

## **The Campaign in Portugal, 1762**

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### **The Seven Years' War**

The Seven Years' War (1756–63) was the last major conflict before the French Revolution to involve all the great powers of Europe. France, Austria, Saxony, Sweden, and Russia were aligned on one side against Prussia, Hanover and Britain on the other. The war arose out of the attempt of the Austrian Habsburgs to win back the rich province of Silesia, which had been wrested from them by Frederick II (the Great) of Prussia during the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–48). However, in effect, the Seven Years' War was a worldwide nine years' war fought between France and Great Britain, as each sought to control North America (the French and Indian War, 1754–63) and India. The British attacked disputed French positions in North America, and seized hundreds of French merchant ships. To draw in Spain to this increasingly global conflict, France initiated the signing of a "Family Compact" in August 1761 between two Bourbon kings - Louis XV of France and Charles III of Spain. Spain agreed to declare war on Great Britain if France had not obtained peace by the 1<sup>st</sup> May, 1762, and in return France would see that Spanish claims against British aggression in their colonies would be met. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of October, 1761, when the British government refused to declare immediate war on Spain, Prime Minister Pitt resigned. Three months later, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> January, 1762, Britain declared war on Spain to anticipate the Family Compact's deadline for Spanish intervention. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of May, 1762, the Spanish invaded Portugal, an old ally of Britain since the Treaty of Windsor in 1386. Britain sent an army out to Portugal, and hostilities lasted just four months, with no major battles taking place, even though both the Anglo-Portuguese and the Spanish armies were quite large. This campaign in Portugal is almost forgotten, and is sometimes referred to as the "Fantastic War". Overseas the Spanish took Colonia do Sacramento, on the estuary of the Rio de la Plata, opposite Buenos Aires. However, these Spanish successes were overshadowed by the British capture of Havana on August 13, 1762, and Manila in the Philippines on October 5, 1762. Three important West Indian islands also fell to the British: Martinique and Saint Lucia in February, and Grenada in March 1762.

### **Events leading up to the Campaign**

In Portugal, Sebastião de Carvalho, Count of Oeiras, and later Marquis of Pombal in 1770, saw that war was looming, and in November, 1761 he ordered Martinho de Melo e Castro, the Portuguese Minister in London, to appeal for help against an imminent attack by Spain, invoking the centuries' old Treaty of Windsor. Martinho de Melo e Castro specifically asked for the dispatch of stores, troops and money, and of competent military officers in an advisory capacity, preferably led by Lord Tyrawley, an old friend of Portugal, who had served as ambassador in Lisbon for 13 years and had a reputation as a veteran soldier. Britain promised an expeditionary force of 6,000-7,000 men, naval protection and stores, to be led by Lord Tyrawley, with a group of recommended officers and a subsidy of £200,000.



**Sebastião de Carvalho, Count of Oeiras, and later Marquis of Pombal**

Tyrawley landed in Lisbon on the 12<sup>th</sup> March, 1762, but most of the group of 30 officers, who were largely recommended by him, did not arrive until July. Tyrawley was accompanied by his son, Charles O'Hara of his regiment, the Coldstream Guards, and also by Charles Rainsford. Burgoyne, who arrived in June, had also served as Lieutenant-Colonel of the Coldstreams for a short period a year or two earlier. The Hon. John Craufurd and Lord George Lennox, were in Lisbon by the 1<sup>st</sup> of June, as was Colonel Carey and Lord Townsend. Lord Loudoun, who was to command the British contingent, said that it had become fashionable to volunteer for service in Portugal. Certainly a number of well-connected officers, and even several peers appeared on the scene. A German critic observed that men of this type were not serious soldiers, and thought too much of their pleasures. Some of them may have been so inclined, but as far as the records show, the majority in Portugal behaved well.

Sales, the Portuguese author, who studied the Campaign, confirms that the British officers seem to have been keen and competent; their chief weakness was a failure to acclimatise themselves; very few of them learned Portuguese, and as Protestants they could not make themselves at home as Frenchmen could. The lack of female society taxed them severely. The Hon. Augustus Hervey penetrated the highest circles in Lisbon, where he met good looking nuns and had the luck to be kidnapped by a Franco-Portuguese countess. Rainsford found solace with the ladies of the British Factory. However Colonel Lambert spoke of the woes of the majority, who longed for a country where cuckolds were better regarded. They had the choice between a "dose of cold steel in their gut from a jealous husband, or of mercury if they

sought more easily available company”. Several colonels are mentioned as victims of the latter, and their ill-health must have jeopardised their efficiency.

The Seven Years’ War had involved British troops in Germany, India, Canada and even West Africa, and troops and stores could not be sent to Lisbon as quickly as Lord Tyrawley desired. In the circumstances a delay of up to six months was not surprising, but Sebastião de Carvalho complained, although he agreed that the Portuguese preparations had to be carried out in utmost secrecy. He suggested that if Tyrawley arrived before the troops and stores, then he should remain incognito, and that he should only communicate with Portuguese Ministers through a third party. Indeed, even after Tyrawley had been in Lisbon for a whole month, Sebastião de Carvalho insisted on receiving him under cover of night at a back door. This was rather absurd, as the news that British troops were being prepared for embarkation was public, and Tyrawley's presence and military character were well known. It is unlikely that the French and Spanish diplomats were taken in by the Count of Oeiras' pretence that the repairs being made to the Tagus forts were only intended for protection against the British navy. However, Sebastião de Carvalho did succeed in keeping them guessing – insinuating that it was still just possible that Portugal might abrogate the alliance with Britain, or at least agree to be neutral. He succeeded in spinning out the negotiations until April, when a third ultimatum was delivered by the Spanish and French, and was then staunchly rejected by the King of Portugal. Sebastião de Carvalho then declared that he was most anxious to preserve the peace and that he would be ready to mediate between Britain and France and Spain, but that he would on no account renounce his alliance with Britain, but rather yield to the demand that he must join the Family Compact, or otherwise a Franco-Spanish army would cross the frontier to deliver the ports of Portugal from the thrall of Britain.

