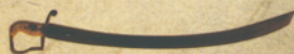




A Cavalryman • in the Crimea

THE LETTERS OF TEMPLE GODMAN
5TH DRAGOON GUARDS



PHILIP WARNER

A Cavalryman in the
CRIMEA

By the same author

Alamein: Reflections of the Heroes
(republished by Pen & Sword, 2007)
Auchinleck: The Lonely Soldier
(republished by Pen & Sword, 2006)
Battle of France
Battle of Loos
(republished by Pen & Sword, 2009)
Best of British Pluck
British Battlefields 1: The North
British Battlefields 2: The South
British Battlefields 3: The Midlands
British Battlefields 4: Scotland
Daily Telegraph Book of British Battlefields
British Cavalry
Castles in Britain (illustrated edition)
Civil Service
The D-Day Landings
(republished by Pen & Sword, 2004)
Disputed Territories
Distant Battle
Famous Scottish Battles
Famous Welsh Battles
Field Marshal Earl Haig
Fields of War: Letters Home from the Crimea
The Great British Soldier
Growing Up in the First World War
A Guide to the Castles in the British Isles
Horrocks: The General Who Led from the Front
(republished by Pen & Sword, 2005)
Invasion Road
The Japanese Army of World War II
Kitchener: The Man Behind the Legend
The Medieval Castle in Peace & War
Panzer
Passchendaele (republished by Pen & Sword, 2007)
Phantom (republished by Pen & Sword, 2005)
Political Parties
Roman Roads
Secret Forces of World War 2
(republished by Pen & Sword, 2004)
Sieges of the Middle Ages
(republished by Pen & Sword, 2004)
Soldier: His Life in Peace and War
Special Air Service (Official History)
Special Boat Service
Stories of Famous Regiments
World War One: A Chronological Narrative
(republished by Pen & Sword, 2008)
World War II: The Untold Story
The Zeebrugge Raid
(republished by Pen & Sword, 2008)

A Cavalryman in the
CRIMEA

The Letters of
Temple Godman
5th Dragoon Guards

EDITED BY
PHILIP WARNER



Pen & Sword
MILITARY

First published by John Murray (Publishers) Ltd in 1977
and reprinted, 2007

Reprinted in this format in 2009 by

Pen & Sword Military

an imprint of

Pen & Sword Books Ltd

47 Church Street

Barnsley

South Yorkshire S70 2AS

Introduction and notes © Philip Warner 1977, 2007, 2009

Temple Godman letters © Georgina Mayne

and Elizabeth de Clermont 1977, 2007, 2009

ISBN 978 1 84884 108 6

The right of Philip Warner to be identified as
author of this work has been asserted by him in accordance
with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988

A CIP catalogue record for this book is
available from the British Library

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted
in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical including
photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval
system, without permission from the Publisher in writing.

Printed and bound in England
by CPI

Pen & Sword Books Ltd incorporates the imprints of
Pen & Sword Aviation, Pen & Sword Maritime, Pen & Sword Military,
Wharnccliffe Local History, Pen & Sword Select,
Pen & Sword Military Classics and Leo Cooper,
Remember When, Seaforth Publishing and Frontline Publishing

For a complete list of Pen & Sword titles please contact
PEN & SWORD BOOKS LIMITED
47 Church Street, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S70 2AS, England
E-mail: enquiries@pen-and-sword.co.uk
Website: www.pen-and-sword.co.uk

Contents

Introduction	<i>I</i>
1 Warships to Varna	<i>11</i>
2 The Brushwood Plain	<i>18</i>
3 Cholera	<i>40</i>
4 Charge of the Heavy Brigade	<i>61</i>
5 The Winter Siege	<i>81</i>
6 Building for Survival	<i>100</i>
7 Bombardment of Sebastopol	<i>133</i>
8 The Attempt on the Malakoff	<i>164</i>
9 The Fruits of Victory	<i>179</i>
10 Home from the Field	<i>190</i>
Index	<i>209</i>

ILLUSTRATION SOURCES

The Publishers thank all the following for their generous help and permission to reproduce copyright material:

1 Mrs Virginia Tregear: 2, 3, 17, 18 Mrs Elizabeth de Clermont: 4, 5, 10, 12 Parker Gallery, London: 6 Black Watch Regimental Museum, Perth: 7 Science Museum, London: 8, 9, 11, 13 National Army Museum, London: 14 Victoria & Albert Museum, London: 15 Scottish United Services Museum, Edinburgh: 16 Mrs Georgina Mayne.

