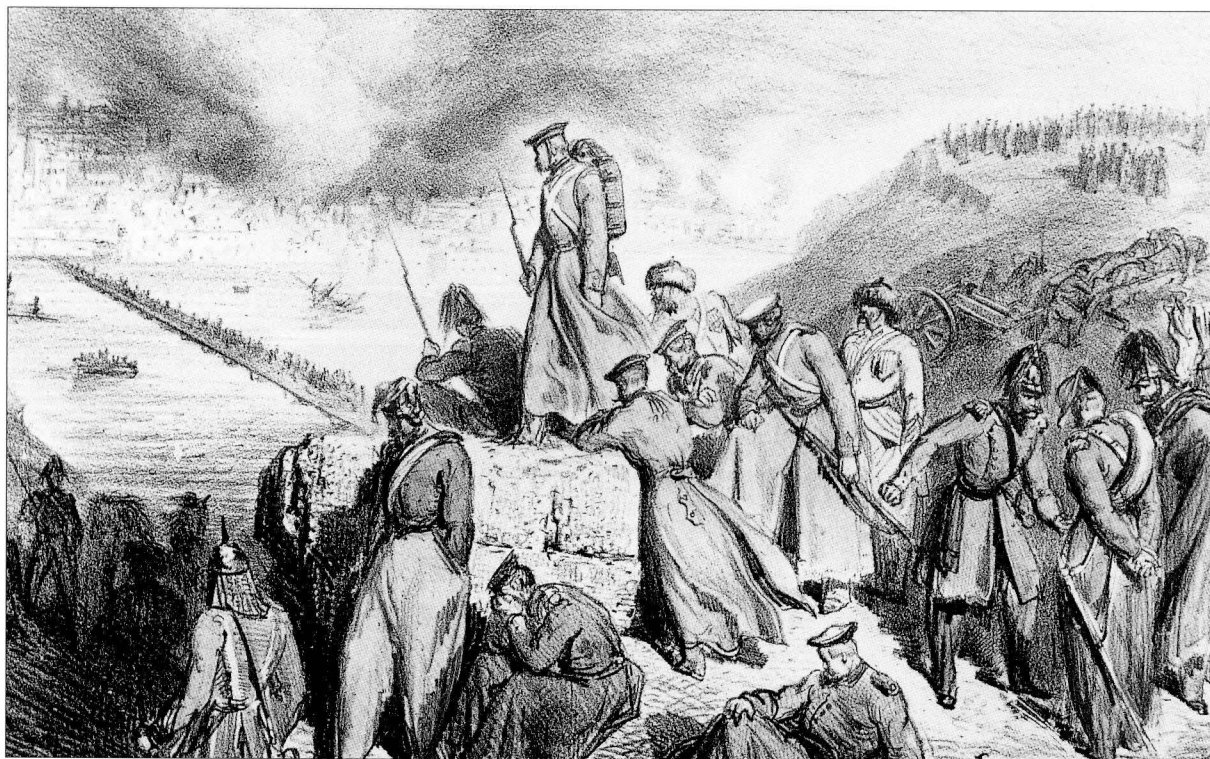
THE END OF THE WAR

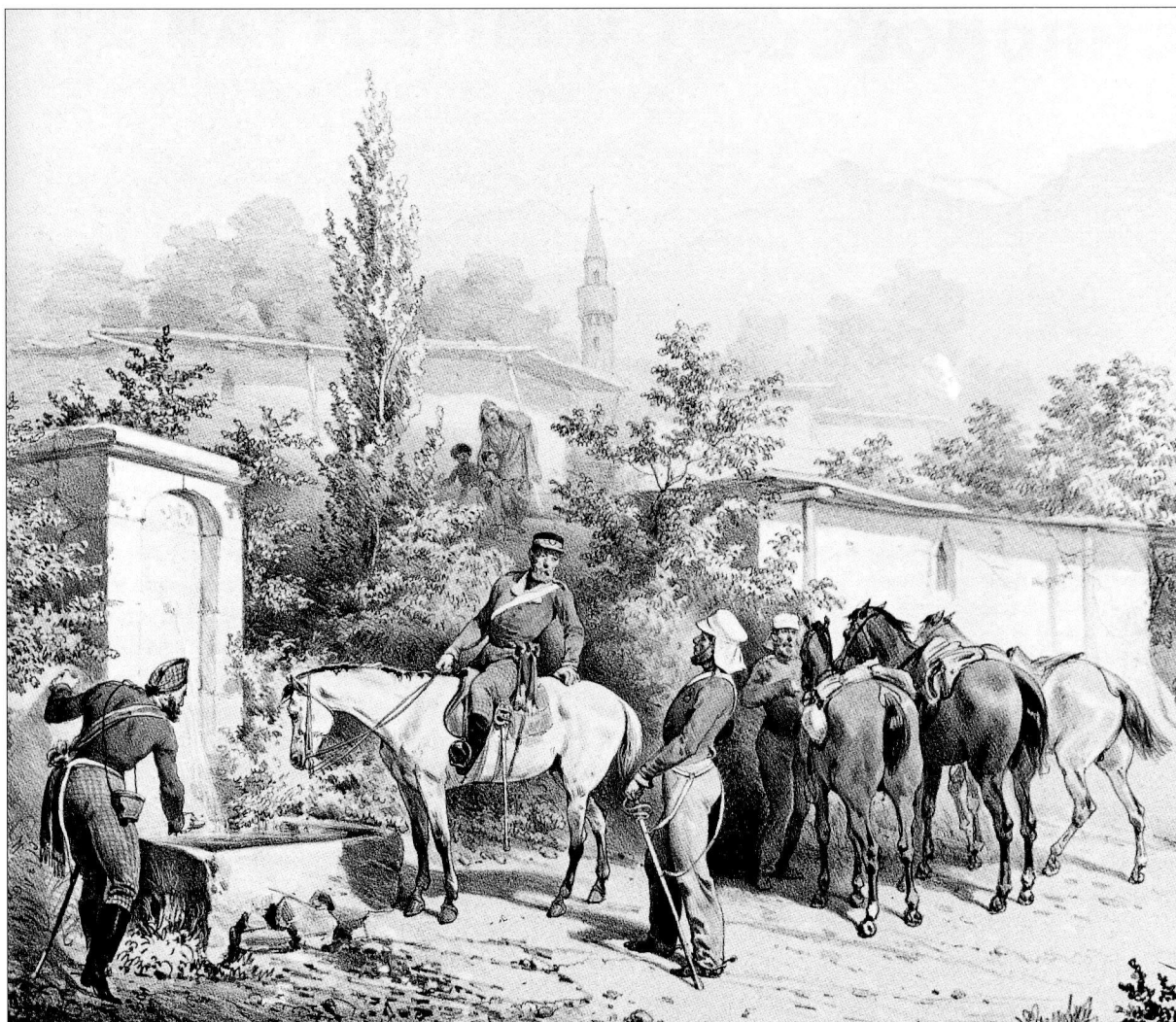
The siege assumed a new tempo when the weather improved. The French had agreed to take over the Inkerman position as the proportion of British troops in the Crimea diminished. The 2nd Division took their place in the so-called Right Attack siege lines. Bombardments started in earnest in June 1855 and the 18th, the anniversary of Waterloo, was thought to be a propitious date for an assault on Sevastopol. The French attack on the Malakoff redoubt started well but it was eventually beaten off. The English attack on the Redan redoubt was a total failure; casualties among the British and French were heavy, while the Russians came off lightly.

In August the Russians again tried to break the siege from the northern flank. This time they attacked the French and Sardinian forces at the Traktir Bridge over the Tchernaya, not far from the site of the Inkerman battle. They launched their attack with much the same confidence and enthusiasm as at Inkerman, and the result was similar: ignominious failure and heavy casualties.