Portuguese patriotism was easily aroused against Spain, and despite the King’s brave words, Portugal was almost defenceless and was in no condition to carry out what had been promised in London in return for British aid. Martinho de Melo e Castro had promised an army of 30,000 men, or more, which would be mustered by the end of November, which would help the British troops transport their baggage to the front. Tyrawley found Sebastião de Carvalho very reluctant to give him details of what was being done, and although he could not check on the immediate size of the Portuguese forces, he was able to see that the resources available in no way measured up to the promises made. Royal finances were at low ebb and the Portuguese Army had suffered from a generation of neglect. Indeed the King’s principal resource was Sebastião de Carvalho himself, who was no expert in matters of war, neither maybe of economics, but he was, however, as tireless as he was talented, and he dominated the Portuguese scene, having successfully suppressed his many enemies. The Spanish Army was not in much better shape, although it was strong in the war of words. In spite of his obsession with secrecy and his panic lest support would be given to Spain, Sebastião de Carvalho, to Tyrawley's surprise, proved to be quite unruffled when Portugal was actually invaded by superior forces. Perhaps he had in the back of his mind to act out the plan to escape

with the government and the Royal Family to Brazil, as had been suggested by the well-known Portuguese diplomat, Luis da Cunha, a few years earlier.<sup>1</sup>

It had been intended that Tyrawley should go up country himself to report on the state of the defences, but the Portuguese discouraged him, and he soon fell ill and was far from eager to go. However, early in April 1762, Craufurd and Charles O'Hara were given Portuguese rank as Major General and Lieutenant-Colonel, and were both allowed to travel up to the frontier. Both were horrified at the defenceless state of everything. Craufurd reported from Tomar at the beginning of May that a large Spanish army was mobilising at Zamora, and that the invasion of Trás-os-Montes had already begun. However, he thought that the main attack would probably be made in the direction of Lisbon, and from the Alentejo, and that it would be unwise to divert many troops northward, such that the few troops that Portugal had - and they amounted to a mere 9,000 foot and 1,300 horse - should be kept near the Tagus to meet any enemy advance towards Lisbon. However, when the news came that Miranda, the only fortified town of note in Trás-os-Montes, had fallen, at once he agreed to send a force under the Marquis of Marialva up north. This was supposed to consist of 7,000 men, but, in fact, it was nearer 3,000 strong. The principle that the approaches to Lisbon must always be the priority was established, and this was firmly retained by Count Lippe, who was appointed by Sebastião de Carvalho to be Commander-in-Chief of the Portuguese Army in July, 1762.

Townshend spoke in scathing terms of the auxiliary Portuguese officers - "They are coarse, who sneak away home and neglect their men. They will act for a time in defence of a place as long as they are fed, but are not reliable, and when troops move forward they won't leave their homes. The worst part is the officers, whom I found in general an ignorant, nasty, swaggering cowardly set of fellows, always deserting their posts and neglecting their men."<sup>2</sup>Craufurd "found the rank and file the most submissive animals that God had ever made, and when well commanded would make as good soldiers as any in any country".<sup>3</sup>Dumouriez had a good opinion of them and O'Hara said "they were as fine fellows as ever he had met and seemed to desire nothing more than to meet the Gallegos as they called them".<sup>4</sup> Townsend said much the same, and when they were spoken of as undisciplined, it did not mean that they were insubordinate or mutinous, but only that they had no vestige of military training.<sup>5</sup>

It appears that Craufurd was right in thinking that the original Spanish plan, to which they again reverted, was to take Almeida and then to advance towards the Alentejo and Lisbon. But there had been disputes about who should be made commander-in-chief and, after the Marquis of Sarriá had been appointed against the King of Spain's will, an Italian engineer named Gaber persuaded him to begin by an attack in the north, with Oporto as its aim. This would realise a principal objective by dealing a hard blow to the British, who had large commercial interests in Oporto, and would also be agreeable to the Queen Mother, who was still very much a power behind the Spanish throne and who wished to spare the feelings of her

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<sup>1</sup> Which actually occurred in 1807.

<sup>2</sup>Tyrawley to Egremont, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1762

<sup>3</sup> Craufurd to Tyrawley, 29<sup>th</sup> May, 14<sup>th</sup> June, 1762. O'Hara, 20<sup>th</sup> April, 1762

<sup>4</sup> O'Hara, 20<sup>th</sup> April, 1762

<sup>5</sup>Tyrawley to Egremont, 29<sup>th</sup> March 1762

daughter, the Queen of Portugal. In any case, there was no point in antagonising the Portuguese unduly, and if they were not attacked in their capital, then they might be readier to give in. On the map it was not far to Oporto, but the Spaniards had no maps and did not realise the difficulties of the country to be traversed. According to Dumouriez, when Sarriá asked for information about the roads in Portugal, he found nobody who could tell him a thing. They did not even realise the existence of formidable mountain ranges in their way. A further delay was caused by the fact that the main body of Spanish troops at Zamora, intended for Almeida, were held up by the flooded River Esla, a northern tributary of the Douro, which they could not cross until a pontoon-bridge had been laid across it. Their troops from Galicia easily captured the undefended towns of Chaves and Braganza, and also Miranda-do-Douro, which was fortified, but capitulated at once after an accidental explosion had made a large breach in the walls. They then overran the Trás-os-Montes plateau as far as Tôrre-de-Moncorvo, which was also an open town, although the Spaniards expected it to be defended, and indeed, through some error, it is recorded that they took a large number of guns and munitions there.