Map of Sebastopol & Balaklava 1855 is reproduced from *Little Hodge* edited by the Marquess of Anglesey, by kind permission of Leo Cooper Ltd. Map of Heavy Cavalry Charge, Balaklava, is reproduced by kind permission of the Editor and first appeared in his book, *The Crimean War: a reappraisal*, published by Arther Barker Ltd.

Illustrations

- 1 Temple Godman aged thirty-nine in 1871
- 2 Park Hatch, Surrey (since demolished), the Godmans' country house
- 3 The Earl held by Kilburn
- 4 Godman, Kilburn and The Earl
- 5 English Heavy Cavalry gathering hay in the Crimea
- 6 The harbour at Balaklava
- 7 Ships unloading at Balaklava
- 8 Officers and N.C.O.s of the 5th Dragoon Guards in off-duty dress
- 9 General Scarlett, Commander of the Heavy Brigade
- 10 The Charge of the Heavy Brigade during the Battle of Balaklava
- 11 Major Abraham Bolton of the 5th Dragoon Guards
- 12 Major A. W. D. Burton of the 5th Dragoon Guards
- 13 *The Welcome Arrival* by J. D. Luard
- 14 Interior of the Redan at Sebastopol
- 15 Kadikoi Camp near Balaklava
- 16 Temple Godman in the uniform of a Major-General
- 17 Temple Godman and his four sons at Highden in Sussex
- 18 Active to the last, Temple Godman on the moor

MAPS

Sebastopol and Balaklava 1855	16/17
Heavy Cavalry Charge, Balaklava, 25 October 1854	74

EDITOR'S NOTE

Some of Temple Godman's letters have been omitted altogether; cuts (indicated by ellipses) have also been made to a number of others. These deletions have been made not simply because of considerations of length. Many are repetitions; postal, provisioning, and clothing details; or question and comment on Godman family friends in England.

For the sake of the reader, the letters have been divided into chapters and into paragraphs. A certain amount of punctuation has been added and spelling corrected, though it is hoped, without removing Temple Godman's flavour.

Introduction

It is ironic that the Crimean War, which was more fully and accurately reported at the time than any previous war, should have been so misrepresented afterwards. Of a remarkable and interesting campaign, quite modern in some aspects, all that seems to persist in the public mind is the Charge of the Light Brigade and the 'thin red line'. The two incidents together occupied less than thirty minutes; the remainder of the war lasted over two years. There is, of course, interest in Florence Nightingale but she was a long way from the battlefields.

When fighting soldiers eventually read or hear what was supposed to have taken place on campaigns in which they were engaged they tend to smile cynically. Sometimes they consider offering a few corrections, but rarely bother; the task, they often feel, is too large, and scarcely worth the trouble. Fortunately, there are occasions when someone who took an active part has kept records — a diary perhaps — and then a new picture emerges. It may not be the view of the Commanding Officer, or the politicians; it may differ substantially from the official version and may damage a few reputations but it will undoubtedly show what the war was really like. For wars are fought by men, usually tired, cold and hungry, and not by numbers and quaint euphemisms. We tend to forget that 'an attack at Company strength was repulsed with severe casualties' probably means that about sixty people were killed or wounded in an unsuccessful venture. As a piece of military history it is of slight interest but for those concerned, the wounded and the survivors, it is an unforgettable experience.

Among the survivors there will be a variety of memories. To some it will be an appalling and futile disaster, to others a moment of great excitement which gave them a feeling of lasting achievement; to yet others a time which gave them an insight into their own character and potential. Of course, there are almost as many views as the number of men involved.

How far we can perceive the feelings of those concerned in the

actual fighting depends on the extent of the personal records. A bare narrative which confines itself to the events of the battlefield tells us little; a detailed account covering a wider range of experience gives us a guide to the writer's mind and the quality of his assessments.

