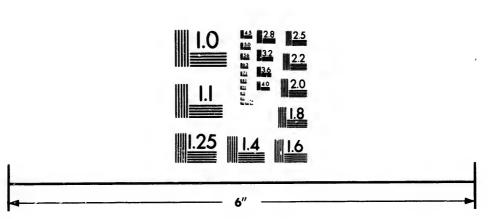


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# MILITARY MEMOIR

OF THE LATE

### LIEUTENANT-GENERAL

## SIR JOHN MACLEOD, G.C.H.

SENIOR COLONEL COMMANDANT

AND

DIRECTOR GENERAL OF ARTILLERY.

JANUARY, 1834.

LONDON:
Printed for R. and C. Byfield,
21, Charing Cross.

### MILITARY MEMOIR

SIR JOHN MACLEOD, G.C.H.

Many of Sir John Macleod's friends have expressed an earnest wish of possessing some document of his military career; and the desire of complying with their wishes has led to a compilation from his papers, which forms the subject of the following Memoir. Their wishes ought, perhaps, to have been sooner attended to: but to undertake a retrospective view of so long a service is in itself an attempt of no common difficulty;

and it will be well understood, that private feelings have shrunk from a task, which it is felt no effort can do justice to.

The friends of Sir John Macleod are aware, that the nature of his public services does not afford extensive subject for narrative. He was the spring of action in others, more than a partaker in events that prospered chiefly from his judgment: his was the anxious charge of responsibility; of foresight and superintending control, more than of active participation in what emanated from him: and his services are better recorded in the successes and rewards of others, and in the high name and public estima-

tion of his corps, than in details relating merely personally to himself.

His earliest services commenced in command; and are those which partake most of active character. These occurred at a period of momentous interest to his country; and drawing public notice and distinction on him, even at that early period of his life, afforded a sure and unerring earnest of those superior qualities that marked his subsequent career.

Sir John Macleod joined the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich as a cadet, in the year 1767; and obtained a commission, as Second Lieutenant, on the 15th of March, 1771.

On obtaining his commission he was

ordered to Gibraltar, where he had an opportunity, on a large scale, of viewing and practising the garrison duties of his profession.

In 1774 he returned to England, and solicited leave of absence, with a view of making an extended professional tour on the continent. He settled, in the first instance, at the college of St. Omer, and was still engaged in general studies there, when, in the following year, he was recalled to England, in order to join the forces preparing to suppress the colonial rebellion in North America. He arrived at Portsmouth at the end of the year; the expedition was then daily expected to proceed on its course, assembling

previous to its final departure at Cork.

Little occurred on his first arrival in America, beyond the usual events of ordinary service. His letters are dated, in 1776, from South Carolina; from Philadelphia in 1777-8; from Rhode Island in 1779; and from Charles Town in 1780.

In 1781, he joined the force detached under Earl Cornwallis, which he accompanied into North Carolina, during an arduous march of above six hundred miles; and he had the good fortune to command the artillery, engaged in the signal victory of Guilford, over the combined continental and American forces, on the 15th of March.

In describing his movements previous to the battle, Lord Cornwallis observed: "The woods on the right" and left were reported to be impracticable for cannon; but as that on our right appeared to be most open, I resolved to attack the left wing of the enemy; and whilst my disposition was making for that purpose, I ordered Lieutenant Macleod to bring forward the guns and cannonade their centre."

Again, the dispatch describing a critical period of the battle states, the second battalion of guards having defeated a corps of continental infantry, much superior in number, formed on the open field, and captured two six-

pounders; but pursuing with too much ardour, they became exposed to an attack from Washington's dragoons, with the loss of the six-pounders they had taken: it then mentions that the enemy's cavalry were soon repulsed, by a well-directed fire from the guns just brought up by Lieutenant Macleod; and on the appearance of the grenadiers of the guards, and the 71st regiment, the guns were soon recaptured.

