

THE DESPACHES OF COLONEL GRAHAM ON THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGNS OF  
1796-1797 (*continued*).*The Battle of Rivoli.*

As was noted at the close of my previous article,<sup>1</sup> Colonel Graham shared in the misfortunes of Marshal Wurmser's army in its retreat from Bassano and Legnago to Mantua, as also in the hardships of the long siege which followed. On Christmas Day he escaped thence, in disguise, by the south side of the town, made his way along the rivers Po and Adige, and succeeded in reaching General Allvintzy's headquarters. That general's forces, which had been baffled at Arcola in November, were still in Tyrol and Friuli; and Graham, knowing Wurmser's desperate situation in Mantua, now urged immediate action.

I propose to limit this article to that part of Colonel Graham's despatches which deals with the battle of Rivoli and the Austrian movements immediately before and after; and as his journal gives in detail events which are referred to also in the despatches of 6 and 16 Jan., I have judged it unnecessary to give these in full.

No. 31.

Trent, 6<sup>th</sup> Jan<sup>r</sup> 1797.

My Lord,—I had the honour of acquainting your Lordship by my note of the 28<sup>th</sup> ult. from Brondolo of my having escaped from Mantua, and of my intention to join Gen<sup>l</sup> Alvintzy as soon as possible: having found him at Padua I represented to him in the strongest manner the urgent necessity of resuming his operations for the relief of Mantua as soon as possible. I then went to Venice in order to see Mr Drake & to know from him if there were any new instructions for me:—from thence I despatched my Guide to Marshall Wurmser with such directions as I trust will enable him to elude the Vigilance of the Enemy & with the promise of a high reward if he got quickly back to Mantua. I did not hesitate to incur this additional expense, knowing under the present circumstances, of what consequence it may be that the Marshall should be informed of Gen<sup>l</sup> Alvintzy's intentions & that he had not heard from him for a month: this very serious inconvenience arises from the sad system of employing cheap rather than intelligent Spies: and as the French have proclaimed in all the Churches that orders are given to the Soldiers to fire on all peasants or others approaching the Lake of Mantua, the Difficulties & Risks are much increased & of course a proportional temptation must be held out. I represented this to Alvintzy who authorised me to promise 100 sequins from him, on my saying I would give as much, besides all travelling expenses: as 50 sequins used to be the highest premium any of those employed could ever expect, I am confident no exertions will be wanting on the part of this intelligent man to get into the Fortress, & if he succeed I shall have a great additional satisfaction in having left it, because it may be the means of saving the

<sup>1</sup> *Ante*, p. 124.

place: for there are not wanting some who have represented to the Marshall that he ought not to delay too long proposing to capitulate; whereas now Allvintzy has requested that he may hold out *to the very last extremity* and at the same time assured him not a moment shall be lost in using the utmost efforts for his relief.

Gen<sup>l</sup> Allvintzy stated to me that his last manœuvre could scarcely have failed had his orders for cooperation been obeyed by the Column which went from this Quarter [Trent]: but that to engage in another attempt without waiting to supply the severe losses sustained in the last hard fought actions would be to sacrifice both the Army & Mantua.

As in answer I could only represent the real state of the place, I dreaded much greater delays, & I was agreeably disappointed on my return from Venice, to find that the operations are to begin immediately: the Gen<sup>l</sup> is to go himself with the most considerable Corps from Alla, which will be put in motion in two or three days—those from Vicenza & Padua begin tomorrow to move on Verona & Legnago: from what I have heard I should entertain sanguine hopes of Success if the quality of the Troops were better: but with an Army composed almost of recruits one cannot be very confident tho' the total number amounts to 48,000 men.<sup>2</sup>

[Notes follow as to the siege of Mantua and the sorties of 7, 28 Oct., 28 Nov., when cannonade had been heard, but no information received: the Austrians came back reluctantly, for they had hoped to meet Allvintzy.<sup>3</sup>

Col. Graham then regrets that Sir J. Jervis had countermanded the transports which he (Jervis) had ordered to embark Hessians at Trieste, as there was some other service for them.]

<sup>2</sup> This total must include the corps of General Provera, which was to move on the Brenta and thence to Legnago and Mantua, as also that of Bajalich at Bassano and Mitrovsky in the Val Suggana. The chief body, that under Allvintzy, moving down the Adige from Trent, numbered 28,022 men. See Capt. Schels's articles on this Rivoli campaign in the *Oesterreichische Milit.-Zeitschrift* for 1822, vols. iii. and iv. Allvintzy's force was thus composed:—

Column	I.	Lusignan . . . . .	4,556 men
"	II.	Liptay . . . . .	5,065 "
"	III.	Köblés . . . . .	4,138 "
"	IV.	Ocakay . . . . .	8,521 "
"	V.	Reuss . . . . .	7,871 "
"	VI.	Vukassevich . . . . .	2,871 "