The Temple Godman letters give a valuable insight into the Crimean War for several reasons. One is their completeness. He went out at the start to the Crimea in May 1854 and did not return till two years later, after peace had been declared. Another is their humane perceptiveness. He would write one account for his mother, sparing her the details, and another for his brother whose feelings were presumably less tender. In addition, he is passionately interested in what seem to us relatively unimportant details. This last aspect is perhaps the most valuable for from it we can assess his reactions to other matters. In short, what might seem harsh, inefficient, and unnecessary in the 1970s may have seemed normal, sensible and essential in the 1850s.

Not for a moment did Temple Godman wish to be anywhere else than the Crimea. He missed his home comforts but did not wish to be at home to enjoy them. Many soldiers engaged in hazardous and strenuous activities simply cannot be bothered to make a record of them; they would rather have a sleep or a game of cards, or just forget them. Later, if they change their minds and try to piece the story together their memories have lost some of the details. In hindsight they may feel some self-pity.

There is nothing of that in Temple Godman. He is intelligent and imaginative so he knows quite well the dangers which surround him, and they are many. Some soldiers are too stupid to understand the situation in which they find themselves and therefore appear to be brave; their deficiencies become apparent when the battle demands cool, swift, constructive thought. Cardigan of the Light Brigade was undoubtedly one of these. His orders had been 'to advance rapidly to the front and try to prevent the enemy carrying off the guns'. He was not, however, told to advance in a manner which would guarantee his brigade would be virtually wiped out.

The Charge of the Heavy Brigade, in which Godman took part, was a great success and was just as courageous as the Charge of the Light Brigade. Unfortunately few people have ever heard of it.

It is a curiosity of the British character that we take more pleasure in dwelling on our disasters than our successes. Everybody has heard of Dunkirk, Dieppe and Arnhem but what is known of Mareth, Sittang and Falaise?

But even the Charge of the Heavy Brigade was no more than an incident. A disaster there would not have lost the campaign although it would have been a serious setback. When it took place we had already won the Battle of the Alma — and made very poor use of it — and soon afterwards we would win the Battle of Inkerman, which was a very fine performance indeed. And then with all the famous glamorous battles over, the army would settle down for nearly two years and win the war. It would be achieved by solid deeds of courage and endurance, many of them performed by unnamed men. Every opportunity of a quick victory had been frittered away by the ineptitude of the Higher Command. For the long months ahead we had opponents who were renowned for their stoicism and endurance.

THE WAR

How, one might ask, had all this come about, and what had brought the twenty-two-year-old Richard Temple Godman into the thick of it?

The root causes of the war may be summarized fairly briefly. Long before the discovery of oil or the establishment of small nationalist states, the eastern end of the Mediterranean was clearly of enormous importance to any country aspiring to Great Power status. Britain, for example, regarded it as vital to her communications with India; France regarded it as essential to what she hoped would be an expansionist policy; Russia regarded it as highly important as a window on the west. Russia's ambitions were mixed with apprehensions. She knew that the decaying Turkish Empire which still sprawled over a vast area — reaching as far as Egypt — might collapse at any moment and she was desperately anxious to ensure that when it did, she herself would be one of the beneficiaries. Unfortunately her efforts to safeguard existing interests and further others caused her to behave with such heavy-handed ineptitude that she aroused fear and hostility on all sides. Her fears of what the Turks might or might not do with their

unwieldy inheritance brought her to war with Turkey four times in the 19th century. The immediate causes which touched off the Crimean War do not concern us here. Suffice to say that after a series of acts which the Russians thought were legitimate defensive moves, and which the Turks, French and British thought were blatant examples of aggression, Turkey, France and Britain declared war on Russia on 28 March 1854.

Whatever the justice of the cause it was an awkward moment for Britain. The army had been run down and neglected since Waterloo in 1815 and, in thirty-seven years, parsimony and neglect can do a lot of damage to any army. Even under the best conditions there can be administrative breakdowns. The miracle of the Crimean War was that in fighting a campaign 3,000 miles away on virtually unknown territory there were not more.

The aim of Britain and France in 1854 was to capture and immobilize Sebastopol, the Russian port and naval base in the Black Sea. The Russian plan was to prevent this occurring and, in due course, to push westwards and capture Constantinople (Istanbul), thereby gaining control of the ingress to the Black Sea. There were minor activities in other areas, such as the Baltic, but the centre of the war was the Crimea, a peninsula jutting into the Black Sea. As the Allies were soon to discover, the Crimea had a climate of extremes, very hot and dusty in the summer and bitterly cold in the winter. Diseases of all sorts flourished in the region, but the most deadly was cholera, a waterborne infection which can kill within hours. Neither the causes nor the cure of cholera were known and it was to exact an appalling toll.