Meanwhile, the Allied bombardment continued and casualties mounted within Sevastopol. The Russians gallantly tried to maintain their fortifications, but slowly the Allied guns gained the upper hand. The Russians planned to abandon the city via a pontoon bridge on the north side of the harbour. When the inevitable assault began on 8 September, the Russians carried out a classic withdrawal, inflicting many casualties at the redoubts, destroying the military installations as they withdrew, scuttling ships and then finally moving back to the north side covered by pre-positioned guns.

The Russians conducted a masterly retreat from the south bank of Sevastopol harbour to the north bank via a pontoon bridge on the night of 8/9 September 1855. In this unusual French illustration Russian infantry and Cossacks are accurately depicted but who the soldier in the spiked helmet complete with mail neck curtain is remains a mystery! (Author's collection)





While diplomacy continued and some minor operations were mounted, both sides eyed each other from across the harbour exchanging gunfire but risking nothing more. The winter of 1855-56 saw the British Army swell in size to nearly 90,000 men, at last well administered, clothed and fed. The French, on the other hand, went into a decline similar to that endured by the British the previous winter. As spring came the British were raring to go, with the press clamouring for fresh laurels. But the French saw no further advantage in pursuing the war, and in March 1856 a peace treaty was signed. A total of 19,584 British soldiers had perished in the Crimea, mostly from cold and neglect. The few survivors of Inkerman who were still serving with the army when it returned home had little time to sport their hard-earned medals or to enjoy the victor's spoils, for many were soon sent to suppress the mutiny in India.

The Russian view of the British after the ceasefire. Here a group of British officers are sightseeing on the south coast of the Crimea beyond Yalta. Two of the party seem to be wearing tartan riding breeches! (Author's collection)

CHRONOLOGY

1854

- 4 January** – Allied fleets enter the Black Sea.
- 22 February** – First British troops sail from England.
- 28 March** – Britain declares war on Russia.
- 8 April** – British troops land at Gallipoli.
- 10 April** – Turkey formally joins the Anglo-French Alliance.
- 19 May** – Russians cross south of the Danube to lay siege to Silistra.
- 28 May** – Allied troops begin to concentrate in Varna, Bulgaria, south of the Danube, to bar further Russian advance.
- 23 June** – Siege of Silistra raised without Anglo-French help.
- 19 July** – Cholera in Allied ranks; serious losses soon occur.
- 10 August** – Serious fire destroys valuable stores in Varna; planned invasion of the Crimea delayed.
- 7 September** – Allied armada sails from Bulgaria.
- 13 September** – Surrender of Eupatoria, some 30 miles north of Sevastopol.
- 14 September** – Main Allied landing at Kalamita.
- 19 September** – Advance on Sevastopol begins overland; minor skirmish with Russian forces on the River Bulganak.
- 20 September** – Battle of the Alma.
- 24 September** – Allies commence the 'flank march' to skirt Sevastopol to the east.
- 26 September** – British take Balaklava; Allied armies soon establish themselves on heights south of Sevastopol.
- 17 October** – First bombardment of Sevastopol by the Allies; French magazine blows up, and bombardment peters out after three days.
- 14 November** – Hurricane causes serious damage to Allied positions on the Chersonese Uplands and to shipping in Balaklava harbour.

1855

- 17 February** – Unsuccessful Russian attack on Eupatoria.
- 9 April** – Second bombardment; continues intermittently for eight days.
- 6 June** – Third bombardment precedes attacks.
- 7 June** – French capture Mamelon on Allied right; British troops take the quarries on the left.
- 17 June** – Fourth bombardment before another assault.
- 18 June** – Uncoordinated, disastrous attack: French fail to take the Malakoff, British the Redan.
- 16 August** – Russians attack across the River Tchernaya against the Allied right north of Balaklava: frustrated by French and newly arrived Sardinian troops.
- 17 August** – Fifth bombardment; continues intermittently for a week.
- 5 September** – Sixth bombardment heralds final assault on Sevastopol.
- 8 September** – French troops capture the crucial Malakoff defence-work on the Allied right, though the British again fail at the Redan.
- 9 September** – Russians abandon that part of Sevastopol south of the Bay; the Allies take possession. Thereafter, military stalemate in the Crimea.

