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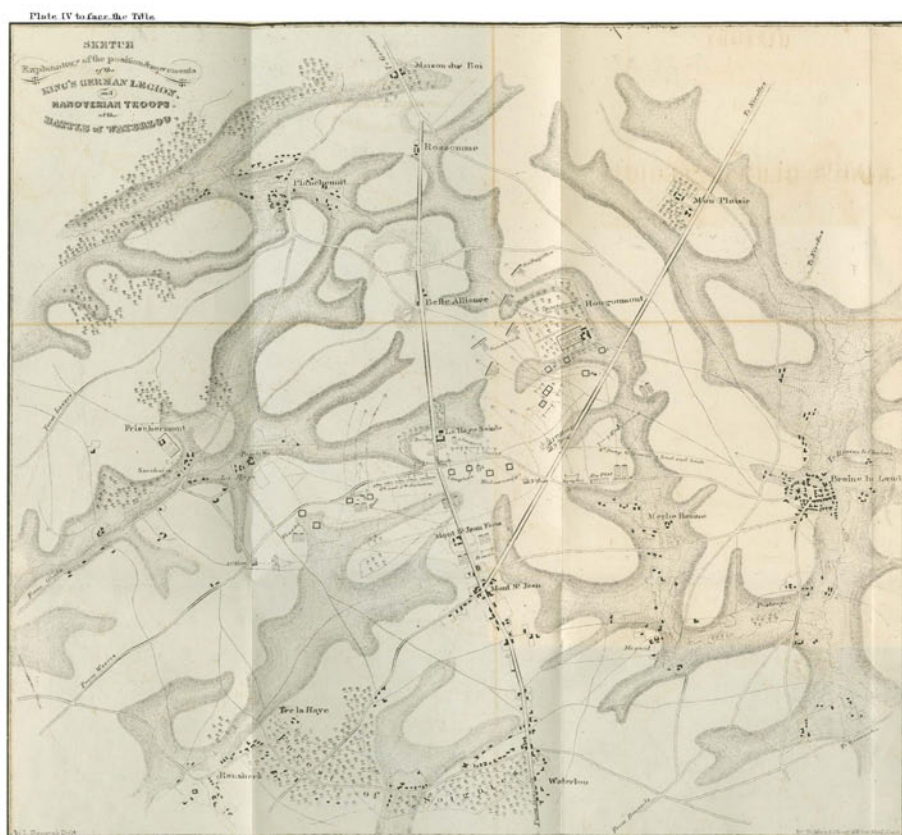
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HISTORY
OF THE
KING'S GERMAN LEGION,

BY
NORTH LUDLOW BEAMISH.

“Wir, wir haben von seinem Glanz und Schimmer
Nichts, als die Müh' und als die Schmerzen,
Und wofür wir uns halten in unserm Herzen.”
SCHILLER.

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NOTICE.

Various circumstances over which the author had no control, have delayed until the present period the publication of this volume. Amongst others the length of time occupied in the collection and investigation of documents and details. This laborious task has been principally carried on by captain CHRISTOPH HEISE, of the Hanoverian rifle guards, who also has prepared the elaborate lists, containing summaries of the services and casualties of the corps, which will be found in the appendix. It would be an unpardonable omission on the part of the author, did he not further add, that to this able, patriotic, and indefatigable officer, the King's German Legion are mainly indebted for the completion of this history.

Cork, Sept. 1837.

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- I. Summary return of all the officers who have held Commissions in the King's German Legion.

List of additional printed works, and Manuscripts to which reference is made in this volume.