In order to reach Sebastopol the Allies had to establish a base at Varna, in what is now Bulgaria, and cross the Black Sea to a suitable landing point in the Crimea. Initially they were able to land unhindered on the Crimean peninsula north of Sebastopol. On the march south they encountered the Russians on the slopes by the river Alma and won the ensuing battle by the sheer bravery of their exhausted and cholera-stricken troops. Lord Raglan, supposedly in overall command, isolated himself and had no influence on the outcome.

After the victory at the Alma the Allies made a controversial move by marching right round Sebastopol instead of attacking it from the north. This gave them the poor-quality port of Balaklava

but they lost so much time that the Russians were able to improve their fortifications considerably. Every week that passed made the position of the Allies worse and the situation of the Russians stronger. The Battle of the Alma had not taken place till 20 September 1854, and it had been followed by an incomplete blockade. The Allies had manoeuvred themselves into a most unsatisfactory position, six miles from the port of Balaklava and at the same time isolated from the interior. Added to this their equipment was old, faulty and unsuitable, as well as being insufficient. Clothing and food were inadequate; there was hardly any fuel. Cholera was the major killer but there were other illnesses too; the nearest hospital was at Scutari, near Constantinople, 300 miles across the Black Sea. Conditions in that 'hospital', some of which was built over a cesspool, defied belief.

The cavalry battles, which comprised the Charge of the Heavy Brigade and the Charge of the Light Brigade, became known as the Battle of Balaklava. This also included the episode known as the 'thin red line' when the 93rd (Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders) stood between a Russian cavalry advance and the port of Balaklava and deflected the four Russian squadrons.

The Charge of the Light Brigade has been too often reported to need much space here. Raglan intended the Light Brigade, a force numbering 673, to advance on the Russians who were trying to draw away some Turkish guns they had captured earlier in the day. From their position in the valley neither Lord Lucan, the Cavalry Division Commander, nor the Earl of Cardigan, commanding the Light Brigade, could see the guns Raglan wished them to recapture. All they could see was a formidable array of Russian guns a mile up the valley. With magnificent courage they reached those guns, sabred some of the gunners but then retired as they had no means of holding their hard-won objective. One hundred and thirteen men were killed and 134 wounded; nearly all the horses were killed.

Heroic though it was, the Charge of the Light Brigade had no effect on the course of the war. The Charge of the Heavy Brigade, in which Temple Godman took part, and which he describes in detail, repulsed an advance by a body of some 3,000 Russians and did it with such vigour that the Russian cavalry morale never recovered from the experience during the rest of the war. The

effect on British cavalry morale from then on was that Russian skirmishing was regarded as a nuisance rather than a menace.

The next battle, Inkerman, on 5 November 1854, was much larger. Russian casualties were said to have been over 10,000 and Allied losses approximately 3,500. Inkerman was a confused battle, fought in fog and rain and became known as the 'soldiers' battle' because any form of higher direction was impossible owing to the unexpectedness and obscurity of the Russian advance. Troops were committed piecemeal to the fighting.

After the victory of Inkerman, Sebastopol would probably have fallen easily but no attempt was made to assault it.

The Allied army then settled down for the winter. The weather was appalling; administrative chaos reigned; typical of the supply situation was that 10,000 children's stockings were sent and a huge consignment of left-foot boots. A major disaster occurred on 14 November when a storm sank over twenty ships at anchor. Their stores could easily have been unloaded previously but went to the bottom with the ships. After Inkerman Raglan had ordered the British cavalry up to the Inkerman ridge where it was nearly impossible to supply them; the aim was that they should protect this flank. By 1 December most of the horses were dead or like skeletons and the remnants were withdrawn. Not all officers stuck it out with their men like Temple Godman. Lord George Paget, who had ridden with the Light Brigade, asked permission to go home as the campaign looked like offering little future cavalry work; however, he was shamed into returning. Cardigan lived in luxury on a yacht, and there were others who imitated his bad example.