1856

- 29 February** – Armistice signed in Paris.
- 30 March** – Peace treaty signed.
- 27 April** – Treaty formally ratified.

THE BATTLEFIELD TODAY

It is slowly becoming easier to enter the Ukraine, but the Crimea remains something of a flashpoint as the majority of its occupants view themselves as Russian rather than Ukrainian. Furthermore, Sevastopol is the home of the nuclear armed Black Sea Fleet, a major bone of contention between the Ukraine and Russia. Western tourists are not banned from entering the environs of Sevastopol, but a military pass is necessary and almost impossible to obtain. In the centre of the Inkerman battlefield there is now a coastal defence rocket battery and in the bed of the Quarry Ravine an artillery magazine has been built. One is not encouraged to snoop around.

If all these difficulties can be overcome, the field of Inkerman presents one of the least spoilt, least visited and most atmospheric battlefields in Europe. After the cease-fire in September 1855, the British spent much time in the creation of memorials to their dead. Between Home Ridge and Shell Hill a substantial monolith was built, and the cemetery to which most of the officer dead were taken on the site of the 4th Division's camp on Cathcart's Hill was considerably improved. None of these survives, however, having been destroyed during the

A modern photograph looking north-east from the top of St Clement's Ravine. At (A) is Inkerman Tusk, which gives a good idea of how difficult it would have been for the French to manoeuvre once they found themselves on it. It also shows the pitch of the slope up which the Russians attacked and, to the left side of the picture, some of the thick undergrowth which would have covered much of the battlefield in 1854. At (B) is a cairn on the site of a mass grave; whether British or Russian is impossible to tell. (M. Moriarty)



Khrushchev era, though there is now a memorial built in 1993 on Cathcart's Hill. Only one of the mass graves is now obvious; it lies halfway down St Clement's Ravine on the northern slope and is in the form of a cairn surmounted by a modern, iron Orthodox cross. It is disappointing to note that it has been extensively dug out and the bones scattered, presumably by grave robbers looking for Second World War memorabilia.

Indeed, traces of the Second World War are considerably easier to find than those of 1854. Metal fragments abound, and there is the odd Mosin-Nagant cartridge case lying on the surface. There is no trace of Minie bullets, canister and round shot – certainly not without the aid of a metal detector. Similarly, all of the earthworks have disappeared. The remains of the Sandbag Battery seem to have disappeared under the dense vegetation at the top of the Kitspur, though, judging from aerial photographs, the layout of the Post Road remains the same, as does the track in the bottom of Quarry Ravine.

That said, very little building has occurred on the field itself. Some dachas have encroached as far as the site of the 2nd Division's camp, and communication masts have been built on Shell Hill, but the rest of the area remains fairly untouched. Furthermore, it is difficult to know how today's vegetation compares with that of 1854. In many areas terraces have been dug for serried ranks of young fir, but the infamous stunted oak remains, and if it were as dense in 1854 as it is today, it is easy to understand how large bodies of troops blundered past one another unseen, particularly when the effects of fog and smoke were added.

Once the determined and wily battlefield tourist has got into Sevastopol and avoided arrest for carrying a map, compass and binoculars, there is a rewarding walk from the harbour up the Careening Ravine to the flank of the battlefield, up West Jut and onto Shell Hill. From here the Russian field of fire is evident, and a rapid walk down into Quarry Ravine and up onto Fore Ridge will reinforce both how small the battlefield is and how quickly it can be traversed. From there one can either plunge through the fir to try to locate the Sandbag Battery or jog down St Clement's Ravine to the banks of the Tchernaya. Once here, the 20th century is very evident: there is a seedy waterfront area riddled with rusting ships, boats, cranes and even a derelict submarine of early Cold War vintage! Look back, however, at the lowering heights of the Kitspur and Inkerman Tusk, and try to imagine how daunting they would have looked to Pauloff's troops.

Inkerman is neither scenic nor inviting; no peace reigns there as on other fields. To me, however, its atmosphere and menace are almost tangible. If a tattered wraith had emerged from the bushes cursing his sodden rifle, or a breathless 'Muscovite' had tramped stolidly beside me up the Quarry Ravine, I should not have been in the least surprised.