Along with the forces of Provera, Bajalich, Mitrovsky, and Loudon the grand total was 49,049; but these were widely scattered. At Rivoli, after the first fight, the Austrians cannot have had 28,000. Thiers credits them with 'at least 40,000.' Schels (*loc. cit.*) gives an instructive list of the French estimates of their opponents' force. Napoleon (*Mémoires*, iii. 447), fixed it at 65,000 to 70,000 men. J. G., in his *Études sur la Campagne de 1796-97* (pp. 236-41), gives the numbers accurately; and his account is probably the best tactical study yet penned. He estimates the French forces, massed at Rivoli on the morning of the decisive day, at 23,000, of which 1,500 were horse: they had thirty to forty cannon. As Clausewitz notes (*Werke*, vol. iv.) the lack of cannon on the Austrian side, save those used by Vukassevich from the left bank of the Adige, and a few light mountain guns, terribly weakened their movements.

<sup>3</sup> Captain Schels in the *Oesterreichische Milit.-Zeitschrift* for 1829, vol. i., describes this siege of Mantua in detail. At the end of May 1796 the garrison numbered 18,758 men; it had 265 pieces of cannon, along with 60 field pieces.

[A recapitulation of the Austrian plans preceding the battle of Rivoli.]  
 . . . . I was surprised when I learnt that one-half of the Army with the Comm<sup>r</sup> in Chief was designed to pass Monte Baldo. I imagined that since the principal attack was determined to be made from this quarter, the enemy did not occupy La Corona & Ferrara in force & that a small detachment only would be sufficient to be sent that way—for however much the General is to be commended for exposing himself to the inconveniences of such an undertaking I cannot think that it was prudent to adopt a plan which at this season it was more than probable a fall of snow might render totally impracticable, especially when the success of the plan was acknowledged to depend on the celerity of its execution by which the Enemy were to be prevented from carrying their force towards Rivoli in time to oppose the Debouché and consequent passage of the Artillery &c: the event has shown that though the weather was the most favourable possible, clear, calm & moderate (what may be termed a mild frost) there was still one day's delay, which was enough for Bona Parté to come with a large reinforcement. Perhaps a small Corps detached to threaten an attack on Ferrara & so to divide the Enemies attention, while with the main body & a powerful Artillery, a direct attack from the valley of the Adige on the Pass of Rivoli was made, would have had a better chance of success—it certainly might have been made 48 hours sooner than the other & with the great advantage of having the men fresh & well supply'd, instead of being exhausted by fatigue & want: the Loss too in case of a Repulse could not have extended beyond what was immediately occasioned by the fire of the Enemy, and the disgraceful dispersion and surrender of whole Battalions would have been avoided. It was unfortunate too that nobody at Head Quarters but myself ever had been on the Ground or knew anything of the Situation or Communications, except what was known very imperfectly from an indifferent plan by which the disposition of attack was made. Before they saw the Ravine of Ferrara they undervalued its strength, & afterwards, thought it impossible to be forced by an attack in front, which however had succeeded on the 29<sup>th</sup> of July when the enemy were there in still greater force & with cannon which they had not now. I suggested (knowing it from the former dispositions) the necessity of sending a part of the force by the high summit of the Mountain: it was thought too late to alter anything:—but on the spot they found it so necessary that a Battalion & some companies of Chasseurs were ordered to climb the Rocks in the night, after two days' fatiguing marches. On the 13<sup>th</sup> I mentioned the Pass of the Bocca de Creara, by which some Cavalry might be brought up, assuring them the Plain of Rivoli was well adapted for Cavalry—and there is little doubt that had the division of Würmser's, sent for in the afternoon of the 14<sup>th</sup>, been present in the morning in the plain, the Déroute would not have happened: indeed the Imperial Infantry is much spoiled by the constant accompaniment & protection of Cavalry & Artillery, but though it would have been almost impossible to have had cannon, it was not the moment to do without either, since it was possible to obtain Cavalry. It was at that time thought either impossible or unnecessary: but orders

were given to have some ammunition brought up that way. I likewise mentioned the possibility of General Ocskay's Column coming up in the night by the Scala della Madonna della Corona, which occasioned another order being sent him.