### **British troops land in Portugal**

The first British troops, consisting of two regiments from Ireland and the detachment of Burgoyne's dragoons from England, arrived in Lisbon on the 6<sup>th</sup> of May, 1762. The situation looked black, for there were ugly rumours of Spanish advances, and all was at sixes and sevens.

Meanwhile, Lord Tyrawley, on whose prowess and understanding of Portugal so many hopes had been set, proved to be a disappointment. As soon as war was declared, he had been offered the supreme command, but had said he would refer the matter to his superiors. He had fallen ill of his old wounds, and the coming of the hot weather brought no relief and it was becoming clear that he was no longer viable to join the Army. The Portuguese had no doubt foreseen this, for they had taken steps to find a replacement. After considering the merits of Count Bevern, they chose another German princeling, the Count of Schaumburg-Lippe-Bückeburg. Although Tyrawley was at that very moment reporting to his superiors that he could not undertake the command of such a hopelessly inadequate force as the Portuguese Army, and in following this up he asked to be recalled on grounds of ill-health, yet he still took offence at the fact that the Portuguese had looked for another commander-in-chief at the very moment when they were flattering him with assurances that by accepting the appointment, he might become a second Duke of Schomberg and the saviour of Portugal. As he was in constant pain, and could no longer even mount a horse, he could scarcely have carried on. Lord Loudoun had to meet up with four regiments and the remainder of Burgoyne's cavalry at Belle-Ile, and only arrived during the third week of July to take over command. Luckily, the Spanish invasion of the Trás-os-Montes had petered out, and it was not until mid-August that they invaded Almeida under their new commander-in-chief, the Conde de Aranda, and then began the more serious half of the Campaign.



**Friedrich Wilhelm Ernst Graf zu Schaumburg-Lippe-Bückeburgde c. 1762**

As a result of the Portuguese request for experienced British officers to advise them, about 30 had been approved after sundry arguments with Lord Ligonier, who doubted whether the plan would work. They mostly arrived at about the same time as Loudoun. Rainsford, like O'Hara of Tyrawley's regiment, the Coldstreams, served as Tyrawley's secretary, and when he left, he was seconded to serve under Lippe, and having hastily supplemented his knowledge of Spanish by learning Portuguese, was given the rank of Chief Engineer in the Portuguese Army. The presence of so many foreign officers did not fail to arouse the usual jealousies, not only among the Portuguese, but even among the British regulars, who found themselves outranked when their equals were given an immediate promotion on secondment. But Sebastião de Carvalho realised how essential the services of the foreign officers were, and he gave them full support. The fact that many of them were well connected and of the same class as the Portuguese *fidalgos* or nobles, who monopolised the senior ranks, may have helped. The Portuguese were flattered by the fact that the Count of Lippe was a reigning prince, even though a minor one, and he had a royal flavour, being a grandson of George I and the Duchess of Kendal. This was further sweetened by the inclusion of the Queen of England's brother, Prince Charles of Mecklenburg-Strelitz in his entourage, who was given the command of a Portuguese cavalry regiment. Lippe brought with him a Lippe cousin, and some 60 Germans, half of whom were officers. They seem to have been fond of their comforts and not very popular, but to have been mainly employed at Headquarters, under their commander, Colonel Bohm, whom Dumouriez called a time-server, but who was quite competent. Lippe nevertheless had trouble enough with the Portuguese generals. Some of them took his side, but most of them were

unamenable to discipline and were unprepared to agree to the slightest innovation. Sebastião de Carvalho had infiltrated a number of his own supporter relatives into key posts and was in close touch with Lippe through Miguel de Ariaga Brun de Silveira, his representative at Headquarters. However, the generals regarded their appointments as hereditary fiefs, and even Sebastião de Carvalho was not always strong enough to be able to replace them. However, Lippe succeeded in doing so by splitting regiments into two battalions, of which the new battalion was commanded by one of his nominees.

Some of the British troops were not of first quality, and the regiments from Ireland had many recruits who had never seen a firelock. Dumouriez said the Irish were little better than the Portuguese regiments. They had a poor time in the drenching rains of Estremadura and the Alentejo, and were often short of shoes, food and clothing. But Lambert also spoke of the steadfast courage of the British troops, which no place or climate could alter and it would be unjust to deny even the Irish recruits a share of this. Burgoyne's dragoons and the companies of grenadiers were well trained, and Lambert's Regiment, which was employed more actively in the Beira and in pleasanter conditions, had a good morale. The Buffs also had a good reputation. They were commanded by the gallant young Lord Putney, in the absence of Craufurd at the Portuguese Headquarters, although he for a time had a special assignment in command of the Grenadiers.