A GUIDE TO FURTHER READING

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Another photograph from up St Clement's Ravine. This gives a good idea of the sight that the British would have had from the area of the Sandbag Battery as the Russians emerged. Again, note the undergrowth and the limitations that this would have imposed on both sides.
(M. Moriarty)



ORDERS OF BATTLE

RUSSIAN ORDER OF BATTLE

SOIMONOFF'S TROOPS: 18,929 MEN

PAULOFF'S TROOPS: 15,806 MEN

10TH DIVISION, GEN-MAJ VILLEBOIS:

1st Brigade:

Ekatherinenburg Regiment 3,298 men

2nd Brigade:

Tomsk Regiment 3,124 men
Kolivansk Regiment 2,875 men

'COMBINED' DIVISION (16TH/17TH), GEN-MAJ JABOKRITSKY:

16TH DIVISION:

1st Brigade:

Vladimir Regiment 2,132 men
Sousdal Regiment 2,240 men

2nd Brigade:

Ouglitz Regiment 1,795 men

17TH DIVISION:

1st Brigade:

Bourtirsk Regiment 2,869 men
Two coys. 6th Rifle Battalion 289 men
207 sappers
57th Don Cossacks: 100 sabres

Artillery: Col Zagoskine:

No. 2 Hvy.Bty. 10 Arty. Bde. 12 guns
No. 1 Hvy.Bty. 16 Arty. Bde. 10 guns
Nos. 4 and 5 Lt Btys., 17 Arty. Bde. 16 guns.

Total: 38 guns

11TH DIVISION:

1st Brigade:

Selenghinsk Regiment 3,197 men
Iakoutsk Regiment 3,223 men

2nd Brigade:

Okhotsk Regiment 3,182 men

17TH DIVISION:

2nd Brigade:

Borodino Regiment 2,509 men
Taroutine Regiment 3,335 men
Two coys. 4th Rifle Battalion 360 men

Artillery:

No. 1 Hvy.Bty. 10 Arty. Bde. 12 guns
No. 3 Hvy.Bty. 11 Arty. Bde. 12 guns
No. 3 Hvy.Bty. 17 Arty. Bde. 8 guns
No. 1 Lt. Bty. 10 Arty. Bde. 12 guns
No. 2 Lt. Bty. 10 Arty. Bde. 12 guns
No. 3 Lt. Bty. 11 Arty. Bde. 12 guns
No. 4 Lt.. Bty. 11 Arty. Bde. 12 guns
No. 2 Lt Bty. Don Cossacks 9 guns
Reserve Bty. 8 guns

Total: 97 guns

* All infantry regiments at Inkerman deployed with 4 battalions.

BRITISH ORDER OF BATTLE

FIRST DIVISION:

LT.GEN. HRH THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE:

Guards Brigade: Brig.Gen. Bentinck:

3rd Bn. Grenadier Guards,
1st Bn. Coldstream Guards,
1st Bn. Scots Fusilier Guards.

Paynter's A Bty. Royal Artillery,
Wodehouse's H Bty. Royal Artillery.

SECOND DIVISION:

LT.GEN. SIR G DE LACY EVANS:

1st Brigade, Brig.Gen. Pennefather:

30th (Cambridge) Regiment,
55th (Westmorland) Regiment,
95th (The Derbyshire) Regiment.

2nd Brigade, Brig.Gen. Adams

41st (Welch) Regiment,
47th (Lancashire) Regiment,
49th (Hertfordshire) Regiment.

Franklin's B Bty. Royal Artillery,
Turner's G Bty. Royal Artillery.

FOURTH DIVISION:

Lt.Gen. Sir George Cathcart:

1st Brigade, Brig.Gen. Goldie

20th (East Devon) Regiment,
21st (Royal North British) Fusiliers,
57th (West Middlesex) Regiment.

2nd Brigade, Brig.Gen. Torrens

46th (South Devon) Regiment,
63rd (West Suffolk) Regiment,
68th (Durham) Light Infantry.