Public indignation, fed by W. H. Russell's reports to *The Times*, demanded an improvement in the supply situation but this did not occur until the armies had experienced the full miseries of a Crimean winter. In April the siege was again prosecuted with full vigour, and continued again through the following months with steeply mounting casualties. On 18 June 1855 an Allied assault was repulsed with heavy losses. On 15 August the Russians launched an attack at Traktir Bridge, hoping to dislocate the Allied dispositions, but it ended in failure at a cost of some 6,000 Russians; this was the Battle of Tchernaya. On 8 September 1855 another Allied assault resulted in the capture of the Malakoff fort by the French, though

the British were repulsed at the Redan. The next day the Russians abandoned Sebastopol. However, they now dug in on the Mackenzie Heights and the war was not yet over. On 16 January Russia agreed that the Austrians should help negotiate a peace treaty and on 30 March 1856 the Treaty of Paris was signed. The last units of the British army did not leave the Crimea until 12 July 1856.

THE REGIMENT

Godman's regiment, the 5th Dragoon Guards, had been formed in 1685. A number of changes had taken place since those early days. Initially it had been called Shrewsbury's Horse after their first Colonel, the twenty-five-year-old Earl of Shrewsbury. Three years later James II replaced Shrewsbury by Richard Hamilton, a Roman Catholic. When William III succeeded James II Hamilton was put in the Tower of London and John Coy, an experienced member of the regiment, given the Colonelcy. At this time each trooper was armed with a straight, two-edged sword, two pistols in saddle holsters and a muzzle-loading carbine.

It was clearly in the Colonel's interest to have his men in good health and well trained but he was not assisted in this by the fact that his officers, who had also purchased their commissions, usually neglected any peacetime training. They believed that their personal gallantry in battle would suffice to win the day and were sometimes killed in circumstances which demonstrated the heights of their courage and depth of their ineptitude. From the start, Shrewsbury's Horse had shown a far more efficient approach to training than many of its contemporaries and this was reflected in its good results. In 1690 another new regiment was formed to fight in Ireland; this was Conyngham's 6th Inniskilling Dragons (or Dragoons). Dragoons were not, strictly speaking, cavalry, but were mounted infantry who used their horses to give them mobility and would dismount to fight. They had the same weapons as the Horse and took their name from their flintlock carbine called a 'dragon-fire spouter'. Until the end of the 17th century they used infantry terms, such as 'company' instead of 'troop'. As time progressed, such regiments with their heavier arms and equipment, and stronger but slower horses, became 'heavy' cavalry, with appropriate functions. In contrast, Hussar regiments (from the

Hungarian *huszar*, meaning lightly horsed freebooter) were principally employed in reconnaissance and light skirmishing.

Over the next hundred years both regiments took part in a number of distinguished engagements, notably under Marlborough's command. In 1788 the title 'Horse' was abolished and all the Irish Horse were renamed 'Dragoons'. Coy's Horse, after a number of other designations, had settled down to being the 2nd Horse. It now became the 5th Dragoon Guards, but for many years was known as the 'Green Horse' from the colour of the uniform facings. The 5th D.G. gained further distinction in the Napoleonic Wars and during the long peace (and neglect of the army) which followed contrived to remain more efficient than many units. Nevertheless at the outbreak of the Crimean War the regiment was under strength and could only muster two squadrons (a total of 300 men) and 250 horses. The regiment was commanded by Lt.-Colonel T. Le Marchant. Going out at the same time were the Inniskilling Dragoons. [In 1922 they would be amalgamated with the 5th D.G. The combined regiment was at first called the 5th/6th Dragoons — a title which successfully infuriated everyone; the 5th D.G. resented the omission of the word 'Guards' and the Inniskillings were equally incensed at losing the word 'Inniskilling'. Five years later, after strong representation the regiment became the 5th Inniskilling Dragoon Guards, which it still is in 1977.]

A proportion of the letters is devoted to Godman's speculations on promotion. Although he was in the thick of the fighting, he seemed likely to gain little advantage from it and in one of the later letters he remarks that if the militia are sent out, he will probably be outranked by men of no military experience whatever.

The purchase system, which was abolished in 1871, was illogical, complicated and unjust. However, it was not unpopular with serving officers who regarded it as a form of gamble and was approved by Parliament as it ensured a good supply of officers at low cost to the country. Although an officer could occasionally gain 'a step' by the death of his immediate senior in battle, the normal promotion procedure was to purchase the next rank vacancy from the person relinquishing it.