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- No. 1. Journals of sieges carried on by the army under the duke of Wellington in Spain, between the years 1811 and 1814, with notes, by colonel John T. Jones, corps of royal engineers, aide de camp to the King. second edition, 2 vols. London, 1827.
- 2. History of the war in the Peninsula and in the south of France, from the year 1807 to the year 1814, by W. F. P. Napier, C. B. colonel h. p. forty-third regiment, member of the royal Swedish academy of military sciences. Vols. IV. and V. London 1834 and 1836.
- 3. Bulletins of the campaigns of the British troops from 1811 to 1815, compiled from the London Gazettes.
- 4. Reminiscences of a Subaltern [United Service Journal 1831, Part III.]
- 5. Abriss der Operationen der englisch-portugiesischen armee, unter dem unmittelbaren commando lord Wellington's, vom 1st Juni 1812. vom general major Hartmann des Königl. hannov. Artillerie. (Hannoversches militairisches Journal 1834.)
- 6. Beiträge zur Geschichte des Krieges auf der pyrenäischen Halbinsel, in den Jahren 1809 bis 1813. *ibid.*
- 7. Der Feldzug in Mecklenburg und Holstein im Jahr 1813, 1 Heft, Berlin, 1817.
- 8. Geschichte des Armeec-Korps unter den Befehlen des General-lieutenants Grafen von Wallmoden-Gimborn, an der Nieder-Elbe und in den Niederlanden vom April 1813 bis zum Mai 1814. (Oestreichische militairische Zeitschrift, Wien, 1827.)

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9. *Erinnerungen, Wanderungen, Erfahrungen, und Lebensansichten eines froh-und freisinnigen Schweitzers* 2 Heft. Trogen 1828. (By the late lieutenant Biedermann of the 2d light battalion King's German Legion.)
10. Narrative of the war in Germany and France, in 1813 and 1814 by lieut.-general Charles William Vane, marquess of Londonderry, G. C. B. G. C. H. &c, 1 Vol. London 1830.
11. Bericht von dem Treffen bei Sehestéd t am 10th December 1813, zwischen den dänischen und alliirten Truppen, von C. F. von Höegh, capitain im Koniglich dänischen Infanteriæ Regiments Oldenburg, Ritter. (*Militairische Blätter*, Essen und Duisburg, 1820—21.)
12. Campaign of the left wing of the allied army in the western Pyrenees and south of France in the years 1813—14, under field-marshal the marquess of Wellington, by captain Batty of the first or grenadier guards &c. &c. 1 Vol. London, 1823.
13. Military memoirs of field marshal the duke of Wellington, by captain Moyle Sherer, 2 Vols. London 1830.
14. Der siebenjährige Kampf auf der pyrenäischen Halbinsel, vom Jahr 1807 bis 1814, von Rigel Hauptmann in Badischen dienst. III. Theil.
15. Life of Napoleon Buonaparte, with a preliminary view of the French revolution, by sir Walter Scott bart. Vols. 8 and 9, Edinburgh, 1835.
16. *Memoires Historiques de Napoleon*, Liv. IX. London, 1820.
17. An Historical Sketch of the campaign of 1815, illustrated by plans of the operations, and of the battles of Quatre-bras, Ligny, and Waterloo, by captain Batty, of the first or grenadier guards. 1 Vol. London, 1820.
18. Der Feldzug von Waterloo, aus dem militärischen Nachlasse des grossherzoglich-badischen majors im Generalstabe und Flügel Adjutanten von Zech. (*Oestreichische militärische Zeitschrift*, Wien. 1835.)
19. Geschichte des Feldzugs der englisch-hanövrisch-niederländisch-braunschweigschen Armee unter Herzog Wellington, und der Preussischen Armee unter dem Fürsten Blucher von Wahlstadt im Jahre 1815, von C. von W. (baron Muffling.)
20. Geschichte des Herzoglich Braunschweigschen Armee-Corps in dem Feldzuge der alliirten Mächte gegen Napoleon Buonaparte im Jahre 1815, von einem Officier des General Staabs. 1 Heft. Braunschweig, 1816.
21. Erzählung der Theilnahme des 2ten leichten bataillons der Königl deutschen Legion, an der Schlachten von Waterloo, vom Obersten und Brigade-Commandeur George Baring. (*Hannoversches militairisches Journal*, 1831.)
22. Armee-Bericht der preussischen Armee vom Nieder-Rhein. June 20, 1815.