These circumstances are sufficient to show that there was much disadvantage arising from not having employed & consulted some officers who were well acquainted with Monte Baldo & Rivoli. But in my opinion by far the greatest error in the Disposition of attack, was sending Lusignan's corps entirely round the Heights, not only to turn the Enemies' left, but in fact to attack the Rear of the Enemies' Right. It was devoting a considerable Corps to destruction in case of failure, as there could be no retreat & it was increasing the chance of failure by the probability of the want of Co-operation at the proper time, where a march of such a length was to be undertaken. . . . I am entirely ignorant of the Motives that determined this Manœuvre, which was conducted by one of the best & bravest officers in the Army, assisted by a distinguished officer of the *État Général* who knew the Country. I presume that the Disposition was made under the impression of finding the Enemy in much less considerable force, & in the position which on former occasions they had occupied, viz. behind the Ravine, which cuts longitudinally the plain within the low heights, with their Right appuy'd to the village & supported by the High Ridge behind it: but it seems unpardonable not to have altered it on seeing the situation of the Ground & the Disposition of their Force. Had Lusignan's Corps merely taken part on the westernmost extremity of these elliptical Heights, described in the Journal, so as to have been ready to act as occasion required, threatening the Enemy's reserve in the centre, if ever they detached considerably from it, I will venture to assert that none of the misfortunes could have happened & that at least if the Enemy were not completely destroyed, the object of the junction of the Corps must have been effected.

If I am mistaken in my conjecture of the most probable & reasonable motives that led to this determination, I must attribute it to an imitation of the bold manœuvres of the French; but then they seldom risk the loss of so considerable a Corps, well knowing that the Effect of alarm can be produced by a few. It must be confessed however that they neither collectively nor individually lose their *sang-froid* readily. The position which Bona Parté chose to occupy on the 14<sup>th</sup>, though probably the only one that could have prevented our *Débouché*, certainly exposed his army to the risk of entire destruction. His rashness can only be accounted for by his confidence in the bravery of his troops & their implicit confidence in him: he therefore treated the Imperial Army with sovereign contempt and his good fortune saved him at the critical moment.

I was with General Liphay<sup>4</sup> on the heights he had carried & saw his uneasiness at the chance of a reverse by having his Right turned, which was unprotected: he received an order to advance immediately on Rivoli: it was fortunately countermanded before it could be executed. General Allvintzy himself came soon after upon the heights: instead of

<sup>4</sup> Liptai.

endeavouring to form a body there and above all to secure the Ridge next the Adige, the key of the Pass of Rivoli, He advanced towards the plain encouraging the men, who had begun to give way, to advance: he was soon left alone & being nearly surrounded was obliged to save himself: the men who still stood firm on the Ridge & the Heights, seeing the whole suite of the Commander galloping off concluded all was lost & took to their heels: this is the only way I can possibly account for the most stupid & absurd terror that men were ever seized with: their subsequent conduct shows that they are devoid of all moral qualities, which indeed their treatment on many occasions is calculated to stifle: they are constitutionally hardy, patient, & brave, great physical qualities for a soldier:—while *well fed* & not *over-fatigued* they will obey & follow their Officers: but many of these having lost all sense of Military Honor, it is not extraordinary that it should not be found in the common Soldier. How different is the French Soldier, whose sense of Honor makes him stand sentry bare-footed & without a watch coat on Monte Baldo in January. . . .

[In the rest of the despatch he again refers to the inefficiency of the older generals, and quotes Wurmser's words to him in Mantua.

'J'ai écrit à l'Empereur de ne me plus Envoyer de Généraux: ils ne valent pas le Diable: je ne me fierai plus qu'à mes jeunes gens et je les mettrai à la tête de mes colonnes . . .' In this army I have more than once heard it loudly & publicly said '*à quoi bon faire de dispositions, quand on est sûr d'avance qu'elles ne seroient pas exécutées!*']

The same spirit of dissatisfaction & dislike to the service prevails—nine out of ten almost, say they are determined to quit, many in disgust at being neglected in promotion & some from thinking it a disgrace to belong to such an Army—in short nothing can be held so low as the Imperial service is at present: . . . the universal opinion in the Italian army is that interest & intrigue are the only means of preferment & that without them no attention is paid to merit. General Mack is constantly quoted as a striking example of the neglect of transcendent abilities & merit, & M<sup>r</sup> Thugûd (*sic*) is accused of having sacrificed to his resentment against him 50,000 men & the Emperor's dearest Interests by occasioning the incalculable Losses of this Campaign from his obstinacy in not employing the only man capable of restoring the Confidence of the Army & of directing its operations with success. . . .

He then in a postscript adds—

I must not omit to mention a circumstance much talked of & well calculated to relax the Discipline & increase the Disgust of the Army: by directions from Vienna, General Allvintzy gave out in orders before the commencement of his former operations in November, that the most immediate & severe punishment would follow every breach of Duty, whatever the Rank of the Delinquent might be: & that distinguish'd behaviour would be instantly rewarded in the most exemplary way—there were glaring instances of both—the Expedition failed—the threats & promises have been equally forgotten.

There then follows Colonel Graham's journal, which is here printed

nearly in full, the subsidiary operations only being omitted. For the strength of the six attacking columns see above, p. 322, note 2.