The exertions of the artillery under Sir John Macleod's orders on this service, in overcoming the obstacles opposed to their advance by the difficulties of the country, will be best appreciated by Lord Cornwallis's description of the march of the army previous to the battle of Guilford: "Their invincible patience, in the "hardships and fatigues of a march " of above six hundred miles, in which "they have forded several large rivers "and numberless creeks, many of "which would be reckoned large rivers "in any other country in the world, "without tents, and often without "provisions, will sufficiently manifest "their ardent zeal for the honour and "interests of their Sovereign and "their Country."

During the course of this service Sir John Macleod had attained the rank of First Lieutenant (in July, 1779). His last letters from America are dated in 1781, just previous to his embarkation at New York to return to Europe, in the November of that year.

In January, 1782, he was promoted to the rank of Second Captain.

On the return of the army to England, Lord Cornwallis, wishing to mark in a distinguished manner his sense of Sir John Macleod's services while under his orders, more particularly in the battle of Guilford, and in the professional resources he had shown in the difficulties attending the previous march of the army, named him to the King; and his Majesty was pleased, in consequence, to command his personal attendance and presentation by Lord Cornwallis.

In the same year he was appointed to the Staff of Lord George Lennox.

The regiment of artillery had been increased, during the American war, to four battalions and an invalid battalion; and the Master General of the Ordnance, from so great an augmentation, found it necessary to extend its staff, at the head of which he placed Sir John Macleod.

In 1790, Lord Cornwallis was appointed Governor General and Commander in Chief in India; and his Lordship immediately expressed a desire that Sir John Macleod should accompany him; but his staff duties, already forming an integral part of the important discipline he was perfecting, compelled him to forego the

gratification of attending his commander and friend.

On the 14th of May, 1790, he succeeded to a company in the regiment of artillery.

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We now approach a period, when the peculiar power and energies of Sir John Macleod's character were to be more conspicuously developed and brought into public notice. The war occasioned by the French Revolution worked rapid changes and improvements in the French army, which it became necessary to meet with corresponding efforts on our part. They had started and matured a system of warfare, and celerity of movement, peculiarly their own; and the other

nations of Europe soon learnt the necessity of opposing them on their own system. Their artillery, particularly, had undergone material change and facility of movement; with ourselves, similar changes were of course studied and adopted. All field artillery was in future to have accelerated activity of movement, beyond that of infantry; and a portion of it was trained to rival the movements of cavalry. The first formation of horse artillery, in the British army, was in the early part of 1793. Two troops were formed in January that year: others were added in quick succession. The organization and equipment of this new arm, with the entire change

system of our field artillery, gave ample scope to the indefatigable mind of Sir John Macleod; and his unremitting attention and exertions were most ably met by the zeal and emulation of the officers appointed to the new commands.

At this time, there occurred another gratifying instance of the high estimation in which Sir John Macleod's name was held in the army.

An expedition was preparing under the command of the late Marquess of Hastings, with whom he had served in America. His first step, in preparing his arrangements, was to offer the command of the artillery to Sir John Macleod; but not only did his staff duties again present an impediment, but his rank in the service at the time precluded the possibility of his appointment to so large a command.

The regiment of artillery had now been augmented from the peace establishment, to a force of 25,000 men. The staff duties had of course increased in proportion, both in trust, and in importance. The Master-General in consequence, in concurrence with the Duke of York, Commander-in-Chief, submitted a representation to His Majesty, of the indispensable necessity of a public officer as Deputy Adjutant General of Artillery. His

<sup>\*</sup> See Appendix (A.)

Majesty was pleased to approve of this arrangement; and Sir John Macleod was accordingly appointed Deputy Adjutant-General, with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in the army. (March 27th, 1795).

On the 21st August, 1797, he was promoted to the regimental rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.

In 1798, a rebellion of most disastrous character broke forth in Ireland; and Lord Cornwallis was called on to proceed thither, with extended authority to suppress it by force of arms. Sir John Macleod considered the active employment of the Master-General of the Ordnance a favourable moment for soliciting permission to

accompany him; and he entreated Lord Cornwallis to submit his wishes to the King, and to exert his influence with His Majesty, to that effect. He received on this occasion a most kind and gracious assurance of the King's approval of his zeal and motives; but his absence from his responsible duties was considered inadmissible.

