

THE EXTREMELY FINE AND RARE CRIMEAN AND ABYSSINIAN CAMPAIGNS GROUP TO A LIEUTENANT COLONEL 33RD (THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S) REGIMENT OF FOOT, WHO'S REMARKABLE ACCOUNTS OF BOTH CAMPAIGNS HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED. AS A CAPTAIN HE TOOK PART IN AND WAS SLIGHTLY WOUNDED DURING THE 'FRIGHTFUL' ANNIHILATION OF BRITISH FORCES AT THE STORMING OF THE GRAND REDAN AND DURING THE REMARKABLE ABYSSINIAN CAMPAIGN, COMMANDED THE 33RD A DIVISION OF THE REGIMENT, TAKING PART IN THE STORMING AND CAPTURE OF MAGDALA WHERE THE 33RD LED THE STORMING OF THE MOUNTAIN FORTRESS.



CRIMEA 1854-56, CLASP, SEBASTOPOL 'I B. FANSHAWE. CAPTN. 33RD. REGT. 1855', ABYSSINIA 1867 'MAJOR T. B. FANSHAWE 3RD. D.W. REGT.'. TURKISH CRIMEA 1855, BRITISH ISSUE 'J. B. FANSHAWE. CAPTN. 33RD. REGT. 1855.'

Thomas Basil Fanshawe was born in Dagenham, Essex, on 3 December 1829. Appointed to a commission in the 33rd (Duke of Wellington's) Regiment of Foot on 14 April 1846. Advanced to Lieutenant on 3 October 1848 and Captain on 29 December 1854, he served in Halifax, Nova Scotia between August 1852 and April 1854, Malta February 1855 until June 1855 and the Crimea from 7 June that year.

A prolific writer of letters to his mother and family, Fanshawe wrote many campaign letters, most of which survive in the valance House Collections (also including a portrait) see:

<https://valencehousecollections.co.uk/?s=Thomas+Basil+Fanshawe+>

These letters were subsequently published in 3 books:

Sebastopol to Dagenham: Crimean War letters of Captain Thomas Basil Fanshawe, 33rd (Duke of Wellington's) Regiment

Abyssinia 1868 Last Great Expedition of Queen Victoria's Army: The Letters of Major Thomas Basil Fanshawe, 33rd (Duke of Wellington's) Regiment

And

Fanshawe's Indian Summer: The private letters of Lt. Col. Thomas Basil Fanshawe from Kamptee 1875

Copies of the first two of which are sold with the medals.

These books give a fascinating insight into the campaigns Fanshawe served in as a Company commander and senior Regimental officer; the dangers and duties in and out of the trenches at Sebastopol, his views on the conduct of the war and insights into the conditions Officers served. Of the Abyssinian campaign, his letters are similarly insightful, especially given the nature of the campaign and the few accounts of it that exist.



THE CRIMEAN WAR

Having been stationed at Malta at the outbreak of the Crimean War, he arrived at Sebastopol on 7 June 1855 with a body of reinforcements. Within days he would have his baptism of fire when present at the great assault on the Redan during which he was listed as wounded (Fanshawe says by a spent ball or stone). Going in at first light on 18 June 1855, the attack proved a disaster. Fully alerted by the ineffectual artillery overture, and heartened by their repulse of the French, the Russians were ready to do likewise with the British, their storm of grapeshot and musketry devastating the men struggling up the slope to the glacis, broken by shell-holes, trenches and old gravel-pits. Within minutes the formed platoons and companies disintegrated into scattered, disordered parties, easily shot down.

Fanshawe later described these events in a letter home to his parents - believed to be the only first hand account of the Regiment's sufferings that morning:

'We had to cross, on leaving the trenches, 150 yards of open ground, exposed to a very heavy fire of grape-shot from the enemy. Our loss, I regret to say, was very considerable, having had 50 men killed and wounded. Lieut-Colonel Johnstone has lost his left arm, Mundy is hit in the leg with a bullet,

Bennett I am sorry to say is killed; Quayle shot in the elbow and arm. Wickham is so hit in the foot that he is likely to be disabled for some time to come... I have had a bruise on the shoulder which has made it stiff... The loss our Division has sustained is frightful. The Rifle Brigade (2nd Brigade) are almost annihilated! Out of 130 men, 35 only survive. The 23rd nearly cease to exist!...

Fanshawe details much more in his letters from the Crimean where he remained with his Regiment before Sebastopol until June 1856. A summary of letters on this campaign is summed up by *Sebastopol to Dagenham*:

"Sebastopol appears to be a succession of forts which the Russians are strengthening every day. A great number of the men are sick of the whole concern. No one looks forward to another winter out here with any degree of satisfaction".

Captain Thomas Basil Fanshawe served with the 33rd (Duke of Wellington's) Regiment at Sebastopol during the Crimean War. The letters he wrote to his parents and siblings living at Dagenham in Essex provide a unique and unprecedented insight into a conflict often referred to as the 'Forgotten War'.