*Journal of the operations of the principal Corps (consisting of 29 Battalions, besides light Troops, & 16 Squadrons) commanded by Lt Genl Quosdanovich & acting under the immediate inspection of Genl Allvintzy, Commr in Chief of the Imperial Army in the Venetian State & the Tyrol, intended to attempt the relief of Mantua.*

This Corps is divided into 6 Columns—the 1<sup>st</sup> of 5 Battalions under the command of Colonel Lusignan, & the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>, each of 4 Battalions, under the command of Major Generals Liphay and Köbles, form the right wing & are to attack the Enemy's post on Monte Baldo:—the 4<sup>th</sup>, consisting of 4 Battalions commanded by M. General Ocskay—the 5<sup>th</sup> of 9 Battalions & 14 Squadrons commanded by M.G. Prince Reuss, & the 6<sup>th</sup> of 2 Battalions 2 Squadrons & the Artillery, form the Left Wing & follow the Valley of the Adige & will cooperate in the attack of Rivoli on the 18<sup>th</sup> (*sic*).

[Jan<sup>r</sup> 10. Head Quarters at Brentonico.

Jan. 11. Advance southwards described. 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> columns scaling Monte Baldo 'the Commr in Chief passed the night on the snow in the open air:' the 3<sup>rd</sup> column halted at Belluno on the right bank of the Adige: the 4<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> columns proceeded from Alla by the great road on the left of the Adige.]

Jan<sup>r</sup> 12<sup>th</sup>. General Liphay's advanced guard, consisting of Chasseurs & one Battalion, was attacked on the heights beyond the Defiles of Aqua Negre, but repulsed the enemy with loss beyond the Ravine of Ferrara: the 3<sup>rd</sup> Column marched by the Ravine of Belluno & joined the 2<sup>nd</sup>, but the General thought it imprudent to attempt to force the Enemy's formidable position without the assistance of the 1<sup>st</sup> column of which there was no report since the morning: the night was spent with much anxiety on that account.

Head Quarters on the side of the Ravine opposite to Ferrara: the 4<sup>th</sup> Column which was to have proceeded by the Right Bank of the Adige was ordered to march in the night from Belluno to assist in the attack of the ravine & a Battalion of . . . .<sup>b</sup> with Chasseurs was ordered to turn the Enemy's left in the night by gaining the rocky summit of the Ridge above the Ravine.

18<sup>th</sup> Jan<sup>r</sup>. 5 o'clock A.M. The enemy abandoned their position behind the Ravine (probably in consequence of hearing of Colonel Lusignan's march) but as this could not be positively ascertained till daybreak it was impossible to overtake them: the 4<sup>th</sup> Column did not arrive, the order having been *misunderstood*:—the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> columns were put in motion & separated at La Corona: the 2<sup>nd</sup> marched by the Caprino Road on the Right of the Ravine, which begins near La Corona & which runs southward parallel to the Adige into the plain of Rivoli: the 3<sup>rd</sup> followed the top of the Ridge bounding the Valley of the Adige: this Ridge has a steep & rocky slope (much covered with wood) westwards towards the above mentioned Ravine, & in general a more gradual one southward towards Rivoli, where it runs out, but in

<sup>b</sup> Illegible.

several places this slope is interrupted by chasms of the Rock: towards the East it is almost a perpendicular Rock between which & the Adige there is a narrow plain which terminates at Rivoli by a bend of the River. The waters of several rivulets falling into the Adige at this bend form a Ravine in front of the Village of Rivoli & the high rocky Ridge, bounding the River, immediately rises again behind it.—At the extremity of these ridges & on each side of the Ravine there were strong batteries & Redoubts commanding the great Road on the left bank of the River & the narrow access from the plain on the right bank by which the 5<sup>th</sup> Column was to attack.—The Enemy occupied a position in front of Rivoli in very considerable force under the command of Gen<sup>l</sup> Joubert: their right was appuy'd on the above mentioned Ridge (near St. Mark's Chapel) about a mile from its southern extremity, having one of those chasms in front, & they had a strong advanced guard posted in a wood which extended northward to another more considerable Gap & which formed a kind of Ravine, running westward into the principal Ravine. Their centre & left occupied a chain of broken & woody heights which begin on the right bank of the rivulet that rises near La Corona & which extends westward into the plain nearly at right angles to the ridge & opposite to St. Mark's Chapel: these heights afterwards take a Southern & then an Eastern Direction, returning towards the high Ridge behind Rivoli. In the centre of the plain within these heights they had a strong reserve of Infantry with a small body of Cavalry & some pieces of Cannon.—The day was far spent before any report came from the 1<sup>st</sup> Column, & the 4<sup>th</sup> not having arrived the attack was necessarily postponed: the 2<sup>nd</sup> column was posted at the foot of the mountain between Caprino & Bassan: the 3<sup>rd</sup> on the Ridge of the Adige, its advanced guard skirmished with the Enemy & established itself as above mentioned between the Gaps of the Ridge. Colonel Lusignan had met with incredible difficulties that had retarded his march but he had completely defeated a detachment of the Enemy sent against him & he arrived late at Caprino. Another order was sent to Gen<sup>l</sup> Ocsaky to bring the 4<sup>th</sup> Column up by the Scala della Madonna della Corona in the right.