1st Bn. The Rifle Brigade.
Townshend's P Bty. Royal Artillery.

LIGHT DIVISION:

LT.GEN. SIR GEORGE BROWN:

1st Brigade, Brig.Gen. Codrington

7th (Royal) Fusiliers,
23rd Royal Welch Fusiliers,
33rd (Duke of Wellington's) Regiment.

2nd Brigade, Brig.Gen. Buller

19th (1st Yorks North Riding) Regiment,
77th (East Middlesex) Regiment,
88th (Connaught Rangers).

2nd Bn. The Rifle Brigade.
Anderson's E Bty. Royal Artillery.

THIRD DIVISION

(ONE UNIT ONLY PRESENT):

50th (Queen's Own) Regiment.

FRENCH ORDER OF BATTLE, INKERMANN, 5 NOVEMBER 1854

BOSQUET'S DIVISION:

Bourbaki's Brigade:

6th de Ligne
7th Leger
3rd Bn Chasseurs à Pied

d'Autemarre's Brigade:

1st Bn 3rd Zouaves
2nd Bn 3rd Zouaves
2nd Bn Tirailleurs Algerien
50th de Ligne

Two field artillery batteries

PRINCE NAPOLEON'S DIVISION

Sol's Brigade:

1st Bn 20th Leger
2nd Bn 20th Leger

de Monet's Brigade:

2nd Bn 2nd Zouaves

Morris's Division

D'Allonville's Brigade:

4th Chasseurs d'Afrique
Two batteries Horse Artillery

WARGAMING INKERMAN

The Crimean War lends itself admirably to a club project with individuals painting up modest contingents of Allies or Russians to taste. Then taking the various roles as the campaign unravels using, of course, the Osprey Campaign books as reference.

The terrain for this particular battle can be taken as per the maps shown earlier. The problems in gaming it, however, are quite challenging.

First, there is the fog and its effect on morale, visibility and the cartridges of those left on picquet duty.

Second, the timing and size of the various reinforcements, and whether they should arrive earlier or later than historically.

Thirdly, several units ran out of ammunition during the course of the battle and this possibility also needs to be taken into account.

Finally, it becomes quickly apparent that there is immense disparity in the size of the Tactical Units being employed on either side. The Russians deploying battalion-sized T.U.s. The British, most particularly in the early stages, utilising under-strength companies as T.U.s.

Players

Depending on the number of players available give them the following roles:

1st player; Pennefather. **2nd** player; Dannenberg. **3rd** player; Buller
4th player; Soimonoff. **5th** player; Bosquet. **6th** player; Pauloff

In the happy event of more players being available they can take subordinate British roles.

Should you want to play the battle solo, take the role of Pennefather and run the Russians with the following mechanism.

Number each Russian brigade from 1-8 and roll on a D10 to see which brigade is attacking, roll again if the score is 9 or 10.

Number each avenue of attack; The Wellway, 2; Mikriakoff Gully, 3; The Saddle, 4; The Kitspur, 5. Roll for these on a D5 to find where the brigade will appear.

Follow this system every 45 minutes of game time, starting at 6.00am, until all Russian brigades have attacked or the Allies have been overrun. Deploy their artillery on Shell Hill and support each fresh assault with as many guns as possible. Each Russian brigade attacks only once.

This is the only battle I can think of where it is not worth depicting either Commander in Chief!

The Table

The crucial features to show on the table are Shell Hill, Home Ridge, Careening Ravine and St Clement's Ravine and of course all in between,

especially the road from Home Ridge to Windmill Hill along which all reinforcements must come. Depicting the Saddle and associated ravines would stretch the resources of most clubs. An inexpensive alternative is to treat the table surface as the Saddle and show the ravines as cut out pieces of felt or similar. These will then count as rough ground with cover and downhill to figures on the Saddle or Lip.

Note that while the 18-pdrs. on Home Ridge are in range of Shell Hill, the lighter Russian artillery on Shell Hill could only fire as far as the Lip. Assuming Shell Hill and Home Ridge are on opposite sides of an 8'x4' table there will be ample room for exposed Allied flanks. If you have a 6'x4' table it will probably be worth shifting Shell Hill and Home Ridge to opposite corners so you are fighting across a diagonal centre line. On a smaller table you will have to allow off-table flank marching for the Russians; it's essential for the Allies to be as worried about this as possible.