The comments of Dumouriez are worth attention, as he visited most parts of Portugal in 1766 to make a special study of the 1762 Campaign. He was a young man at the time and gave free rein to his prejudices, as he admitted in his revised edition 40 years later, but he was a soldier himself (later to become a general) and a serious observer. He thought that the officers recruited by Melo e Castro in London were a poor lot. Some of them perhaps were, but many of them were recommended by Tyrawley, who was anxious to receive good men, and though some may have owed their recommendation to family influence, they do not seem to have been found wanting. Dumouriez was an Anglophobe and he praised the Walloons and the Swiss and the Germans and parsed some of the British officers by name. He accused the British generals of quarrelling with Lippe, but the records do not bear this out, indeed Lippe received universal praise, and although he had difficulties and there may well have been bad blood, for instance between Townshend and Loudin, he kept up good relations and ensured the execution of his orders with remarkable success.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Loudoun to Ligonier, 9<sup>th</sup> November, 1762



**British troops, c. 1760**

Burgoyne had been the first to march from Lisbon with his dragoons and the Irish regiments. He wrote on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August from Sardoal near Abrantes to say that he had had a miserable march; his only transport had been ox-carts, which took 14 hours for a day's march, while the soldiers escorting them got sunstroke.<sup>7</sup>

The two regiments from Ireland reached Santarém at one o'clock in the morning. They had been promised accommodation in a convent and this had been agreed with the Portuguese General Noronha. However, their sudden arrival in the middle of the night caused a commotion and the local magistrate put them up with private people. In any case, soon the troops were dispersed over the countryside, and most of them had tents, so billeting became less of a problem.<sup>8</sup>

### **Spain invades Portugal**

News came that the enemy had crossed the River Côa, occupied Castelo-Rodrigo and were now nearing Almeida. Townshend, with a Portuguese force was sent to reinforce resistance in the Beira, and Lieutenant-Colonel McClean reported on Almeida. He confirmed O'Hara's poor opinion of the defences, but thought the place should hold out for two or three

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<sup>7</sup>Dumouriez, *Vie et M emmoires*(1822), 1, pp. 75-78; Dumouriez, *Etat*, pp. 105-106, 124; Sales, *op. cit.*, pp. 54, 68-70.

<sup>8</sup>Burgoyne to Loudoun, 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 1762.

weeks. Unfortunately, the commandant disobeyed orders to evacuate all the civilians and to resist to the utmost, and he capitulated on the 25<sup>th</sup> August, 1762.<sup>9</sup>

Nevertheless, Lippe decided he would relieve the pressure on Almeida and Oporto by taking the advice given him earlier by O'Hara to disconcert the enemy by a counter-attack. This was to be led by a taskforce under Burgoyne, and to be supported by a sizeable body of Portuguese infantry. The objective was Valencia de Alcântara, the first Spanish frontier town, which was believed to be an important depot for supplies. It was hoped that the Portuguese infantry would go beyond Valencia to interrupt the enemy communications with Badajoz, but they ran out of bread at Gavião, where a supply train failed to meet them, and they were brought to a halt. Then news of the fall of Almeida came, and all idea of an offensive had to be dropped. Meanwhile, Burgoyne, with a force of about 400 crossed the Tagus at Abrantes on the 24<sup>th</sup> August and by a series of forced marches, in which his horsemen, helped along by the grenadiers, took Valencia by surprise. A reconnaissance made by Ramsford earlier had brought back news of the conditions and weakness of the enemy. Burgoyne had 50 dragoons and six British companies and also 11 Portuguese companies of grenadiers under Viscount Pulteney; Lieutenant-Colonel Somerville and Major Luttrell led the remainder. They found no magazines, but they decimated several companies of the Seville Regiment in the town, and then cleared the neighbourhood of the enemy, taking a number of prisoners, including a Spanish general. They left the town and its inhabitants unscathed, in return for the ransom of a year's taxes, which were duly paid in corn. It was not a great victory, but it startled the enemy and gave a great fillip to the Portuguese. Captain Singleton took the good news to the King of Portugal, and his record of the orders of the day has survived. Burgoyne was given a large diamond and the Spanish Colours were captured.<sup>10</sup>

In the Beira, the enemy were advancing, and Alfaiates and four other small places fell without offering resistance. The peasants near Alfaiates were so angry that they made a spirited counter-attack, but this was repulsed, as was another made by regular forces under the Count of Santiago. He had to retreat from Celorico, as did Colonel Hamilton's Royal Volunteers, after fighting a spirited skirmish at Sabugal. Lippe, who had advanced his headquarters to Nisa to support Burgoyne, withdrew to Abrantes but then, in order to confront the threat to the Beira, he marched hurriedly north some 25 leagues to Miranda-do-Corvo near Coimbra. He took all the British regiments with him, except Burgoyne's and the Buffs, and summoned eight Portuguese battalions under Dom Luis de Portugal to join him. This force was supposed to number over 6,000 men, but actually consisted only of 2,477 men and six guns. Lippe was much put out when Don Luis halted on a Sunday to allow his men to attend a High Mass, administered in three instalments, and was consequently delayed. Lambert with the 67<sup>th</sup> Regiment was sent to Ponte-da-Mucela on the River Alva, which was thought to be the key point on the route that the enemy would take if they tried to break through from Almeida towards Coimbra, in order to interrupt the road from Lisbon to Oporto. Lambert's communications lay through Coimbra, and he corresponded with the Rector of the University

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<sup>9</sup> Townshend Mss (Crawford to Townshend, 29<sup>th</sup> July; Misc. Corr., Justice of Peace, Santarem, to Noronha, 10<sup>th</sup> July; Brigadier Frederick, Santarém, 27<sup>th</sup> July 1762).