Some of these purchases were made at 'regulation' price; others required a higher bid. 'Over-regulation' was, of course,

illegal though widespread. Sometimes an officer was promoted for distinguished service but this was an 'army' rank, not a regimental one, and there were interesting situations in which a member of a regiment might hold an 'army' rank above that of the commanding officer of his regiment; it did not affect his regimental position. Temple Godman had purchased his initial commission as a cornet for £840; at the end of the war his captaincy was worth at least £3,225. A year after he became a major purchase was abolished and he became a Lt.-Colonel within a year of that.

Explained like this the system probably does not seem ridiculous or corrupt. However, there had been situations when infants or even women had held commissions and where competent officers were invariably passed over; some served twenty or thirty years in the same junior rank. One saving grace was that it helped to create a stable society by drawing officers from the strata with most to lose if there should be a revolution. An officer who had bought his commission and hoped to sell it later would view with considerable distaste any upstart who wished to overturn the existing regime.

THE MAN AND HIS FAMILY

Temple Godman arrived out in Varna in June 1854. He had been born at Park Hatch (now demolished), Surrey, in 1832. He was the second son of Joseph and Caroline Godman, who had twelve other children. He had been educated at Eton, which in the 1840s can scarcely have been comfortable, and was commissioned by purchase into the 5th Dragoon Guards on 17 May 1851. His initial rank was cornet and on 3 March 1854, shortly before sailing for the Crimea, he became a lieutenant. Just over a year later (21 July 1855) he became a captain, but not until fifteen years later, on 22 June 1870, did he become a major. Scarcely more than a year after he was appointed Lt.-Colonel, became a full Colonel in 1876, and retired in 1882 with the honorary rank of Major-General. He died in 1912.

In 1871 Temple Godman married Eliza de Crespigny, who bore him four sons and three daughters. Although at thirty-nine he might have seemed to have left marriage fairly late, some of his sons left it even later; and his grandchildren are therefore still

quite young. (One of his daughters married E. S. Shrapnell-Smith, descendant of Henry Shrapnell, who invented the shrapnel shell.)

His younger brother, Frederick, to whom some of the Crimean letters are written, and who went out to the Crimea to see him, became an eminent ornithologist, author of many books; he wrote most of a forty-seven-volume work, *The Biology of Central America*. The children seem to have been very fond of each other in a rumbustious way. In the 1840s when the boys had been sent to bed to be out of the way of a dinner party they decided to dangle young Frederick, with a sheet tied to his leg, upside down outside the dining-room window. Whatever the effect on the guests, it resulted in an immediate and sharp beating for all concerned, even young Frederick.

Temple Godman is clearly quite fearless, both physically and morally. He makes light of danger and is in no way inhibited from expressing justified criticisms of his senior officers. He sees no reason why their ineptitude should be glossed over by such as he — a victim of it. Most of the Generals were too old as well as unsuited for their task; Raglan was sixty-six and unequal to the physical strain. Burgoyne was seventy-two. There have been brilliant elderly commanders but the chances are against it.

Among his final letters Godman tells us that all his possessions have been destroyed in a fire at Scutari. They included a journal he had kept every day. Had it survived it would have been a most valuable document if his letters are anything to go by.

A final point is that Temple Godman succeeded in keeping the same horses throughout the entire war. It would have been a magnificent feat under any conditions but those in the Crimea made it exceptional. It is a convincing testimonial to the blend of sensitivity and practical mindedness that went to make this most unusual and appealing cavalry officer. He richly deserved the laurels that life were to bring him.

PHILIP WARNER

I

Warships to Varna

*The Himalaya**

Tuesday May 30th 1854

My dear Father — Now I have nothing to do I think it better to write, and add more as we proceed. We left Queenstown† at 2 p.m. on Sunday (which however did not seem to me much like Sunday) in a thunderstorm; in spite of the rain all the people turned out to cheer us as we sailed by. At 4 p.m. we dined, and before it was over nearly all had left the table and gone to bed. Nothing could be more unfortunate than our first night, for towards evening before the horses had time to get used to the motion, it came on to blow, and increased to a gale, with torrents of rain, and the sea constantly breaking on us. Ferguson, the Major, and myself were the only ones not ill. We did not go to bed, and we, assisted by three or four men who were not ill, were constantly going round the horses tying them shorter, and putting those on their legs who had fallen from the rough sea and wet decks. They, however, fell faster than we could put them right. Some got their forefeet over the boxes, and we pushed them back by main force, for if they had got loose on deck, someone must have been hurt. They were actually screaming with fright, the canvas covering over their heads was cracked by the wind, and by flicking them made them much worse. Two horses that fell next each other gave us much trouble, and at last we had to cut them out of their boxes, and drag them on deck before they could get up.