They contain personal observations, entertaining anecdotes about camp life and often frank comments about his fellow officers. We read about his experience of being under fire in the trenches as well as how he spent his leisure time. Captain Fanshawe even mentions a visit to the British Hotel set up by Mary Seacole and the hospital at Scutari administered by Florence Nightingale. The letters are fully transcribed, with an introduction, illustrations, footnotes, family trees and name index of military personnel providing much additional information."



Captain Fanshawe went on to serve as second in command of a wing of the regiment with the Okamundel Field Force at the Siege of Dwarka in 1859.

THE ABYSSINIA CAMPAIGN

Raised Major in April 1865, during the early phases of the Abyssinia campaign 1867-8, Fanshawe held temporary command of the 33rd after the death of Colonel Robert Dunn VC, Fanshawe's tentmate, under 'unusual' circumstances, he then commanded a wing of the battalion during the remarkable and often overlooked advance into Abyssinia under General Napier. Fanshawe was present at the storming and capture of Magdala in April 1868 where the 33rd led the storming of the

fortress, which was situated at the top of a mountain, the only path to which was marked by sheer drops of 100's of feet.

A description of Fanshawe's letters on this campaign is best summed up by *Abyssinia 1868 Last Great Expedition of Queen Victoria's Army*:

"Regiments of the British and Indian armies under the command of Sir Robert Napier, marched more than 400 miles through rough terrain and mountain roads to reach Magdala where British hostages were held by the King of Abyssinia.

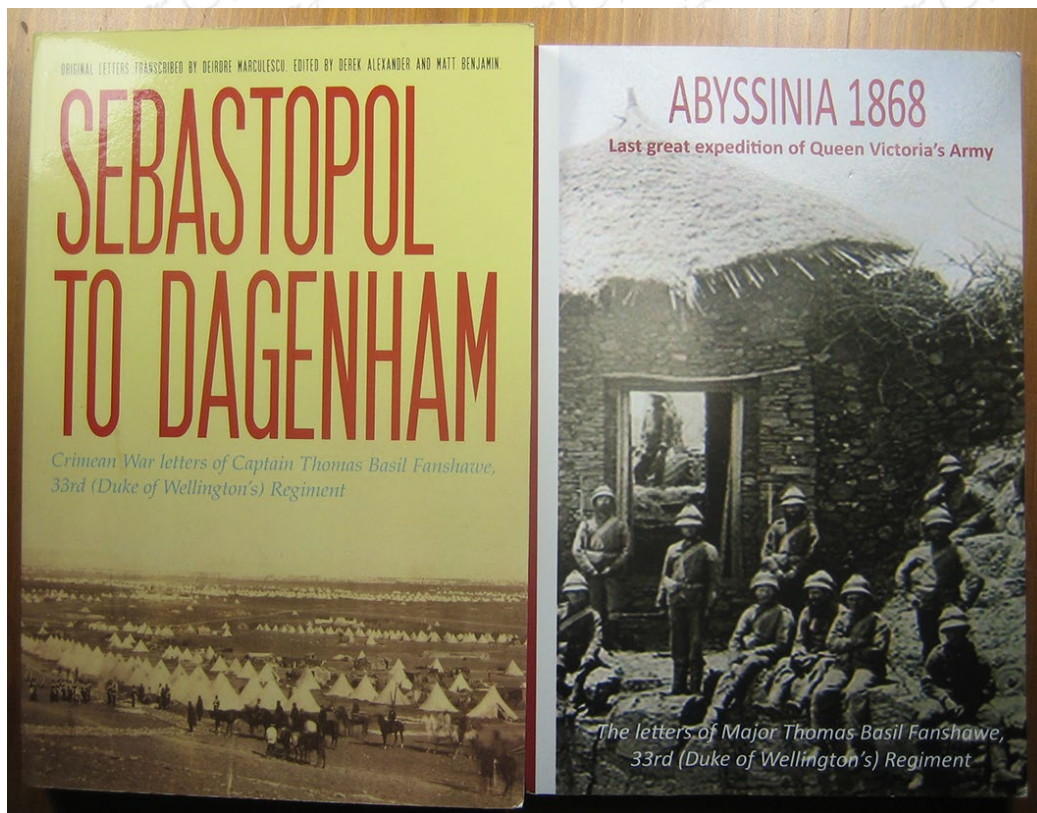
The Abyssinians defending their city, were armed mainly with spears. After suffering great losses they retreated into their fortress and diplomacy with the besieged King failed. The siege was only broken when the 33rd Regiment found an entrance into the city and the final battle took place.

A prized battle honour was gained by the Regiment for 'Abyssinia' and Basil Fanshawe's letters to his mother give vivid details as the dramatic events unfold. Also revealed are intimate familial concerns that will draw the reader into Fanshawe's life and time."



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_expedition_to_Abyssinia

Appointed Lieutenant Colonel, 33rd Foot on 24 September 1873, he finally retired to pension on 2 March 1878.



Condition generally VF, contact marks and wear to naming of first, Both Crimea's with engraved and undoubtedly contemporarily naming, both appear to be in a slightly different hand. Sold with copied Army Service Record and extracts from The History of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment where Fanshawe receives a number of mentions and the two books of letters mentioned in the text.

A really quite superb group of medals, the personal accounts of the oft forgotten Abyssinian War, being particularly rare