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2. Correspondence of the late lieutenant-colonel Offeney, B. G. M. of the 7th line battalion, late King's German Legion.
3. Correspondenz dez verstorbenen major F. Sympher, of the artillery, late King's German Legion.
4. Notes of captain Christoph Heise, H. G. O. 3—H. W. C. of the royal Hanoverian rifle-guards, captain h. p. 1st light battalion late King's German Legion.
5. Correspondence of major-general sir Alexander Dickson, K. C. B. &c. &c. of the royal British artillery.
6. Tagebuch des verstorbenen Rittmeisters Graf von Wallmoden-Gimborn, of the Hanoverian hussar guards, lieut. h. p. 1st hussars late King's German Legion.
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9. Mittheilungen des Oberst lieutenant von Witzendorf; H. G. O. 3—H. W. C. &c. of the Hanoverian garde du corps, captain h. p. 1st dragoons late King's German Legion.
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13. Narrative of captain Hesse, H. G. O. 3—H. W. C. &c. of the Hanoverian rifle-guards, adjutant h. p. 2d line battalion late King's German Legion.
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- 21 Correspondence of the late lieutenant general sir Henry von Hinüber K. C. B.—H. G. O. 1. &c. &c. colonel commandant 3d line battalion, late King's German Legion.
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25. Notizen des Oberst lieutenant von Einem, H. G. O. 3.—H. W. C. &c. of the 1st Hanoverian line battalion, captain (brigade major) h. p. late King's German legion.
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28. Mittheilungen des capitain Charles Poten, H. W. C. &c. of the 10th line battalion, h. p. 8th line battalion, late King's German Legion.
29. Notes of lieutenant-colonel Münter, S. F. O.—H. W. C. &c. commanding the 12th Hanoverian line battalion, captain h. p. 7th line battalion, late King's German Legion.
30. Notizen von dem Königlich Hannoverschen General Commando.
31. Mittheilungen des general Graf von Kielmansegge, H. G. O. 1. R. St. A. 2.—R. W. 4.—H. M. V. &c. &c. commander of the first brigade of Hanoverian infantry at the battle of Waterloo.
32. Notes of the services of the engineer officers of the King's German Legion, principally communicated by the individuals noticed.

PLATES AND PLANS.

Battle of Waterloo (Plan IV.).....	<i>to face the title.</i>
Monument to general von Langwerth,	
Plan I. Combat of Garcia Hernández,.....	} <i>to follow page 400.</i>
II. Attack on Toloza,.....	
III. Battle of the Görhrde,.....	
V. Farm of la Haye Sainte,	

ERRATA.

- Page 9, line 21, *for* "Badajos" *read* "Rodrigo."
 — 45, — 28, *for* "13th" *read* "30th."
 — 105, — 8, *for* "second" *read* "first."
 — 201, — 27, *for* "battalions" *read* "batteries."
 — 223, — 7, *after* "lieutenant" *insert* "Wolrabe and Wahrendorf,"
 and *for* "fourteen men were wounded," *read* "forty-
 four non-commissioned officers and men were wounded,
 besides seven men killed."
 — 228, — 9, *dele* "Wolrabe and Wahrendorf."
 — 231, — 9, *for* "out of," *read* "into."
 — 251, — 19, *after* "the" *insert* "skirmishers of."
 — *ibid* — 20, *for* "colonel du Plat" *read* "captain Bacmeister."
 — 265, — 14, *before* "a Portuguese regiment" *insert* "detachment of,"
 and add "Note: captain Decken was present as a spec-
 tator, and, having had his horse killed, led the attack
 on foot."
 — 272, margin, *for* "1813" *read* "1814."
 — 279, line 4, *for* "two hundred and seventy-nine" *read* "thirteen hundred"
 — 283, margin, *for* "1813," *read* "1814."
 — 307, line 6, *for* "von Hohnstedt" *read* "von Hohnhorst."
 — 309, margin, *for* "March" *read* "April."
 — 330, line 12, *by* a communication received from major von Heimburg,
 since the text was printed, it appears that the statement
 made here relative to the battalions, Lüneburg and
 Osterode is incorrect, and that it was a battalion of the
 5th division, formed in square, which poured such an
 effective fire upon the French cavalry, at this period of
 the day.
 — 356, line 2, *dele* "captain Sander."
 — 371, 18 & 19, *dele* "von Bothmer, von Witte, Meyer, Winekler."
 — 387, — 5, *for* "Elba" *read* "St. Helena."