<sup>10</sup> Townshend Mss. (McClellan to Townshend, 4<sup>th</sup> July, 1972); Sales, op. cit., pp. 34-40. St. Priest, Memoires, 68/9, 71.

there in French, from whom he received good co-operation. Labour and supplies seem to have been easier than when they had to come through the Lisbon pipeline. Some hundreds of labourers were needed to work on defences to block or destroy those roads and bridges likely to be used by the enemy and to drive through the countryside for supplies. The labourers were prone to fail to turn up, or to simply fade away, but Lambert had the advantage of being able to pay in cash, and a fair quota was available. He had had some choice in selecting his Portuguese troops, who played a more active part than most, and together with Lambert's Regiment, they enjoyed a pleasanter climate in the Beira in the summer than in the lowlands. The Portuguese troops were helped out by a good leavening of British officers, and through Townshend's influence, all troops were perhaps somewhat better paid and supplied than elsewhere in Portugal. Lambert received considerable sums in cash for his labourers; he studied their habits and realised that the Beira peasant was clannish and must be carefully segregated from rival septs and should be sent to work with his friends.

After a fortnight at Ponte-da-Mucela, Lambert was ordered up to Viseu in support of Townshend's counter-attack, but he was back in Ponte-da-Mucela on the 3<sup>rd</sup> October, and immediately ordered to take over the defence of a long stretch of the River Zêzere. He ranged from Cabril to Fundeiro and Barca de Codes until the beginning of November. Then he was ordered to Portalegre to meet the new enemy threat to the Alentejo from Alcântara.<sup>11</sup>



**The crossing point into Portugal over the Roman bridge at Alcântara**

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<sup>11</sup> Add. Mss. 23635 (O'Hara, 14<sup>th</sup> May); Add. Mss. 23644 (Rainsford, 8<sup>th</sup> July, 14<sup>th</sup> September, 1762); S.P. 89/57 (Lippe to Egremont, 30<sup>th</sup> August); King's Library, Ms. 230, fos. 7-8. Singleton's record of the operational orders is at the National Army Museum.

At Miranda-do-Moncorvo, Lippe had news that the enemy were not after all trying to break through to Coimbra or Oporto, but rather were marching towards Castelo-Branco and the Tagus, while some of them were taking the road through Spain to Alcântara, whence they could invade the Alentejo. By the 19<sup>th</sup> September he was back in Abrantes with all the British regiments except Lambert's. He summoned Townshend to join him, but sent him almost at once back again to the Beira. Burgoyne had been guarding the Tagus and had installed a battery opposite Vila-Velha, the highest ferry crossing over the Tagus below the Spanish frontier, where the enemy threatened to cross. He was familiar with the ground, as together with Rainsford he had carefully reconnoitred it while it was still a small Portuguese post held by a sergeant and 12 men. Rainsford had then noticed that the main Castelo-Branco-Abrantes road above the ferry ran through a gorge which could be commanded from the southern bank. When he saw it, the river was already low, but formed a formidable barrier owing to the strong current. Burgoyne prevented the enemy crossing the river, but he was too late to save the castle of Vila-Velha, a mile or two below the ferry. An officer had been sent to repair it, but had failed to do so, and the garrison had capitulated at the first attack, except for a small body of Portuguese, under Engineer Bassemonde, who escaped by a ford nearby, about a mile below the ferry. There was a rough road across the mountains from the castle, which a sizeable enemy force managed to use to gain the Perdigão heights and drive out a British force of about 300 men. The enemy continued to occupy the Vila-Velha castle until the end of October.<sup>12</sup>

### **The French also invade Portugal**

In July, 12 French battalions joined the Spaniards before Almeida and, although they came from an army of reputation and about equalled the British contingent, not much is heard of them, except that their relations with the Spaniards were difficult and that they had many sick, having suffered much in the hot march across Spain. They were assigned to the Beira front and penetrated for a short time as far as Celorico and Guarda. St Priest, later the French Minister to Lisbon<sup>13</sup>, was with them, and has left us an account. He secured the surrender of Alfaiate by a fierce ultimatum, which was one of the several forts which so shocked Lippe by falling without a blow. St Priest said that the Spanish commissariat was hopeless, and the French would have starved if they had not made their own arrangements. He scarcely saw any fighting, and said that the Spaniards kept the French out of sight because they were so ashamed of their comparatively down-at-heel appearance and incompetence of their own army. The Portuguese fortress of Almeida fell to the Spanish on the 25<sup>th</sup> August, 1762.

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<sup>12</sup> Sales, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-29; Townshend Mss. (Lippe, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> September; Lambert, 31<sup>st</sup> August, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> September, 4<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> October; Lennox, 7<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> September, 1762); King's Library, Ms. 230, fos. 4-5, 7-9, 12. St. Priest Memoires, 69, 71.

<sup>13</sup> The modern-day equivalent to the Ambassador.



**The fortified border town of Almeida in the Beira**

Back in Abrantes on 19th September, Lippe found that he must go to the aid of the Count of Santiago, who had been driven back from Celorico to the head of the Alvito valley, where he was holding the passes against a strong enemy force with about 1,000 men. Loudoun's regiments, who had just marched some 50 miles or more from the River Alva, had to then march 25 miles back to cover Santiago's retreat and save him from being out-flanked. Lippe himself was at the Alvito on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October. The Spanish were astonished to find themselves suddenly confronted by British troops, and withdrew hastily. This was lucky, for the retreat down the mountainside and across the valley was an awkward operation. However, Loudoun had managed to bring up a competent artillery officer, Major Forbes Macbean, with a small battery, which he installed on the Perdigão heights. It had to be abandoned when it was outflanked by a Spanish force from Vila-Velha, but it was successfully brought over the level plateau to the rim of an escarpment which commanded the enemy approach along the valley. There were several such escarpments blocking the enemy advance towards the Tagus and Lippe made full use of them for his defences. Therefore, although the enemy reached Sobreira-Formosa and Cardigos, near to Abrantes and the Zêzere, Lippe was in a good position to block any further advance. Having failed to cross the Tagus at Vila-Velha, the enemy's best course would have been to cross the Tagus in Spain and then renew their invasion from Alcântara, but this would have been ignominious for a superior force, and Lippe did his best to tempt them on to lock themselves into the mountains, where their cavalry would be of little use, and they would be dependent on one bad road for their supply line. Indeed, Lippe had the courage to send Townshend, whom he had summoned to his aid, to march back 40 leagues to the north of the Beira, where he effected a very successful diversion. Lippe still held the São Simão heights north of Perdigão, and although the enemy had managed to take Perdigão by marching a sizeable force along the mountain road from Vila-Velha, Burgoyne prevented them making further use of this route, and they were dependent for their supplies on a long rough road from Sarzedas.

