

**THE LIFE, ADVENTURES,
AND POLITICAL
OPINIONS OF FREDERICK
GUSTAVUS BURNABY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649632541

The Life, Adventures, and Political Opinions of Frederick Gustavus Burnaby by R. K. Mann

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
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R. K. MANN

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AND POLITICAL
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L I F E
O F
F R E D E R I C K G U S T A V U S B U R N A B Y.

THE LIFE, ADVENTURES,
AND
POLITICAL OPINIONS
OF
FREDERICK GUSTAVUS BURNABY
(COLONEL COMMANDING ROYAL HORSE GUARDS, BLUE).

Pro Rego.

BY
R. K. MANN.



F. V. WHITE AND CO.,
31, SOUTHAMPTON STREET, STRAND.
1882.

210 h 59

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L I F E
OF
FREDERICK GUSTAVUS BURNABY.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE.

THE town of Bedford can claim the distinction of being the natal place of Frederick Gustavus Burnaby, he having been born there on the 3rd March, 1842. His family is one of considerable antiquity, whose coat of arms, we learn from Burke, is *arg.* two bars, a lion passant, guardant in chief, *gu.*; the crest, a demi-man, *sa.*; in the dexter hand a bunch of columbine flowers, *ppr.*; round the neck a rope, *or.*, with the end hanging down on the sinister side, the motto being, 'Pro Rege.' He can further boast, according to Foster's 'Collectanea Genealogica,' of being the nineteenth in descent from Edward I., King of England, the most illustrious monarch, excepting the Saxon Alfred, who ever wore the British diadem. This is a thing to be proud of, but

2 *Life of Frederick Gustavus Burnaby.*

Colonel Burnaby is as free from ostentation as was his famous ancestor, whom in many other respects he closely resembles.

Features, temperaments, talents and other characteristics, are frequently perpetuated from generation to generation, and in Burnaby's case we have a striking instance. In length of limbs he takes after the great Plantagenet King, standing in his stockings six feet four inches. Edward was taller than any of his subjects, few of whom could reach to his shoulders. Besides limbs, he is a counterpart of the heroic Plantagenet, such as in valour, intellect, daring, and a love of travel. Edward, for his day, had seen much of the world; Eastern suns had browned his fair complexion; he had visited Italy, Sicily, France and Flanders; when in Italy he went to Rome, where he was entertained with profuse magnificence by his old tutor, Pope Gregory X., and in grey weeds had made pilgrimages to every shrine in his own land. The old chronicler, Piers Langtofts, tells us, 'Sire Edward had a horse named Fenaunt, black as a raven, on whose back he could spring, armed from head to foot in mail, and leap any chain however high.' What the monarch did the guardsman can do, and were cuisses added to his cuirass, with like ease could he vault into his seat; in fact, in leaping, riding, or in any other gymnastic feat or trial of strength, the modern soldier is equal to the one of old.

In his earliest years, Frederick Gustavus gave striking indications of a fearless and adventurous

turn, as did the naturalist, Charles Waterton, and like him, by the incredulous, was dubbed a 'Baron Munchausen.' We know how little either are entitled to the appellation. Our young hero, while at Harrow, like other boys of his years, occasionally got entangled in a broil. One fine day, getting into a quarrel with one of his school-fellows named Edwards, they determined to settle their differences with their fists. To the fight they addressed themselves right heartily. Edwards was the taller, and the elder by two years. The combat lasted a good hour, and was as fierce as it was long; but it was put an end to before either had yielded, and to this day Burnaby thinks the encounter was only stopped in time, as he was getting the worst of it, and was about tired of the fun. He had a decided partiality for aquatics, and would take long excursions on the Thames. On one occasion he rowed his little skiff from Windsor to Oxford, through the canal, up the Severn, so on past Shrewsbury, and back again, the voyage lasting three weeks. He could use the pen as well as the oar, and not having a relish for fagging, he took up the first-named instrument to express his opinions on the subject, and forwarded his lucubrations to *Punch*. It was a pretty racy production, and his first, and gave the public a greater amount of amusement than it did the heads of the school, who entertained a thought of expelling the writer. In Greek and Latin he did not take a lead, nor was he at the top of his class at examinations; but in French he was not beaten. From