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978-1-108-04468-4 - General Todleben's History of the Defence of Sebastopol, 1854-5: A Review

William Howard Russell

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General Todleben's History of the Defence of Sebastopol, 1854-5

The journalist William Howard Russell (1820–1907) is sometimes regarded as being the first war correspondent, and his reports from the conflict in the Crimea are also credited with being a cause of reforms made to the British military system. This 1865 book began as a review in *The Times* of the five-volume work of General Eduard Todleben (or Totleben), the military engineer and Russian Army General, whose work in creating and continually adapting the land defences of Sevastopol in 1854–5 made him a hero and enabled the fortress to hold out against British bombardment for a whole year. Russell added extracts from the original book to his review, and enlarged his commentary on the Russian text, producing a thorough and accurate synthesis, but always highlighting the central importance of the Russian work to any student of the history of the Sevastopol siege.

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A Review

WILLIAM HOWARD RUSSELL



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Frontmatter

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THE DEFENCE OF SEBASTOPOL.

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Frontmatter

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

GENERAL TODLEBEN'S HISTORY
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1854-5.

A Review.

BY

WILLIAM HOWARD RUSSELL,

LATE SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT OF 'THE TIMES.'

LONDON:

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1865.

[The right of Translation is reserved.]

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

P R E F A C E.



As the extraordinary number, size, and consequent costliness of the maps with which General de Todleben's History of the DEFENCE OF SEBASTOPOL is accompanied, interpose considerable difficulty in the way of producing the work in English, I have been requested to republish the account of the book which appeared in 'The Times.' By the permission of the Proprietors I now do so. In order to complete the description of the battles of the Alma, of Balaklava, and of Inkerman, and of the principal events treated of in the first volume, I have added some extracts from the Russian narrative, which would have swelled the

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William Howard Russell

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

vi

PREFACE.

Review far beyond the limits of even the columns of 'The Times.' I am not without hopes of seeing the whole of the work, which has been imperially brought out by the Russian Government, translated into our tongue in its entirety; but private enterprise stands appalled at an outlay which would need an imperial purse to bear, as the demand for such a publication at the present day would necessarily be limited. Meantime, the actual substance of the Russian account is laid before my readers in the following pages. In the Review, I sought to give an idea of what our Author said, rather than to criticise his statements or to controvert his facts. I have been led to add a few comments in the present volume to the matter which appeared in the first instance without note or remark, because I considered it expedient to correct assertions which I knew to be erroneous or unjust, as regarded our portion of the Allied armies. I may be pardoned for drawing attention to the remarkable corroboration afforded to the statements of those anonymous and somewhat discredited correspondents who described

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William Howard Russell

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE.

vii

the events of the famous campaign in the Crimea as they occurred at the time, by the matured history of the siege which has been prepared by the illustrious defender of Sebastopol.

W. H. RUSSELL.

Temple, December, 1864.

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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978-1-108-04468-4 - General Todleben's History of the Defence of Sebastopol, 1854-5: A Review

William Howard Russell

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Our First Victories	3
The Early and Late Historians	5
The Russian History	7
The March of Russia	9
The Ascent of the Czars	11
Menschikoff's Mission	13
Declaration of War	15
Siege of Silistria	17
Defenceless Russia	19
The Russian Armies	21
The Forces of the Allies	23
The Condition of Sebastopol	25
The State of Sebastopol	27
Menschikoff Surprised	29
Selection of the Alma	31
The Choice of Landing-places	33
The Night before the Battle	35
The Russian Position	37
The English Order of Battle	41
The Russian Left Engaged	43
Canrobert and Bosquet	45
The English begin to Move	47
A Check to the French	49
The English on the Right	51

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-04468-4 - General Todleben's History of the Defence of Sebastopol, 1854-5: A Review

William Howard Russell

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
The English Fire	53
The Capture of the Epaulement	55
The Second Attack on the Epaulement	57
Retreat of the Wladimir Regiment	59
The Retreat of the Russians	61
Russian Reasons for their Defeat	63
Causes of the Defeat	65
Delay after Victory	69
Condition of Sebastopol	71
The Works of Sebastopol	73
Menschikoff's Flank March	75
The Sinking of the Fleet	77
The Allies on the Belbeck	81
State of the North Fort	83
The Flank March	87
Menschikoff's Flank March	89
Sir John Burgoyne's Vindications	91
Sir John Burgoyne's Remarks	97
Sir John Burgoyne's Policy	101
An Advance Northward	103
Surrender of Balaklava	107
State of the North Side	109
Preparations to Resist	111
Reinforcements for Sebastopol	113
Korniloff's Influence	115
The First Trench opened	117
The New Works	119
Opposite the English	121
The English Works	123
Reasons for and against an Assault	125
The First Day's Fire	127
The Russians recover spirits	129
The French again succumb	131
The Economy of Matériel	133
The Actions before Balaklava	135
Rout of the Turks	137
The First Russian Advance	139
The Light Cavalry	141
The French Chasseurs	143

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-04468-4 - General Todleben's History of the Defence of Sebastopol, 1854-5: A Review

William Howard Russell

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS.

xi

	PAGE
The Results of the Action	145
The Effect at Sebastopol	147
“ Little Inkerman ”	149
General Sir De Lacy Evans' Despatch	151
The French Batteries	153
Peril of the Flagstaff Bastion	155
Probable issue of an Assault	157
The Opposing Forces	159
The Allied Strength and Position	161
The Nature of the Ground	165
Dispositions for Inkerman	169
Soimonoff's Advance	175
Attack the Camp	177
Attack Adams's Brigade	179
The Precision of the British Fire	181
Retreat of the 17th Division	183
The Relative Numbers	185
Dannenberg's Advance	187
The Guards Rally	189
Cathcart's Disaster	191
The Artillery Conflict	193
The French are Summoned	195
The Russians Defeated	197
The Pursuit	199
Escape of the Russian Artillery	201
The Losses	203
The Superiority of English Fire-arms	205
Close of the First Period of the Siege	207
The Redan and the British	209
Moral Effect of Inkerman	211
The Great Storm	213
Russian Philanthropists	215
Good Samaritans	217
The Winter Begins	219
British Insouciance	221
The Rifle Pits	223
Increase of Lodgments	225
Comparison between French and English	227
Information to the Enemy	229

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-04468-4 - General Todleben's History of the Defence of Sebastopol, 1854-5: A Review

William Howard Russell

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xii

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
The Russian Commissariat	231
The Chaos of Balaklava	233
Russian Supplies	235
Russian Transport	237
Cost of the War	239
The War of Mines	241
The French take our Light Attack	243
Fears for Perekop	245
Attack on Eupatoria	247
Todleben's Opinion of our Troops	249
The Result of Delay	251
Want of Forethought	253
Concluding Remarks	255

APPENDICES	257
The Battle (or siege) of Eupatoria	259
Statistical account of the Losses of the Russian Army in 1854-5	311