During the battle on the Alvito, Burgoyne struck a shrewd blow against the Spanish post at Vila-Velha. There was a Spanish garrison at the castle nearby, and another at Castelo-Branco not far off, but the post near the ferry was weakly held, and thinking that they were sufficiently protected by the river, no proper watch was kept by the Spanish. The river was still a formidable barrier, as a Portuguese grenadier had drowned trying to take a rope across it. Although Lippe described the grenadiers as British, and Loudoun specifically mentioned 100 British grenadiers, a Portuguese historian argues from this incident that they were all Portuguese.<sup>14</sup> Actually the drowned man came from the Cascais Infantry Regiment<sup>15</sup> and was perhaps a volunteer. Some Portuguese cavalry from the Sampayo Regiment took part and lost eight horses from exhaustion. It is true that Lieutenant-Colonel Lee commanded a regiment of Portuguese grenadiers, but it seems likely that the grenadiers were British, or a mixed force as that at Alcântara.<sup>16</sup> Whatever the composition of the force, it was led by 50 of Burgoyne's dragoons. The men and horses somehow crossed the river unobserved, on about the 7<sup>th</sup> October, perhaps by the ford used by Bassemonde, and made their way in small detachments in to the hills under the cover of night. At dawn they rushed the Spanish post, killing a number of men in their tents, including a Spanish general, and succeeded in capturing a number of prisoners and 60 battery mules. They put a battery of guns out of action, which was about to be emplaced, and safely crossed the river again. Like the *tour-de-force* at Valencia, this was a small victory, but it had a great effect, and no further attempt was made to use the Vila-Velha crossing. In November, 1762, when the Spaniards still had their eyes on the Alentejo, they did indeed cross the river in cork rafts, which was by then flooded, but further down in Spanish territory near Herreras de Alcantara. On this occasion a Spanish grenadier was drowned trying to lead across a horse. The failure of the enemy to use the Vila-Velha crossing blocked their attack on the vulnerable Alentejo and led them to persist in the Estremadura and Beira until the dry season was past.

It was in the many marches and counter-marches that the troops, both British and Portuguese, were called upon to show their stamina. Their success in doing so meant that the enemy never found an easy entry and, confronted by Lippe in good defensive positions, the Spanish and French never dared to take the risk. The distances marched over bad roads through mountainous country on short rations were large, being over 40 leagues (or four and a half miles) between the Tagus and the Douro, and Townshend's men had to cover most of the distance three or four times.<sup>17</sup> When Lippe ordered them back from Estremadura to the Beira after his return from Miranda-do-Corvo, his official account paid tribute to Townshend's skill and to the admirable perseverance of the Portuguese soldier, who supported great hardships.

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<sup>14</sup>Fernando Nunez, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

<sup>15</sup> Later the 19<sup>th</sup> Regiment

<sup>16</sup> C. R. B. Barrell, 'The 85th King's Light Infantry (1917)' gives 50 dragoons, 200 Crawford's 85<sup>th</sup>, 100 British grenadiers at Vila-Velha. S.P. 89/57 (Burgoyne to Egremont, 9th October, 176; Loudoun, 9th October); King's Library, Ms. 236 fos. 17-19. Both Loudoun and Lippe say the grenadiers at Vila-Velha were British. Add. Mss. 23644 (Ramsford, 25th October, 1762). The records are reticent about the precise date of Vila-Velha. Burgoyne's report is dated 9th October.

<sup>17</sup> Lieutenant Andrew Frazer's contemporary map of the campaign gives the league as four and a half miles. The league was normally an hour's march or an hour's mule ride, and varied up-hill or down-hill, according to the way traversed. Four and a half miles is rather a long league. King's Library, Ms. 236, f. 22; Townshend Mss. (Lambert, 4th October, Loudoun, 5th November, 1762).

"Most soon wore out their shoes, but went gaily marching on over the sharp stones leaving everywhere the imprint of their bloodstained feet."<sup>18</sup>The British, too, who were perhaps less inured to go barefoot, had their vicissitudes. Lambert, before his march from Celorico and Viseu by Ponte-da-Mucela and Cabaços to Barca de Codes, found his men were wearing out their shoes and there were none to be bought, though he was better off than his Portuguese colleagues, for he had more chance of laying hands on some money. Loudoun said that there was often only one shoe for three men.<sup>19</sup> Back at Ponte-da-Mucela, Lambert was proud of his men. "This day the last division will join here. I hope you will allow that the Norfolk turkeys can outmarch any (Portu-)geese whatever."<sup>20</sup> Yet he was still only half-way to Fundeiro on the Zêzere, another five days' march.