In addition to the increased extent of the corps, there was added, in 1801, the establishment of a riding school, on a large and efficient scale; and also a veterinary establishment adequate to the necessities of the cavalry branches of the regiment; now increased by a numerous corps of drivers, regularly organized and trained for

the service of field brigades of artillery. This corps, which had its first formation in 1793, had grown to the extent of 5500 officers and men; and before the conclusion of the war, amounted to 7300. The formation and efficiency of these several departments, though apparently of minor detail and interest in the service, were, not the less an object of Sir John Macleod's constant care and watchful superintendence.

In 1808, Sir John Macleod was directed to organize a tenth battalion of artillery.

On the death of Lieutenant-General Walton, in the same year, he was appointed to succeed that officer as Master Gunner of England.

In 1809, the Scheldt expedition was projected; and Lord Chatham being at the time Master-General of the Ordnance, Sir John Macleod again seized the opportunity for soliciting active employment. His Majesty on this occasion was pleased to accede to his request; and he accordingly sailed from the Downs in command of the artillery under Lord Chatham's orders, in July, 1809.

The result of this expedition is remembered to have been unsuccessful; but the arduous and laborious duties of Sir John Macleod's command proceeded from the commencement of the operations with uninterrupted and progressive success; doing equal honour

to the arrangements of the commanding officer, and the devoted zeal of the corps, in surmounting every obstacle, as far as the objects of the expedition were persevered in. On the final abandonment of its ulterior views, Sir John Macleod returned to England.

At no previous period had the resources of Sir John Macleod's mind been more necessarily exerted, than in the gigantic outfit of this expedition. But the war now assumed a character that called for still increasing energy and thought to meet the demands and casualties of the service, multiplied by the extension of our arms throughout every part of

the world, by a constantly accumulating correspondence from every quarter, and above all, the hourly increasing importance of the war in the Peninsula, where the vigour of the struggle between the two contending nations seemed actually to grow with its duration. Sir John Macleod fortunately possessed, and knew how to employ, a mind devoted to the most arduous undertakings of the service; and the growing emergencies of such an important moment to the country, continued to give new life to his ardent and energetic exertions.

Before the close of the war, the three corps of artillery organized by

Sir John Macleod amounted to upwards of 26,000 men, and near 14,000 horses. The recruiting branch of the service alone, to keep up such " a legion" in men and horses, had become a source of great and anxious solicitude; and formed in itself an overpowering mass of business, to any mind of less resource or experience than his own. From the commencement of the revolutionary war, also, there had been an almost constant succession of foreign expeditions, the arrangement and equipment of which devolved upon him. The principal of these were the Continental in 1793, the West Indies in 1794, the Cape of Good Hope in 1795, the Helder in

1799, Egypt in 1800, Cape of Good Hope in 1806, Buenos Ayres in 1807, the Mediterranean throughout the var, Spain and Portugal in 1808, Walchelen in 1809, Holland in 1813, and finally, the Netherlands and France in 1815.

On the 25th October, 1809, he attained the rank of Major-General; and on the 4th June, 1814, the rank of Lieutenant-General in the army.

In 1820, his late Majesty, desirous of marking his sense of Sir John Macleod's long and important services, commanded his attendance at the Pavilion at Brighton, where, under circumstances of peculiar kindness and distinction, he conferred on him

the honour of Knighthood, and appointed him Grand Cross of the Royal Guelphic Order<sup>d</sup>.

The Battle of Waterloo at length gave peace to Europe; and on the recall of the British army of occupation from France, Sir John Macleod was employed in making similar reductions in the artillery, to those which took place in all branches of the service. He had now attained a rank which, from the reduced numbers of the corps, would in future prevent his employment in the duties he had fulfilled during the war. It was on this occasion he received a letter from the Duke of Wellington, offering him the situation of Director-General of

Artillery. A mind like Sir John Macleod's could not with indifference quit a post at which he may be said to have formed the corps, to whose name and welfare he was, in every sense and feeling, enthusiastically devoted: and the considerate kindness with which the Duke's proposal was addressed to him, was never forgotten by him. He continued to fulfil the duties of Director-General of Artillery to the close of his life; and even throughout his last illness, he would never consent to any respite from the details and duties of his trust.