Weather

The descriptions of the fog make it sound like a sea mist which rolls in from the water reaching a defined height until burned off by the sun. So, to reflect this in a purely arbitrarily way, limit visibility below the contour level of the saddle to smooth-bore musket range, between the saddle and the lip to Minie rifle range and above the lip unaffected.

By 9.30 am the sun has thinned the mist so the Saddle-Lip heights are clear and below the Saddle visibility increases to Minie rifle range. By 1.00pm all mist has cleared. Adjust these times with the table under **Timetable** below.

Troops looking from a clearer level to a mistier use the average of the two distances. Those in the mistier level use that visibility range even when looking out. Troops in mist and unable to see the enemy shooting at them have to suffer a severe morale penalty, perhaps counting as 'surprised' depending on the rule system.

Troops which have been on picquet duty roll a D10, on the first occasion ordered to fire, for the percentage of their rifles able to fire. Non-firers need the equivalent of 15 minutes to draw the damp cartridges and reload.

The mist will also affect the perception of the commanders. As the players of Allied characters represent the immediate unit officers they will be unaffected. The Russian players take on the mantle of much higher echelons of command normally remote from the firing line, although Soimonoff did get killed. Each time they wish to implement a new order roll a six-sided die (D6) for the number of periods of delay before that movement can be started.

Timetable

Even though precise timings of the various historical events are not available owing to the confused nature of the fighting it will be necessary to impose a pseudo-historical timetable in order to make the game reflect its historical antecedent. What follows shows only the reinforcements for the game and not each recorded incident.

6.00am First shots

Eight companies of British picquets immediately available;
four of the 55th, two of the 41st and two of the 47th.

- 6.15am Relieved picquets return to the lip; 8 companies British line infantry from 2nd Division.
- 6.30am Balance of 2nd Division arrives in dead ground behind Lip.
- 7.00am Raglan arrives, Guards under way, Light Division preparing to move, 4th Division alerted, two 18-pdr guns summoned.
- 7.15am Four companies of 88th (L.D.) arrive with P Battery.
- 7.30am Balance of Light Division arrives with Buller.
- 7.45am Hamley's battery arrives.
- 8.00am Two companies of the 20th and two of the 57th, armed with smooth bore muskets (4th Div.) arrive at Home Ridge
Pauloff's Russian columns arrive as per the maps.
- 8.30am Bosquet with two French battalions, four companies of Chasseurs (equivalent to British riflemen) and Boussiniere's 12-gun horse artillery battery arrive. Guards Brigade arrives. Balance of 4th Division column (armed with smooth bore muskets) arrive at Home Ridge.
- 8.45am One company Zouaves appears at the barrier.
General Bourbaki arrives, French troops will now attack when ordered.
- 9.30am 18-pdrs arrive plus 2 battalions Zouaves, 2 battalions Algerians and the French 50th line.
- 10.30am Three French line regiments arrive.
- 11.00am Acton's company of 77th, Horsford's wing of rifles and company of 49th reinforce barrier.

All troops arrive in column, one after the other, on the road from Windmill Hill in the order listed above. At this stage in the campaign British companies should be assumed to be 60 men strong, a 'wing' is half the companies in a battalion. French battalions were 800-900 men, organised in six companies all armed with Minie rifles. Evidently the Zouaves should be a morale class higher than the line infantry, the British infantry the highest class available and the Russians will count as raw.

All the times above, including those for the fog lifting, have to be varied to keep the players on their toes. When the game clock reaches half an hour before the individual time, but not before, roll a D6 and adjust as below:

die score	adjusted time
1	-30 minutes
2	-15
3	no change
4	+15
5	+30
6	+45

Change the nominal time listed above to the new time. The troops listed against that time will now arrive up to half an hour early, on time or up to three-quarters of an hour late.