Head Quarters at Bassan, a small village at the foot of the mountain, in front of which there are two or three other small villages & several large Houses, walled Gardens, & Vineyards, occupying the broken ground between the Enemies position & ours.

14<sup>th</sup> Jan. The 4<sup>th</sup> column arrived & was posted to the left of Bassan communicating across the Ravine with the 3<sup>rd</sup>: the 5<sup>th</sup> Column crossed the Adige on a Bridge established near Peri & advanced as far as they could venture, while the Enemy occupied the Ridge. The 6<sup>th</sup> advanced on the left beyond Dolce to cannonade the enemy's Batteries at Rivoli. As the 1<sup>st</sup> column was ordered to make a detour of the above described low Heights so as to turn entirely the enemy's Left and to make a direct attack on the village of Rivoli & the high Ridge behind it, the general attack would have been postponed proportionately: but the Enemy reinforced by General Masséna's Division & commanded by General Bonaparte who arrived in the night, attacked the advanced posts of the 3<sup>rd</sup> column in the wood in front of their Right: and these being

supported the action became general on the Ridge about Daybreak, and the Enemy advancing in great force, the 4<sup>th</sup> column was soon after likewise engaged: for some time the 3<sup>rd</sup> column was driven from the wood & the Enemy planted a Standard on the Rocky summit of the Gap which bounded the wood on the north side: but after maintaining that situation with much obstinacy they were forced to abandon it, as well as the villages in front of the 4<sup>th</sup> Column: about 9 o'clock A.M. General Liphthay with the 2<sup>nd</sup> column having made a vigorous attack on the Enemy's left & Centre, they were entirely driven from the Low Heights with the Loss of 2 pieces of Cannon: & soon after, their Right, being in danger of being cut off, precipitately retreated from the Ridge of the Adige.<sup>6</sup> This was the favourable moment when the 5<sup>th</sup> Column protected by the Artillery of the 6<sup>th</sup>, which forced the Enemy to withdraw theirs from their batteries, was to begin the attack on Rivoli; but before it could advance to the Pass, our hopes of complete success were blasted in a moment: the men especially of the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> columns, who had fought for near 5 hours with distinguished bravery, were much dispersed by the nature of the Ground; and, not having been collected & formed on the Heights and on the extremity of the Ridge, eagerly pursued the Enemy through some small woody enclosures into the Plain, where the foremost were attacked by a few Horsemen: these returning & calling out *French Cavalry*, a sudden panick spread like wildfire: no effort of their Officers nor of the Commander in Chief, who used every exertion & exposed himself much, had the smallest effect in rallying them: they fled in the utmost disorder & it was in vain to assure them that they were not pursued: fortunately the Enemy durst not follow beyond their position on the Low Heights (except with a few *Tirailleurs*) which they immediately regained, as well as the extremity of the Ridge and the Redoubts at the Pass of Rivoli.<sup>7</sup>

Major General Prince Beuss observing the Ridge cleared of the Enemy & ignorant of this reverse of fortune, had ordered the advanced Guard of his Column, consisting of 6 Squadrons & one Battalion, to advance: the Cavalry, though exposed to the fire from the Redoubts on each side of the pass, effected their *Debouché* & the Redoubts were stormed & carried by the infantry. But disappointed of the support expected from the left wing of the Army, they were soon overpowered by numbers & thrown back with loss on their Column.—In the afternoon we had the sad additional mortification to see the brave Colonel Lusignan maintain an unequal conflict against the whole of the French Army: no report is come from him & there is every reason to suppose that his Corps is

\* Koch (*Memoires de Massena*) notes how swiftly and suddenly this attack was made under cover of the hollow or ravine of the Tasso stream, on the French left. The best plans of the battle field are those given by Clausewitz, by 'J. G.', and by Alison.

<sup>7</sup> As far as I know no account of the battle (certainly not those of Schels and Clausewitz) has ever explained so clearly and forcibly as this of Colonel Graham the immediate cause of the Austrian disaster. The panic yielded to the French the very ground which was needed for the Austrian 5th column whereon to debouch. That advance, in any case a most difficult one up the steep spiral ascent from Osteria to the plateau of Rivoli, was now exposed to an attack on *both flanks* as the front ranks struggled up the slope. Its success depended on the success of Liptai's attack and on the important diversion effected by Lusignan: but the latter was delayed by natural obstacles and Liptai's advance was checked by the panic.



destroyed: 2 Battalions & 2 squadrons of the 5<sup>th</sup> column were sent for & came up by the pass of Bocca de Creara; the Commander in Chief spent the early part of the night on the Ridge of the Adige, but having determined not to retreat to la Corona, which he was advised to do in order to give time to assemble & form the Battalions, he returned to Bassan.