APPENDIX.

- 418, — 2, *for* "2d line" *read* "2d light," and add to "officers
 wounded": "lieut. Mielmann, artillery, slightly."
 — *ibid*, 1st drag. *for* "24 rank and file, and 23 horses wounded," *read* "34
 rank and file, and 43 horses wounded."
 — *ibid*, 2d drag. *for* "19 rank and file killed," *read* "20 rank and file
 killed," and *for* "27 horses killed," 23 wounded,"
read "28 killed, and 29 wounded," and alter total
 accordingly.

- Page 437, end of page, *for* "W. Maling," *read* "T. Maling."
 — 438, line 12, *for* "expenditure," *read* "expedition."
 — 442, 2 & 3, *dele* "captain F. Wyneken, and lieut. Holtzermann,"
 — *ibid*, . . . 6, *for* "Marwedel," *read* "Mervede."
 — *ibid*, . . . 20, *for* "Scharnhorst," *read* "Schauroth."
 — 514, . . . 17, *for* "St. Sebastian," *read* "St. Etienne."
 — 16, . . . 21, *for* "Marwedel," *read* "Mervede."
 Return XX, *for* "George Klingsöhr," *read* "Charles Helmrich."

COMPLETE LIST, &c.

- No. 1, place * *after* "R. St. A. O."
 — 32, ditto, *before* "No."
 — 33, ditto,
 — 38, ditto,
 —260, ditto,
 —272, *for* "Hons." *read* "Hans."

DIRECTIONS FOR THE BINDER.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Plate IV, | <i>to face the title.</i> |
| Monument to general von Langwerth, | } <i>to follow page ... 400</i> |
| Plates I, II, III, and V, | |
| Return XX, | <i>to face page ... 452</i> |
| Returns A. B. C. D. E. F. G. H. I., | <i>to follow page ... 672</i> |

CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO THE BATTLE
OF TALAVERA.

Letter from Major-General von Berger to the Author.

TRANSLATION.

SIR,

The officers of the King's German Legion must acknowledge with the most lively thanks, and some degree of shame, that you, a stranger, have undertaken to write the history of their corps, and thereby to erect a lasting testimonial of its services.

From the 1st volume of the work, which appeared about two years since, it is evident with what difficulties you have had to contend in the execution of it, and it is, indeed, a matter of astonishment that you have succeeded in so great a measure, in extracting the truth and forming a connected whole from the various—perhaps often contradictory accounts, journals and notes of which your materials were composed. It could not, however, but arise that, in the description of individual occurrences, these fragments should have led you into errors which, had you been able to avail yourself of better sources of information, would, doubtless, have been avoided.

With reluctance have I decided upon addressing you respecting one of these statements, because it partly concerns myself personally, and in the refutation of it, I must come forward, in some degree, as my own panegyrist, which, during my service of nearly fifty-five years, I have never allowed myself to do. But called upon by many of the officers of the 7th line battalion of the Legion, which corps I had long the honor to command, I am induced to take this step, and I venture to hope that it will prove as unobjectionable to yourself, as incapable of being misunderstood.

In describing the battle of Talavera you have stated, on the authority of lieutenant (afterwards captain) Stutzer, that the 7th line battalion of the Legion, which, with part of the 5th battalion, were thrown into disorder by an unexpected attack of the enemy, fired upon the skirmishers of the 1st line battalion, commanded

by lieutenant von Holle. This is entirely without foundation; for I had strictly forbidden the men to fire, having learned that some of our troops had been sent to fall upon the enemy's flank.

The disorder, also, into which the 7th battalion fell, was not so great as your description would imply. The greater part of the battalion remained in the position which had been assigned to it, and defended itself in so determined a manner that the men were at close quarters (*Handgemein*) with the enemy, and, having no room to fire, were obliged to use the butt-ends of their musquets. In proof of this I have only to add, that two or three french officers were stripped of the decoration of the legion of honour by some of my men, and two of the enemy, who had remained behind in the 7th battalion, were made prisoners. The singular incident also occurred to myself, that my horse, which had been hit by a ball, sprung forward and carried me into the midst of an enemy's battalion; I however, succeeded in turning him round, and came back to the 7th battalion, when he fell dead under me.

