

**RULERS OF INDIA: THE
MARQUESS CORNWALLIS
AND THE CONSOLIDATION
OF BRITISH RULE**

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Rulers of India: The Marquess Cornwallis and the consolidation of British rule by W. S. Seton-Karr

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W. S. SETON-KARR

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RULERS OF INDIA

The Marquess Cornwallis

AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF BRITISH RULE

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IN THE FOREIGN DEPARTMENT

Cornwallis

FOURTH THOUSAND

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NOTE

The orthography of proper names follows the system adopted by the Indian Government for the *Imperial Gazetteer of India*. That system, while adhering to the popular spelling of very well-known places, such as Punjab, Lucknow, etc., employs in all other cases the vowels with the following uniform sounds:—

u, as in women: ō, as in fathers: i, as in police: f, as in intrigue:
o, as in cold: u, as in bull: ō, as in sure: e, as in grey.

LORD CORNWALLIS



CHAPTER I

EARLY LIFE AND AMERICAN CAMPAIGN

THE family of Cornwallis, Mr. Ross says with truth, was of some importance in Ireland, as is shown by the family papers. The first of whom we hear anything positive in England was Thomas Cornwallis, who became Sheriff of London in 1378. He acquired property in Suffolk, and his son and grandson represented that county in Parliament. One of his successors helped to suppress the insurrection of Wyatt, and was rewarded by the office of Treasurer of the Household. The grandson of the Treasurer was created a baronet by Charles I, supported the Royal cause, and followed Charles II to the Continent. After the Restoration, Sir Frederick became Baron Cornwallis in 1661. The third holder of this title is known as having married Anne Scott, widow of Monmouth and Duchess of Buccleugh. The fifth baron, who was Chief Justice of Eyre south of Trent,

and Constable of the Tower, was created Earl Cornwallis and Viscount Brome in June, 1753. His son, born December 31, 1738, is the subject of the present memoir.

Charles, second Earl and first Marquess Cornwallis, was educated at Eton; and, according to the custom of the time, entered the army at the age of eighteen. He was sent abroad in 1757 to acquire some technical knowledge, and joined the Military Academy at Turin. Several amusing anecdotes of his life there are given in letters from a Prussian officer, Captain De Roguin, who appears to have accompanied the young Englishman as a sort of travelling companion and tutor. The discipline of the Academy seems to have been fairly strict, and Lord Brome spent his time in learning to dance and fence, studying the German language, and taking lessons in the riding school. After leaving Turin he visited some of the German courts, served on the staff of Lord Granby, and was present at several actions on the Continent, including the battle of Minden. In 1760 he entered Parliament as member for Eye, but in less than two years he succeeded to the earldom, on the death of his father in June, 1762.

Hitherto there had been nothing extraordinary in the career of Earl Cornwallis. He had benefitted by a public school education. His mind had been opened and his taste improved by foreign travel, and he had seen some hard service at Minden, Labinau, and other

minor actions against the French. On his return home he continued to pay attention to his military duties and was stationed with his regiment at Dublin, Derby, Gloucester, and Gibraltar. In July, 1768, he married Jemima, daughter of Colonel Jones of the third regiment of Foot Guards. He seems to have been constantly in his place in the House of Peers, and to have voted usually with Lord Shelburne, who eventually became the first Lord Lansdowne, and with Earl Temple. It is significant that notwithstanding the political opinions of his predecessors he was steadily opposed to the scheme for taxing the American colonists, and though he held divers Ministerial appointments he voted against the Ministry of the day on more than one occasion. In 1770 he was violently denounced by Junius, and by that venomous writer was credited with the intention of 'retiring into voluntary banishment in the hope of recovering some of his reputation.'

This attack rests on no more basis of truth than many of the accusations of Junius. But so far from retiring from public life into social exile, it was the fate of Cornwallis from this date to take a decided and prominent part in most important events in America, in India, in Ireland, and on the Continent. Practically, his public career may be divided into four portions. He commanded a division of Royal troops and saw much service in the American War of Independence. He was Governor-General and