If we revert to the services of Sir John Macleod throughout the eventful and protracted war, during which he was employed in the most confidential and important duties an officer can fulfil, it would be difficult to distinguish what might properly be termed the most conspicuous period of his career: but it may perhaps be considered to be that between the interval commencing with the chivalrous and enterprising advance of Sir John Moore into Spain, and the brilliant succession of events that followed without intermission, till the final close of operations in the Peninsula; at which time the nature and responsibility of the duties he controlled had acquired an extent, variety, and importance, quite unequalled in our service.

Sir John Macleod was married, in

the year 1783, to Lady Amelia Kerr, second daughter of the fourth Marquess of Lothian, and had a family of four sons and five daughters.

It may be permitted here briefly to advert, with his own, to services which were fostered by him, and which bore no common character in the army.

Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Macleod, who fell while leading the 43rd regiment in the storming of Badajoz, in 1812, had, from the period of his first entering the army, given proof of his ardent attachment to the service, and a promise of the fame and rare distinction that recorded the close of his brilliant career.

His services commenced under his father's friend, Lord Cornwallis; he was with him in India when he died, and was the bearer of the despatches to England announcing that melancholy event. He was next employed at Copenhagen, and subsequently in the Peninsula. His character and services are best recorded in the words of the illustrious Commander. who, with the glory of his own deeds, has transmitted the name of Colonel Macleod to posterity. The following is an extract from the Duke of Wellington's despatch announcing the fall of Badajoz in 1812.

"In Lieutenant-Colonel Macleod, of the 43rd regiment, who was killed

" in the breach, his Majesty has sus-

"tained the loss of an officer who

"was an ornament to his profession,

" and was capable of rendering the

"most important services to his

" country."

Every soldier will understand, that if anything could have afforded consolation to Sir John Macleod, on the loss of such a son, it would have been a tribute of this nature from such a source. Even under the weight of such a blow it had its influence: the patriot father bowed in submission to his heavy affliction, and buried his private griefs for ever in his own breast.

Sir John Macleod's second son com-

menced his service in the navy, under the late Lord Hugh Seymour; and afterwards obtained a commission in the Engineers. He was a most zealous officer, and distinguished himself at the siege of Scylla Castle; at the siege of Ciudad Roderigo; and at that of Badajoz, where he unfortunately received a wound from which he has never ceased to suffer.

His third son, James, was, in the first instance, in the Artillery, and employed at Copenhagen, at Walcheren, and throughout a great part of the Peninsular campaigns. In 1823 he quitted the Artillery and joined the 41st regiment, and was employed in the active operations

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carrying on in India, when he fell a victim to the climate at Rangoon, in 1824.

Sir John Macleod's fourth son commenced his services likewise in the Artillery, and served in that corps in the battle of Talavera, and the early campaigns of the Peninsular war. On the death of Colonel Charles Macleod. the Duke of York offered him a commission in the Line; and it was while he was serving at the siege of Dantzic, where he had been sent on a special duty, that he was recalled in order to join the 35th regiment, then with the force under Lord Lynedoch's command, in Holland. He was next employed on the staff of the Duke of

Wellington's army the Netherlands, and was severely wounded at Quatre-Bras, in the enemy's attack of the 16th of June. He proceeded subsequently to Canada, on the personal staff of the late Duke of Richmond; and, like his elder brother, it was his misfortune to have to bear to England the despatches announcing his friend and patron's death. He is at present on the staff of the army in Jamaica, where he has been employed since 1825.