As late as the 13<sup>th</sup> October, Lippe feared a breakthrough on the Zêzere, and he moved his headquarters from Sardeal to a more central position at Mação. Lambert was busy felling trees and working on the crossings of the Zêzere at Fundeiro and Barca de Codes. There was anxiety in Lisbon, but Arriaga assured Sebastião de Carvalho that Lippe was busy in all weathers studying the enemy positions and thinking up counter-measures. At this point, the enemy were beyond Sobreira-Formosa and Cardigos and was still in possession of the Perdigão heights, although in the Beira, Townshend was nearing Penamacor. But the weather had broken, and already on the 14<sup>th</sup> October Lambert wrote from Fundeiro: "The rain, which still continues, is surely a Protestant rain. It has swelled the Zêzere to render it in my opinion impracticable, and now it is full a shower a day will keep it up." Only 40 out of 200 labourers turned up, and one ran away, so Lambert would have to tell the honest Rector how they behaved. But the rains were now doing the work for him, and many deserters, exhausted, with their hands blistered from work on the Sarzedas road, were coming in. Three days later, one of them brought news that the enemy were pulling back, and Lambert told Townshend: "The retrograde enemy may bring us together again unless we are ordered to kick them in from different quarters, and that way we shall cross each other in the kicking-match. Name your place and I shall have the honour of being your obedient servant."

Lippe took the enemy more seriously, and ordered his army up to the Alentejo frontier, for although the enemy had withdrawn from Castelo-Branco into Spain early in November, 1762, they threw a strong force across the Tagus into Spain; and although the ambassadors had been talking peace in Paris since the beginning of September, there was little hint of it in Portugal, or at the front. A fresh drive towards Lisbon seemed unlikely, in view of the effect of the weather on the roads, but an attack on Elvas, or the seizure of places with which to bargain seemed not improbable. Rainsford had been kept busy inspecting all the fortresses. He found several of them very weak and recommended the removal of some of their bigger guns to places where they were less likely to be captured. Lambert, to his disgust, had to leave the Beira for Portalegre to strengthen the frontier. In November the enemy attacked two small places, Marvão and Ouguela, but the long record of shameful capitulations at last ended.

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<sup>18</sup> King's Library, Ms. 236, fos. 12-19.

<sup>19</sup> Sales, *op. cit.*, pp. 24, 27-28; S.P. 89/57 (Loudoun, 20th September, 9th October, 1762)

<sup>20</sup> H. Schaefer, *Geschichte von Portugal* (Gotha, 1856), p. 526.

Ougela was successfully held by a Portuguese commander, and Marvão, a small fort on the top of a rocky mountain near the Tagus and the frontier was defended by Captain Brown of Armstrong's with a British detachment and some Portuguese. He replied to the summons with a reminder of the recent fall of Havana and dispersed the assailants with a burst of cannon fire. Spanish threats to Campo-Maior and Arronches were averted, although they kept up their threat to the last, and on the very last day before the armistice on the 24<sup>th</sup> November, the Spanish were marching towards Olivença, a frontier town of disputed sovereignty.

### **The end of the Campaign**

On the 24<sup>th</sup> November, the Count of Aranda informed Lippe that peace preliminaries had been signed, that emissaries were exchanged, and that an armistice had been agreed. The troops on both sides were in poor shape. Lambert wrote from Portalegre that he had never imagined that he would see an English soldier on duty without breeches, shoes or stockings, others without hats, and several with only one sleeve to their coats. He also reviled some of the Irish officers. But if the Irish and some of the English were little better than the Portuguese, it was because they had been reduced to the same miserable condition.

However, peace was signed in February and Loudoun embarked on the 25<sup>th</sup> April, 1763. The 67<sup>th</sup>, the 83<sup>rd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> (Bufs) went to garrison Minorca, now restored from the French. The Dragoons, the 75<sup>th</sup>, the 91<sup>st</sup>, and the 85<sup>th</sup> returned home, where the 91<sup>st</sup> and the 75<sup>th</sup> were disbanded. There had been few deaths in battle, but sickness had been rife, and according to Loudoun's last list deaths by sickness in hospital at Santarém numbered 194.

The British part in the reorganisation of the Portuguese army continued after the peace. Sebastião de Carvalho had taken to heart Egremont's warning that Portugal could not always rely on help coming from England at the last minute, and must make timely provision for her own defence. Lippe was persuaded to remain and did not leave until September, 1764. O'Hara soon left and Rainsford and several others left with Lippe; but a number of British officers remained and were in command of troops on the frontiers and elsewhere for some years. Simon Fraser, who was an M.P. with many interests, often absented himself, but he was the Governor of the Minho and Trás-os-Montes until 1775 or later. In 1764, Lippe toured the north and reported on Fraser's work there, finding that the Bragança Regiment at Chaves had been brought by Colonel Smith to a commendable pitch of efficiency. Dumouriez in 1766 thought that Lippe had done good work, although he had left too soon to do more than make a good beginning. He noted that there was still jealousy between the Portuguese and the predominating British or Scottish factions and other foreigners. In 1765 Hay reported that the army was now paid regularly and the men adequately, although the officers were still much underpaid. When Lippe paid another visit to Portugal in 1777/8, McClean, now a *mestros-de-campo*, played a leading part in the manoeuvres, in which Colonels McDonnell, Chauncey and Sharp commanded Portuguese regiments. In 1765 Sebastião de Carvalho thought that the Portuguese army was equal to defending the country, at least for a short time, although British support would still be required for Portugal itself and for the ports of Brazil, although the Brazilian interior was now populous enough to defend itself. Hay reported that the armed services now had a first call on the Royal Treasury, into which the revenue was paid direct and not, as

formerly, first into the separate departments, who drew on it for their own purposes. Until 1775, Lippe continued to advise by correspondence, but after his death and the fall of Sebastião de Carvalho, the Marquis of Pombal, the reforms were forgotten, and the Army took no part in any European campaign until the Revolutionary Wars. The 1762 Campaign, short as it was, had been a high point in Anglo-Portuguese co-operation, and had been a useful experience for a number of British officers, some of whom served later in America, although it did not profit the unlucky Burgoyne at Saratoga. The main reasons for the Peace of Fontainebleau, which brought the Seven Years War to an end, must be sought elsewhere, but the conservation of Portugal at its conclusion was by no means a trivial episode.<sup>21</sup>