Ammunition and Resupply

There are two ways of doing this: Decide at the start of the game how

many periods of firing can be sustained by your units and note how many times they fire as the game progresses. A simple tick on the casualty chart should suffice. Or, use a two-dice firing mechanism and assume they are out of ammo when a double is rolled, giving odds of 36:1. The regulations laid down fifty rounds to be carried, and a rate of fire of two rounds per minute was easily sustainable. So, a unit should be able to manage 2-3 hours of intermittent, but furious, shooting. Once a unit is out of supply they will have to fall back to the dead ground behind the lip to fetch more ammunition, one period at a collection of wagon models before returning to the fray. Bear in mind, before you decide, that there will be a lot of small Allied units.

Command and Control

To reflect the difference in the size of the tactical units the Russian player may not use separate units smaller than a battalion. While the Allied players may use units as small as individual companies and combine them into ad hoc commands as required without penalty. Ensure when making a morale check under your rules that 'casualties lost from original unit strength' factors take this into account, i.e. count the company or wing strength on the day of the battle. If the morale system counts units that's fine, each *separate* company or wing will count as one unit which will have a suitably bad effect on the Russian morale. Their artillery doctrine, direct from the Tsar, made losing a gun absolutely unthinkable, so these will retire should any British infantry get within one move. However, should the Allies morale start to crumble the rot will spread very quickly with so many small units. Neither side should gain any bonus from their C in Cs but instead from their divisional commanders.

Tactical Tips

With hindsight it is quite extraordinary that the Russians were not able to exploit their huge advantages in manpower to prevent reserves reaching the battlefield of Inkerman. In the context of a club campaign the Russian objective, of course, remains the same; to force the Allies to lift the siege. The trick to achieve this is to co-ordinate attacks all along the line to stretch Allied reserves beyond breaking point and gain a foothold on the Lip, then roll up the position. Hence, their repeated efforts to outflank the line at the battery. Had their diversions been prosecuted with more vigour and prevented supports reaching Pennefather they could very well have been successful.

The British on the other hand have to husband their meagre resources, keeping the Russians at bay until sufficient reserves have arrived to make the position secure. They certainly can't afford to see units swanning off over the Lip in pursuit of hapless Russians, though the rules should allow that to happen. They may even need to shorten the line temporarily in order to hold it at all.

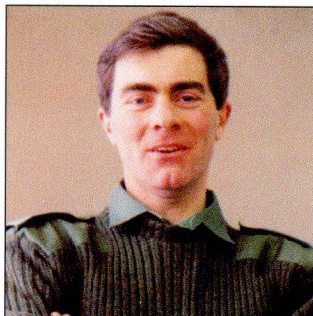
Fortunately, the morale shock to the Russians of being fired upon by an enemy they may not be able to see who is also uphill and causing massive casualties will make it very difficult for them to close. Often the downhill bayonet charge following such fire shock will tip them into precipitate retreat. Bayonet charges are frequently mentioned in the sources but in fact only accounted for 6% of the casualties.



**A detail of the fight for the Sandbag Battery.
This scene is characteristic of the determination
and courage shown by the soldiers of both sides
during the battle of Inkerman. It also clearly rep-
resents the close quarters nature and ferocity of
much of the fighting.**

INKERMAN 1854

On 5 November 1854 the Russians marched out of the besieged city of Sevastopol to throw off the allied British and French forces by mounting a joint attack with their troops from outside the city. Despite outnumbering their enemies five to one the Russians failed to achieve what looked to be almost a foregone conclusion. The third major action of the Crimean War, the battle fought in heavy fog at Inkerman proved to be a testament to the skill and initiative of the individual men and officers of the British Army of the day.



PATRICK MERCER has had a life-long fascination with the Crimean War since, as a boy, he gazed at a cannon brought back from Sevastopol in the centre of Ludlow. This kindled an interest in Victorian military history, especially the achievements of the individual soldiers and their individual regiments, and has culminated in a number of trips to the little visited battlefields of the Crimea. Educated at Oxford University, he now lives in Herefordshire with his wife and son.

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ISBN 1-85532-618-3