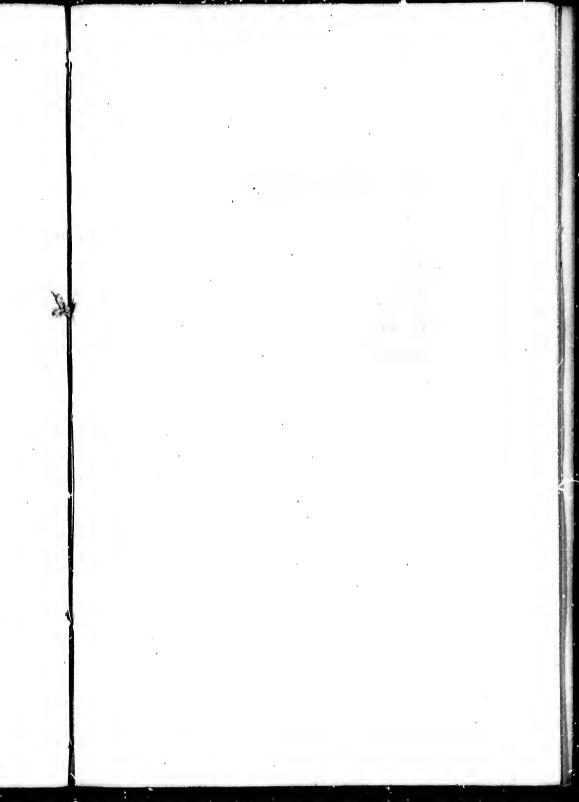
From the general outline that has been given of Sir John Macleod's services, some faint impression may be formed of his character, by those who did not know him. The period at

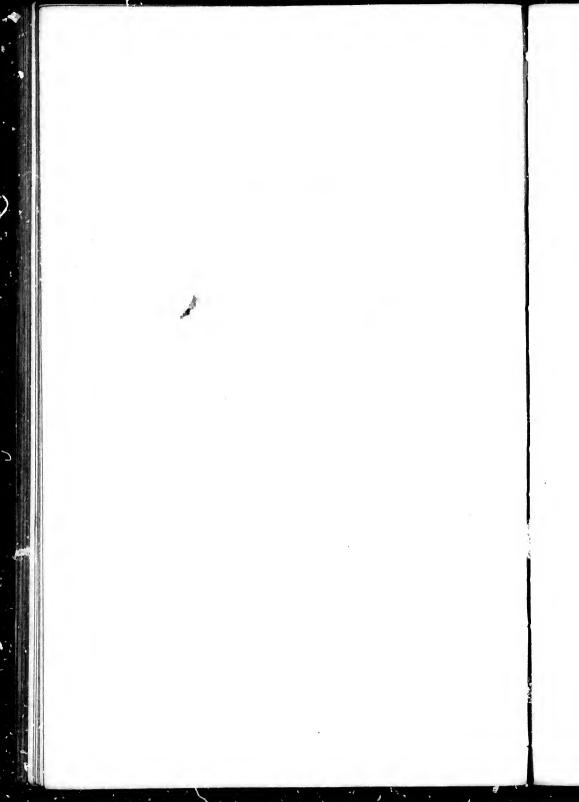
which he served, was that of most importance in his country's annals; and his was a mind not to bear an undistinguished part in the records of the time. An unprecedented war, in power and duration, had opened a field for the development and full exertion of its superior and peculiar qualities. The leading feature of his character was the confidence he inspired in others, and the unbounded trust they reposed in him; and thus, whether called on for counsel, or to act under unforeseen or sudden emergencies of service, he was ever ready and prepared to meet its exigencies. His watchfulness seemed never to sleep, but to be in anticipation of

what might occur; and to forestal events, by securing means to meet "His whole soul," to use a common-place expression, was in his profession. Of every soldier he made himself the friend. To his equals in rank he was a brother; to those beneath him a father, in kindness and in counsel; and to the private soldiers a benefactor; ever watching over their comfort and their welfare. To all he had a ready ear to listen, and a heart and hand to act in their hehalf. Throughout his long career he was never known to act with the slightest approach to severity; and yet he never failed to maintain discipline, to reprove fault, or to check irregularity. He animated zeal, excited energy, and aimed at perfecting discipline, by always appealing to the better and nobler feelings that prevail with the soldier's character. His influence extended beyond the branch of the service he controlled; his name was a passport everywhere; and held in such universal respect, that it imposed emulation of good deeds on all who belonged to him; and the conduct and acts of his sons, however they might reflect on him, were thought of but as a matter of course in them: even at the period of his son's fall at Badajoz, his loss, as the son, was almost as universally felt as in that of the brilliant officer commanding a distinguished corps. Sir John Macleod's highest praises, however, are those which cannot be told the world: nor, indeed, is private character the proper subject of a memoir of this nature. Our private character, too, is always best judged and known by that of our associates and friends; his were among the great and the good. Honoured by his Sovereign, respected by all ranks of the army, loved by his friends, and revered by his family, his private life afforded an example to all who love goodness, honour, and bewhile his professional nevolence: career ever pointed to the highest and noblest attainments by which we can serve our country.