## Appendix

### British Regiments serving in Portugal during the Campaign

The *16<sup>th</sup> Light Dragoons (Burgoyne's)*. This was the crack regiment involved. Detachments served in the principal engagements at Valencia, Alcântara, Vila-Velha and on the Alvito and elsewhere. It was mainly employed in the Alentejo guarding the south bank of the Tagus. Colonel John Burgoyne was employed as brigadier in charge of a mixed Anglo-Portuguese brigade, so therefore Lieutenant-Colonel Somerville was in command. Two troops reached Lisbon in May, 1762 from Portsmouth, the remaining four coming from Belle-Ile in July. In April, 1763, the regiment returned to England.

The *3<sup>rd</sup> Foot (The Buffs) (Howard's)* arrived in July, 1762 from Belle-Ile, where its numbers had been depleted, so it had to be heavily recruited. The titular colonel was Major-General Howard, but he was absent, and Lieutenant-Colonel Browne had been invalided home, so therefore Major John Biddulph was in command, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel. The regiment went up to the Coimbra area with the other British troops at the end of August, and was engaged at Alvito, but otherwise it spent most of the time under Lippe in the Alentejo and Estremadura. From Portugal it went to Minorca, where Colonel Craufurd, the Governor, took command.

The *67<sup>th</sup> Regiment (Lambert's)* arrived in July, 1762 from Belle-Ile. Colonel Hamilton Lambert was a brigadier in command of a mixed force, but he retained command of the regiment. From Abrantes, under Townshend's command, it was marched through Tomar to Ponte-da-Mucela at the end of August, with Thomas Shirley commanding with the rank of colonel. Thereafter it was sent to northern Beira and back again to the River Zêzere, which it defended to the end of October, when it was moved to Portalegre. On the Zêzere the regiment was more actively employed and better supplied than some regiments elsewhere, and it served well, suffering a less damaging rate of sickness. It then returned to England. Many regiments

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<sup>21</sup> Sales, op. cit., pp. 28-34; Townshend Mss. (Lambert, 14<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 1762); Add. Mss. 23644 (Rainsford, 25<sup>th</sup> October, 5<sup>th</sup> November) S.P. 89/57 (Loudoun to Ligonier, 9<sup>th</sup> November, Lippe to Egremont, 24<sup>th</sup> November, 13<sup>th</sup> October, Franklin, 14<sup>th</sup> October, Loudoun, 9<sup>th</sup> November, 24<sup>th</sup> November, 1762).

were disbanded and Lambert appealed to Lieutenant-General Townshend as an M.P. to save him from this fate. As a result, the regiment remained in being.

The *75<sup>th</sup> Regiment (Frederick's)* arrived from Belle-Ile in July, 1762. This regiment, which was only raised in 1758, was disbanded after returning to England in 1763. After incorporation first in the 75<sup>th</sup> Invalids, and then in the 116<sup>th</sup> Invalids, it eventually evolved into the Gordon Highlanders. Colonel Marescoe Frederick was its brigadier, and Lieutenant-Colonel Corbett Parry and Major Maurice Cane held in Portugal the local ranks of colonel and lieutenant-colonel, respectively. It accompanied the other British regiments to Coimbra and Alvito, but not much is recorded of its activities in the Alentejo and Estremadura except that in the early days in July it achieved rather good relations for billeting and supply with the authorities at Santarém.

The *83<sup>rd</sup> Regiment (Bigoe Armstrong's)*. This regiment arrived from Ireland in April, 1763. It marched to Coimbra and took part at Alvito with other regiments and ended the Campaign at Portalegre. Not much is recorded of its activities, except that a detachment under the gallant Captain Thomas Browne defended an enemy attack on the small castle of Marvão in November.

The *85<sup>th</sup> Regiment, also known as the Royal Volunteers (Craufurd's)*. Not to be confused with Hamilton's Portuguese Regiment of Royal Volunteers. In Portugal the Hon. John Craufurd, was titular colonel, but he was employed as a Major-General at the Portuguese headquarters, and so Viscount Pulteney was in command, although he too, for a time, had another when the companies of grenadiers (one from each regiment) were placed under him for the Valencia Alcântara expedition. Captain James Douglas also had the rank of lieutenant-colonel in the regiment. The regiment arrived from Belle-Ile in July, 1762, and after taking part in the march to the Coimbra area, the regiment served in the Alentejo and Estremadura under Lippe. After returning to England in April 1763 it was disbanded.

The *91<sup>st</sup> Regiment (Lord Blayney's)*. This regiment arrived from Ireland in May. Blayney probably ranked as a brigadier, for he had a Brigadier's allowance of six horses, and Lieutenant-Colonel Henry St John and Major William Dalrymple had the ranks of lieutenant-colonel, respectively, in Portugal, in the regiment. After disbandment in 1763, many of the regiment joined the Buffs in Minorca.

*Artillery.* There were eight companies of artillery, commanded by Colonel Pattison. Lord Loudoun took great pains to obtain the secondment to Portugal of Captain Forbes McBean, for whom he obtained promotion to major. This officer rendered good service with his battery at Alvito.

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