15<sup>th</sup> Jan<sup>r</sup>. At 5 o'clock A.M. the Enemy attacked on the Ridge & soon regained possession of it as far as St Mark's Chapel & after day-break, pushing on through the wood, they established themselves on the high point of the Gap, where, as well as in the Valley, an action continued for some time; but as the Battalions were still dispersed & mixed & the men exhausted with hunger & fatigue, and as it was evident from the summit of the Ridge that the Enemy were making progress everywhere, a determination to retreat was taken, when it was no longer possible to do it without Disorder: orders were sent to Major Generals Liphay & Ocskay to retreat & take post at la Corona, while Major General Köbles was to defend the Ridge as long as possible: the General himself retreated by the Bocca of Creara & had scarcely got down before the Enemy were in possession of the Pass, a proof that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Column was soon forced: in consequence we were exposed for some time to their Tirailleurs who fired from the summit of the Rocks & who with shouts of contempt & with stones, drove our men like a flock of sheep along the narrow plain towards Belluno: many of General Köbles's column have been surrounded: the remainder escaped by passes of the Rocks. No reports are come from the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> columns so that the extent of the loss of this disgraceful day is not known.

No. 33.

Head Quarters, Avio, 17<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1797.

My Lord,—In addition to the contents of the journal & Dispatch which I had the honour of addressing to your Lordship yesterday, I have only now to add that Col. Lusignan's whole Corps is cut off and that the Loss of the others in prisoners, particularly on the 15<sup>th</sup>, is very considerable—what aggravates, if possible, these misfortunes is the intelligence of Gen<sup>l</sup> Provera's success, who by the last accounts was at Castellara within ten miles of Mantua. I understand that in consequence of this it has been determined in a Council of War held to day to make some movement across the Mountains towards Verona in hopes of drawing the Enemies attention from Mantua. But as great part of the Army must be left to guard the Country, I see no prospect of advantage from this. I do not say however that, considering the total discouragement of the Troops on the 15<sup>th</sup>, an attack on Rivoli would be a prudent attempt—but it is the only one that would be likely to save Mantua, now become an object of still greater interest by the addition of 10,000 or 12,000 men that may have joined the Garrison: if they could save themselves across the Po & join the Pope's troops, destroying as much as possible the works &c at Mantua, they might still be useful—for if, by this . . . .<sup>\*</sup> is not prevented from setting on foot a Large Army in Italy early in the summer, the French might probably be driven from Mantua much sooner than is imagined. A flotilla on the Lago di Garda, which would most materially facilitate the Débouché from the Tyrol, & which

\* Words illegible.

might afterwards be conveyed by the Mincio to the Lake of Mantua, would be of infinite service. But to give vigour & effect to such operations, a Corps of British sailors with a few enterprising Officers, such as are almost all ours of the Navy, would be essentially necessary: having thought much on this subject I throw out the Idea now, as in my mind Mantua is lost at present.

I have the honour to be with the greatest respect

Your Lordship's most obedient humble Servant

THOMAS GRAHAM.

[P.S.]—I send my servant w<sup>th</sup> these despatches by the way of Venice in case Mr Drake sh<sup>d</sup> have any to send & I leave them open for his & Sir Morton Eden's perusal.

No. 34.

Rovoredo, Jan. 19, 1797.

[He states that the losses in their flight were much greater than he had imagined: probably they were between 14,000 and 15,000 men. Added to this was the 'surrender of Gen' Provera's corps of about 8,000 men.' He begs to be allowed to return to England, as his services are no longer of any use.]

Rovoredo.

[He encloses a letter from General Allvintzy begging that a body of 2,200 Hessian troops near Venice may be sent as soon as possible.]

Nos. 35, 36.

[He reports from Conegliano the further advance of the French up the Adige to the position of Lavis. He recommends that a British naval force be sent to the Adriatic.]

No. 37.

[From Udine, 27 Feb. 1797, he reports the approach of the archduke Charles and the retirement of the French for concentration.]

No. 38.

Head Quarters of H.R.H. the Archduke Charles, Udine,  
14<sup>th</sup> March, 1797.

My Lord,—H.R.H. the Archduke Charles arriv'd here on the 4<sup>th</sup> Inst<sup>t</sup> to take the command of the Army.