This attack was not altogether unexpected by me; for, some time before, I observed, although it was almost dark, an enemy's column move against our left wing. I pointed this out to the brigadier and requested that he would provide me with support, but he would not be convinced of what I had stated, nor would he even allow the battalion to stand up and meet the charge of the enemy, because general Sherbrooke, who commanded the division, had ordered the troops to lie down. If, under these circumstances, the battalion should have entirely given way, no reproach could, therefore, be attached to it; for, left to itself, it could not possibly long withstand the main column of general Lapisse, which consisted of at least, 2000 men.

We lost on this occasion from 30 to 40 men in killed and wounded. After general Hill had repulsed the enemy, I received orders to throw back the battalion some hundred paces and align it with the 5th battalion.

The description is further incorrect in stating that the 5th line battalion formed the left wing of the German brigades. The 7th battalion stood on the flank, the battalions being placed in the order of their numbers. This can, if necessary, be corroborated

CORRESPONDENCE.

XXV

by general Donkin, who was by me a short time before the enemy's attack, and talked with me about the precarious (*misslich*) situation in which I was placed with my battalion.

Whether, as the history further states, captain Langrehr, on the renewal of the action, the morning of the 28th July, rushed forward against the enemy at the head of the 5th battalion, with the colour in his hand, I can neither assert nor deny; but that I seized the colour of the 7th battalion, in order to raise the courage of the men, which I believed to have sunk from the occurrence of the preceding evening, the officers of the battalion yet living cannot deny: several written certificates of this fact have been already forwarded to captain Heise. To my no small satisfaction the whole battalion marched gallantly forward, and we succeeded in driving back the enemy, who suffered considerable loss. I should never have mentioned this last circumstance, the relation of which would probably have brought upon me the reproach of vain-glory, had not, in the description of this battle, the 7th battalion been represented in so little favourable a light. This alone has led me to state every thing that could tend to the honor of this truly brave battalion. For the same reason I will also add that general Sherbrooke, under whose orders both brigades of the Legion stood, came to me after the attack, and said, "your battalion this morning gloriously revenged the check which it undeservedly suffered the evening before."

You will, Sir, no doubt, excuse my having gone so much at length into this matter. As officer commanding the late 7th line battalion of the Legion I felt it was my duty to do so, and I venture to hope that in the 2d volume of your work, you will either insert this letter, or, in some other manner, correct the erroneous statements respecting this battalion.

I have the honor to be,
 With the greatest respect,
 Sir,
 Your most obedient servant,
 A VON BERGER,
Major-General.

Nienburg, Dec. 3, 1834.

REPLY.

Hanover, Dec. 7th 1834.

SIR,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3d inst., and beg to thank you for the favorable terms in which you have been good enough to notice the 1st volume of my History of the King's German Legion. The difficulties with which I had to contend in the compilation of the work, you duly appreciate, and you do me no more than justice in believing, that had more copious details of the achievements of the corps been placed at my disposal, some errors and omissions which, I regret to learn, appear in the text, would have been avoided.

I shall not fail to append your description of the part taken by the 7th line battalion of the Legion at the battle of Talavera to the forthcoming volume of the work, and I trust that this document, in conjunction with a statement from major von Holle on the same subject, will be found fully to redeem the errors, to which you have, with so much courtesy, called my attention.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

N. LUDLOW BEAMISH.

To Major-General von Berger.
 &c. &c. &c.

Statement of major von Holle.

TRANSLATION.

The surprise of the night of the 29th July was related to me in the manner I have stated, by my late brother, lieutenant Charles von Holle, who was then wounded; namely:—

He was sent down the hill with his few skirmishers to plant outposts, and came upon the enemy's column of apparently nine battalions, which, charging up the hill with a tremendous fire of musquetry, drove his detachment before them, exactly upon the 7th battalion of the Legion.

The 7th battalion, half asleep upon the ground, suddenly received a shower of balls, which it immediately returned, without