

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910164075303321
Autore	Gomm G.C.B Field-Marshal Sir William Maynard
Titolo	Letters And Journals Of Field Marshal Sir William Maynard Gomm, G.C.B. &c, &c, From 1799 to Waterloo, 1815
Pubbl/distr/stampa	San Francisco : , : Wagram Press, , 2011 ©2011
ISBN	9781908902054 1908902051
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (278 pages)
Disciplina	940.274092
Soggetti	Napoleonic Wars, 1800-1815 Generals - Great Britain
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di contenuto	Title page -- PREFACE. -- CONTENTS. -- CHAPTER I. -- INTRODUCTORY. -- CHAPTER II. -- 1794-1799. -- PARENTAGE-FIRST COMMISSION-WOOLWICH-JOINS 9TH REGIMENT-EXPEDITION TO THE HELDER-BATTLE OF BERGEN. -- CHAPTER III. -- 1800-1805. -- COAST OF PORTUGAL-VIGO BAY-GIBRALTAR-LISBON-RETURN HOME-ADE-DE-CAMP TO GENERAL COMMANDING N.W. DISTRICT-IRELAND JOINS STAFF COLLEGE, HIGH WYCOMBE-COMES OF AGE-CORRESPONDENCE WITH HIS AUNT. -- CHAPTER IV. -- 1805-1808. -- EXPEDITION TO BREMEN-RETURNS TO STAFF COLLEGE-PASSES EXAMINATION-EXPEDITION TO STRALSUND-BOMBARDMENT OF COPENHAGEN-ARMY RECEIVES THANKS OF PARLIAMENT. -- CHAPTER V. -- 1808. -- IRELAND-ALMOST JOINS SIR TORN MOORE'S EXPEDITION TO SWEDEN-ASSISTANT QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL-EXPEDITION TO SPAIN UNDER SIR A. WELLESLEY-LANDS AT MONDEGO BAY-BATTLE OF ROLICA-BATTLE OF VIMIERA-CONVENTION OF CINTRA-LISBON. -- CHAPTER VI. -- 1808-1809. -- UNDER SIR JOHN MOORE-SENT ON TO EXAMINE ROADS INTO SPAIN-ADVANCE-NO LETTERS-RETREAT TO CORUNNA-DEATH OF SIR JOHN MOORE-DANGEROUS VOYAGE HOME-CANTER BURY-COACH ACCIDENT. -- CHAPTER VII. -- 1809. -- WALCHEREN EXPEDITION. -- CHAPTER VIII. -- 1810. -- PENINSULAR WAR-LISBON-CONVENT OF BATALHA-THE PORTUGUESE ARMY-THOMAR. -- CHAPTER IX. -- 1810.

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Sommario/riassunto

Field-Marshal Gomm's letters and journals provide a first-rate account of the numerous actions, battles and events that he was involved in during the Napoleonic wars. A seasoned officer from a military family, he was an acute observer of all that went on around him, and the notes and letters he wrote, edited by his son, provide a capital trove of information. This collection of his diary entries and letters focuses on the Napoleonic Wars, although he would rise to the highest rank in the British Army and C-in-C of India. Engaged in the early campaigns of the British Army against the French forces from 1799, he was one of the few officers that fought in the Peninsular War and the Waterloo campaign that actually had some staff training, having passed through Staff College. Many of his contemporaries were somewhat amateur in their outlook to soldiering, but Gomm was a thoughtful and assiduously thorough officer. After the campaign in Portugal and Spain, first under Wellington and then under Sir John Moore, he managed to survive the Walcheren expedition and was then posted back to Spain, where he would serve out the Peninsular war. Present at the battles of Busaco, Fuentes d'Onoro, Salamanca, Vittoria, the Pyrenees, the Nive, the Nivelles and St Pierre, as well as the sieges of Ciudad Rodrigo and

Badajoz, he was a lieutenant-colonel by the time he left for England. This was a fairly rapid ascent for the time, a signal confirmation of his abilities as a staff and regimental officer, and some influence at home, no doubt. Appointed to the post of Quartermaster General of Picton's fifth division, he was to see the furious combat of Quatre Bras and the "hard pounding" of Waterloo two days later. His position as an unattached staff officer gave him a view of the fields of battle from a position on horseback, and with freedom of movement around the field that few could match. His contemporaneous notes and letters of Waterloo are annotated with his more considered thoughts and views, particularly regarding the "crisis" of Waterloo, the repulse of the last columns of the Garde Imperiale. Author - Field-Marshal Sir William Maynard Gomm, G.C.B (1784-1875) Editor - Francis Culling Carr-Gomm (1834-1919) Introduction - Francis Culling Carr-Gomm (1834-1919)