At last morning broke, and I was never more glad. Before this,

* The *Himalaya* a P.&O. screw-propelled steamship — the biggest in the world at the time of its launching — had been sold to the Admiralty for use as a troopship and was used extensively during the Crimean War. This remarkable old ship was eventually sunk by German bombers in World War II when it was being used as a storeship in Portland Harbour.

† Queenstown is now Cóbh, outport of Cork.

however, they turned her head more round to the wind, which took us out of our course, and they took off half her speed. She then went steadier and the horses did not tumble about so much. Being well tired and wet through I got to bed about 4 a.m. As it did not blow so much, being very sleepy I did not wake till one and so lost breakfast and lunch, for they give us nothing except at particular times.

Monday I was very tired all day, but I have not been at all ill yet. Tuesday evening sighted Cape Finisterre and passed a ship about three miles off, which they made out to be a transport with some of the 11th Hussars; changed signals with her and soon left her behind. She sailed a week before us from Dublin; her name was the *Parola*. Calm weather since Monday evening, horses all well. Got out of the Bay of Biscay Tuesday evening. Wednesday morning had a muster parade and saw several whales about quarter of a mile off, spouting up the water. They do not feed us very well on board. I am getting used to being crowded in our cabin — there is not much room to spare with three in it. All our men were very ill at first, and you can't fancy anything more wretched than they were, strewn all over the floor and deck as thick as peas, so ill they could not move; they have none of them got any hammocks, but sleep where they can. Most of our sea-sick officers came out again Tuesday — and all seem pretty well now. Saw the coast of Portugal most part of the day, and in the evening passed the rock of Lisbon. Thursday still in sight of the coast — passed Gibraltar in the evening about 11 p.m. and had a pretty good view of the Rock, being moonlight. Friday in sight of the Spanish coast all the forenoon, saw the Sierra Nevada mountains covered with snow; they seemed very high, though we were told they were eighty miles off.

I find we only pay 3s 6d for our daily feeding, which is certainly cheap for what we get; Government pays the rest. All the horses well except one or two, and these not seriously indisposed. The screw shakes so I cannot write well. Captain Crispin of the *Fairy* is on board in order to see if the screw would do for H.M. Yacht. He does not like it at all, says he is disappointed with the *Himalaya's* speed, and thinks the screw will in a few years loosen the vessel by the shaking. Our average pace has been 11 knots an hour. This is quite an experiment taking horses on the upper deck, and

it can't be a very safe one. They say if the machinery broke they would have to throw some or all of the 190 horses on the upper deck overboard in order to work the sails. The sailors have most of them never been to sea before, they are so hard to get. The weather is beautiful and likely to be so all the way, very warm. We do not expect to know where we land till we get to Constantinople; I suppose we shall go to Varna.* There is an Artillery officer on board, quite a boy, just got his commission. His name is Nicholls; he comes from Chichester and knows the people about there and Midhurst; he is going up to the war.

Saturday — In sight of the African coast all day, passed Algiers but too far off to see the town which is in a bay. Threw overboard our first horse, which however was pronounced to have died of natural causes, and not from the voyage. It is very hot indeed today, not a cloud to be seen, so delightful, the sea as calm as a pond and as blue as paint. Sunday, all well on board, had prayers, very hot weather; I have not much baggage, but I expect to have to leave much of this behind me. We have come all the way about $10\frac{3}{4}$ miles an hour. Last night passed another transport, but too dark to see what she was — supposed to be the 11th Hussars. We shall be about four days to Constantinople from Malta and I will write again next chance. When we get there we shall know where we are to land. We have just passed Galeta off which the *Avenger* was lost. We keep well outside the islands; can see the coast of Tunis plainly. Monday warmer still; today within a few hours of Malta, where we coal and water and land infantry; stay about twelve hours I believe. Have now done about 2,300 miles in nine days.