From what I can learn there are many other instances now of a continuance of the same system with regard to promotion & Economy that has hitherto occasion'd such misfortunes in this Army: to restore its spirit & discipline would have requir'd placing the most unlimited powers in the hands of the Commander in Chief & I thought that the nomination of the Emperor's Brother evinc'd an intention of the only change of system which in my opinion can, without a vast superiority of numbers, put this Army on a footing of equality with that of the Enemy's, where Bona Parté is absolute Dictator.—But this is far from being the case—there is considerable promotion indeed of some of the higher Ranks, which has brought forward some who never will gain the confidence of the Army: while many, almost all, of the distinguish'd officers of lower rank remain unnoticed—because this Army has been unfortunate; and because it is pretended that the Regimental promotion depends on the proprietors of the Regiments: thus the discontent remains, which makes many officers be absent under pretence of sickness & numbers of vacancies continue unfill'd up in the Battalions. I have formerly, I believe, said that the Difference of the number of French & Austrian

Officers, in proportion to the men, is of itself sufficient to account for all the Defeats of the latter in such a country as this: this is a daily subject of conversation here with those most in the ArchDuke's confidence, but they look on the evil as irremediable on account of the obstinacy with which the old system is adher'd to at Vienna. I most anxiously wish that all my apprehensions may prove Groundless: but it is impossible for me to judge favourably of the commencement of this campaign: & I think it a subject of great regret that the ArchDuke's reputation (all that we have to give a spring to this dejected army) should be expos'd to so much risk, on the first outset against so fortunate a General as Bona Parté—the occasion urg'd the most active & decided Exertions of every kind. . . .

With troops so dispirited even the archduke Charles could do little in the strong defensive positions of the Carnic and Noric Alps. Colonel Graham notes later on that the army is 'mouldering away,' and that the Croats especially are deserting at every possible opportunity. He himself longed to be back with his own beloved 90th; and he must have taken to heart many lessons which were to be of the highest importance in the Peninsular campaigns waged against the foes whose daring and resource he so highly esteemed in 1796-7. J. HOLLAND ROSE.

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#### HEREDITARY INSANITY IN HISTORY.

IN our notice of Professor Lorenz's 'Genealogie' we stated that we proposed on a future occasion to discuss the author's treatment of certain cases of hereditary insanity.<sup>1</sup> We now proceed to carry out our engagement, but we must make a preliminary observation. As we must select those cases on which we differ from the author, our remarks will necessarily assume a hostile appearance, but we would not have our readers suppose that the judgment which we shall here pass is to be extended to the whole work. The parts which we shall criticise constitute but a small, and probably in the estimation of the writer a somewhat unimportant, portion of the entire compilation. Having made this reservation, we shall deal freely with the matter.

In his treatment of the subject we notice that the professor is too ready to assume that any given case of insanity must be hereditary, and that he does not make sufficient allowance for cases of spontaneous appearance. We find that in some instances he attaches little, in others great, importance to drunkenness as a test of insanity. He seems to us also to act as the advocate of some families and the opponent of others. In conclusion, we regret to see that he has adopted the view that marriages between near relations do not produce pernicious effects.

<sup>1</sup> ENGLISH HISTORICAL REVIEW, July 1898.

We propose to examine four of the cases which he gives, and, as three of them are closely connected with Joanna of Castile, we will begin with that of George III, which is perfectly independent. The professor assumes, perhaps too hastily, that the king's infirmity was derived from his ancestors. He then travels up the direct male line until he can find some one who presents some mental peculiarity. He finds that William the younger, the great-grandfather of George I, at the end of his days was mentally incapable of managing the affairs of the state. He has now found the secret, and he considers this to be a proof of pathological atavism of the most extraordinary kind. We should think so, too, if we could believe one word of it, but we do not. William was probably the most enlightened and vigorous prince of the House of Brunswick. His life was one of continual mental and bodily activity. By his Danish wife he was the father of fifteen healthy children, all of whom grew up, and many attained a great age. Now if his mind was affected, he must either have inherited his infirmity or it must be ascribed to decay of age, hastened probably by over-exertion. But Dr. Lorenz does not, and probably could not, afford us any clue to facilitate our research. The Brunswick family was very prolific and healthy, and we cannot believe that any former member of it transmitted any taint to William the younger. We must infer then that the weakness of William was not inherited, but was purely personal; and, as he continued to govern long after the birth of his son George, the ancestor of our kings, he cannot in any way have contributed to the insanity of George III.

If the professor insists on finding the cause of the insanity of George III in the list of his progenitors, we recommend him to trace back the maternal ancestors of Caroline, the queen of George II, and the paternal ancestors of Augusta, the princess of Wales. He will then find himself in the midst of the Ernestine Saxons, among whom he has already discovered traces of inherited insanity. If he succeed on the side of Caroline, he will at the same time be able to account for the madness of Christian VII of Denmark.

No case has ever attracted so much attention as that of Joanna of Castile, and in recent times, besides our author, M. Déjerine and Dr. Ireland have discussed the question. Since the refutation of Bergenroth in the *Edinburgh Review*, probably no one will doubt that Joanna was insane and that she inherited her infirmity. The question to solve is, From whom did her insanity come?