Sir John Macleod was of the Raaza family; and his grandfather, Colonel Eneas Macleod, served with great distinction in the campaigns and sieges of the Dulie of Marlborough f.

He was born the 29th of January, 1752, and died, the Father of his Corps, in the 82nd year of his age.





## APPENDIX.

(A.)

THE following letter is here given, not so much with a view of exemplifying the estimation in which the Marquess of Hastings held Sir John Macleod's services, as the desire which naturally suggests itself, of recording a proof so illustrative of the zeal and enterprise of his Lordship's character:

St. James's Place, November 5th, 1793.

(Secret.)

My DEAR MACLEOD,

It is probable that I may very

speedily be employed at the head of a considerable force. In such a situation, there is not any person I could so much wish for a commander of 'my artillery, as yourself. If this cannot be, point out to me somebody upon whom I can rely in such a trust. Let it be so been fellow, who will laugh in the midst of difficulties, as I have seen you do. Cast your eyes round, too, for inferior officers whom I may ask for: because, as we are sure of tough work, I ought to have good stuff. Thirty pieces of cannon would properly be requisite; yet I foresee, that from the paucity of artillerymen, I shall be stinted in this particular. I mention this, to give you an idea what the nature of the artillery officer's command would be. But all is still loose and undetermined; and I have to request your secrecy in every respect.

Believe me, &c.,

Moira.

(B.)

Whitehall, June 18th, 1798.

DEAR MACLEOD,

closet, and have stated to him your earnest wish to be allowed to accompany me to Ireland, for a certain time at least, and the desire which I felt of availing myself of your services. His Majesty expressed himself to be highly pleased with your zealous offer; and to be much disposed to gratify both you and me, by complying with your request; but he added, that he was apprehensive that the service here must greatly

suffer by the absence of the public officer; and he desired me to tell him fairly, whether that would not be the case.

Called upon in this manner for my opinion, I could not help admitting that the service here must be liable to some inconvenience from your absence; upon which his Majesty desired me, not to press him further on the subject.

I am sincerely sorry for this disappointment, on your account as well as my own; but on reflecting coolly on the business, I must confess I think the King is in the right.

Dear Macleod,

Very sincerely yours,

CORNWALLIS.

(C.)

It is scarcely possible to convey an adequate idea of the anxious and responsible duties of a commanding officer of Artillery on a service of this extended scale; more particularly under circumstances where contingencies are uncontrollable, and liable to baffle or interfere with the best arrangements. The details of this expedition, however, have been so fully and frequently before the world, in every form, that it has not been considered necessary to insert here any part of Sir John Macleod's Journal of its operations.

(D.)

44, Grosvenor Place, October 13th, 1820.

SIR,

It gives me great pleasure to have to acquaint you, that his Majesty, in consideration of your distinguished services, and more particularly of the very able assistance you gave on the forming the Artillery attached to the King's German Legion, and the zealous and judicious activity by which, through a series of years, you contributed so much to the flourishing state of that gallant corps, has been most graciously pleased to nominate and appoint you, Sir, a Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Guelphic Order, the decoration of which I have the honour of transmitting to you herewith, and remain, with the highest esteem,

Sir,

Your most obedient,
and very humble Servant,
MUNSTER.

To Lieutenant General Sir John Macleod, G.C.H., &c. &c.

(E.)

The Officers of the 43rd Regiment, de-

sirous of recording their affection and respect to their lamented Commander, erected a monument to his memory in Westminster Abbey, under the immediate superintendence of his friend, Colonel William Napier; on which is engraved the extract given from the Duke of Wellington's despatch.

(F.)

See Biggs's Military Chronicles.

rondon.

Printed for R. and C. BYFIELD, 21, Charing Cross.