Believe me your affectionate Son

The Himalaya

June 9th 1854

My dear Mother — We did not leave Malta till about 9 a.m. the 10th. I went on shore again that morning at five o'clock and bought a white wide-awake.† It certainly was intensely hot there. I went on board a French transport which was lying at Valetta, and which had twenty Artillery horses on board, all tied together

* A Bulgarian port.

† Soft wide-brimmed felt hat.

by the head and no separation between them. Our horses in such a position would soon have broken one another's legs by kicking, but the French horses show no breeding or spirit. We have had an excellent passage — the second day we saw no land till the evening, when the south coast of Greece came in sight. A very pleasant sail through the archipelago with its numerous islands (which appear very barren, but I believe really are not so) brought us last evening to near Tenedos where we lay to, as no ships are allowed to enter the Dardanelles at night.

This morning broke with a splendid sunrise, before which I was on deck; when we again proceeded passing Tenedos, with Asia on our right, we arrived at the castles of Europe and Asia, which command the entrance of the Dardanelles. We saw the tombs of Ajax, Achilles and Hector on the shore. From this point we passed on either side most picturesque little towns, and numerous forts, with idle-looking Turkish sentries lounging about. All the houses are low and roofed with brick, and though they look well from the sea at a mile's distance I can easily fancy them anything but comfortable residences. The trees are of a very deep green, and the corn, of which there seems plenty, is just turning yellow; the harvest in Malta is over. We passed, since we entered the Dardanelles, the most beautiful little valleys covered with wood and corn, which run into the sides of the hills. The land on either side is high, and seems covered chiefly with short grass; here and there large tracts of corn show that the land must be very fertile. Many parts put me in mind of the Sussex downs, with their undulating surface and short stumpy trees, which in this country I believe are myrtles and olives, but we are not quite near enough to distinguish their species.

I have been perfectly delighted with this day's journey, it is worth coming to see. We have been passing transports all day by dozens, some going up full, and others returning having discharged their cargoes. For every English* we pass two French, but these they are such ships as an Englishman would only expect to see a fisherman in. We overtook today several large English cavalry transports, which sailed long before us, but which are not likely to be in till long after us, as the wind is dead against them. They ran as close as they could to us, but we kept out of

* Godman frequently used 'English' where 'British' would have been accurate.

their way, and pretended not to see their signals to take them in tow. If we get there first we are more likely to get the best quarters. . . .

Your affectionate Son

The Himalaya

June 12th 1854

My dear Caroline — I suppose my last letter had about a week's start of this. It was finished in a hurry, and had no sooner left than an order came to say we were to go on to Varna without landing. We had been ordered to disembark on the Asia side of the Bosphorus, and to go into camp, but for some reason which I do not know, were countermanded and accordingly got up steam this morning and proceeded to Varna at 3 a.m. We were eleven days three hours from Cork to Constantinople. We anchored the night before, seven miles below Constantinople (curiously enough in a thunderstorm, as we left Cork); in the morning we steamed up to the city, the approach to which is very disappointing, the country being very low, and not unlike the Thames' banks about Greenwich, only there were not so many houses.

I went on shore where we were to have landed. There was an immense barrack there, where Elliot, and our Brigadier were quartered; anything like the filth it is impossible to imagine. Our Brigadier's rooms as well as the rest swarm with all manner of creeping things, so much so that one would be covered by sitting there only a few minutes. He said his only chance was to keep the room constantly flooded with water. Elliot lived in a store-room full of all sorts of rubbish and dirt. The view of Constantinople, Pera, etc. from the Bosphorus is the most beautiful thing I ever saw, it is impossible to describe it, more like a scene in the *Arabian Nights*, or a fairy scene. The mixture of houses, palaces, mosques with their minarets, with the beautiful green of the trees that grow among them is perfect, but when one lands the effect is spoilt; the streets are so narrow, dark, and winding that one can see nothing. The dress of the people is interesting and curious. From where we were at anchor (opposite Scutari) we could see the camp and barracks; the latter are immense, but filthy dirty and swarm with vermin. I went to see Watson; he lives with two other men in a room, the most wretched-looking place I ever saw, a door on some