In order to enable the reader to form a judgment on the matter, we have drawn up a genealogical table of Joanna's ancestors back to the time of Alfonso XI.



who come in the direct line down to Peter the Cruel married relatives from the Peninsula. Two married princesses of Aragon, and four (including Peter) married princesses of Castile.

Peter of Aragon was also insane, though not to the same extent, and his insanity must be accounted for in a different way.

Both these Peters were also ancestors of Joanna. By a succession of intermarriages the blood of all these princes became mixed, and the family, especially in the Castilian branch, rapidly degenerated. The life of John II was a perpetual childhood, and the son that he had by his first cousin, Mary, was the bodily and mentally incompetent Henry IV. It will be seen by the table that Ferdinand the Catholic had in his veins the blood of Henry of Transtamare and of his brother Sancho, of Peter the Cruel of Aragon and Peter the Cruel of Portugal. Isabella contributed that of Peter the Cruel of Castile, of Henry of Transtamare, and of Peter the Cruel of Aragon. By the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella all these tainted streams were united and came like a torrent on the head of Joanna. For several generations almost the only untainted blood in the family, with the exception of that of the maternal ancestors of Ferdinand, was that derived from John of Portugal and his wife Philippa of Lancaster.

We must now inquire how Dr. Lorenz accounts for the insanity of Joanna. In a most extraordinary way, without any investigation, he starts with his conclusion, that John of Gaunt was the cause of all the evil. What made him think so we cannot imagine. We can only suppose that he thought that, as our Henry VI was mad, his great-grandfather, John, must have been mad too. But Henry did not derive his insanity from his Lancastrian blood, but through his mother, Catherine of France, who was born many years after her father, Charles VI, went out of his mind. Having settled this point the professor travels in a straight line, seeing nothing on the right or the left, and apparently knowing nothing of the really mad ancestors of Joanna. He does not offer one tittle of evidence to prove the insanity of John. He merely informs us that the Spaniards thought that his daughters drank too much. Now he has frequently told us that drunkenness is of little value as a test in tracing insanity, and in this case the charge was most probably untrue with reference to Philippa, and with regard to Catherine it was quite unnecessary, as she was the granddaughter of the mad Peter the Cruel of Castile. He also tells us that Isabella of Portugal, grandmother of Joanna, was weak in her head at the end of her life. It is probable that the infirmity of Isabella was not hereditary, and even if were it is more likely that it was derived from some other ancestor than from Philippa, who was perfectly sane. Our own opinion is that the principal seat of the evil was in Peter the Cruel, and that, as his granddaughter married into the Castilian family, the evil was intensified, and still further in-

creased by marriage between near relations descended from tainted ancestors.

If Dr. Lorenz can prove that John of Gaunt was mad, we can tell him how he may lighten his labours. All the reigning houses in Europe are descended from the duke of Lancaster, so that whenever he meets with a case of insanity in a royal family he can at once point to John as the source of the evil. He will thus be enabled to account for the insanity of the kings of Bavaria, and he will then be provided with a proof of a case of pathological atavism almost as remarkable as the one he fancies he has found in the house of Brunswick.

The case of Don Carlos is very remarkable. If ever a man before his birth was predestined to be mad, he was the man. He was the child of double first cousins. He had only four instead of eight ancestors in the third, and only six instead of sixteen in the fourth degree. His parents, grand-parents, and great-grand-parents were all, except Emanuel and Philip, descended from Ferdinand and Isabella, through whom, jointly or separately, the insanity of the Castilian family was transmitted to the Habsburgers. His case, in one respect, was worse than that of Peter the Cruel. We cannot therefore see what good purpose can be served by the attempt made by Dr. Lorenz to find extenuating circumstances. Yet we are seriously informed that the case would not have been so bad had not Carlos in his youth had a fall, and had the Spanish physicians possessed more skill.

The case of John William, the mad duke of Cleves, does not present much difficulty. His mother was granddaughter of Joanna, and daughter of Ferdinand I., and we agree with Dr. Ireland that traces of Joanna's insanity are to be found in the Austrian branch of the house of Habsburg. But Dr. Lorenz wishes to transfer part at least of the blame to the father, William, who was brother of our Queen Anne of Cleves. William changed his religion several times, and appears to have become confused, and finally incapable; but his son, John William, was born many years before. The professor suggests also that William was not moderate in his mode of life. Now we do not believe that he transmitted any of these peculiarities to his son, whose insanity is fully accounted for on the mother's side, without the necessity of hunting up doubtful cases in the paternal line.

There are other cases in which we might not altogether agree with Dr. Lorenz, but we have written enough to show the danger to which the genealogist is exposed in tracing the course of insanity, and it is clear that this danger is greatest if the inquirer has already adopted strong views on the subject. He will then be liable to accept, without sufficient examination, everything which confirms his own opinion, and to devote all his critical powers to explaining away everything which points in the opposite direction. X.