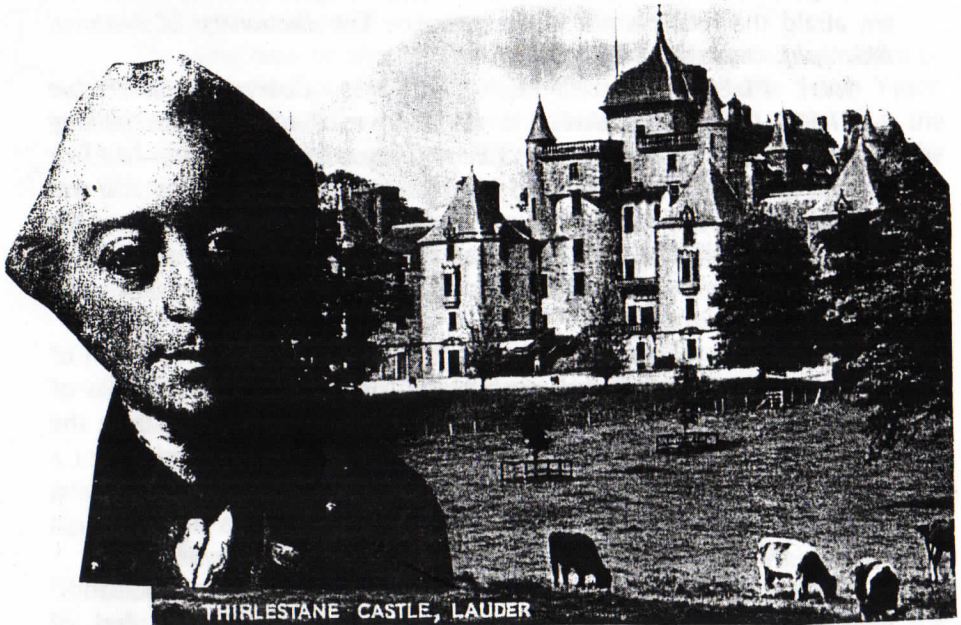

A Totteridge Worthy
General the Honourable Sir Alexander Maitland, BT.



North of the vestry of St Andrews Church, Totteridge, as close to one another as the decencies of Christian burial would allow, lie in their last terrestrial assembly the village's notables of the Napoleonic Age. In armourial and crested splendour, is the Colonel of the Regiment - Hertfordshire's own Regiment of Foot - General the Honourable Alexander Maitland. On the south wall of the nave the memorial reads:

In memory of Penelope, the wife of General the Honourable afterwards created Sir Alexander Maitland, Baronet, and Daughter of Colonel Martin Madan. She died 22nd December, 1805, aged 75 years. Also of General the Honourable Sir Alexander Maitland, Baronet, 5th Son of Charles, 8th Earl of Lauderdale, 52 years Colonel of HM 49th Regiment of Foot, who died 15th February, 1820 aged

of HM 49th Regiment of Foot, who died 15th February, 1820 aged 97 years. Also of Charlotte Mary Maitland, their youngest daughter, born 7th June, 1767; died 28th May, 1853. Their remains are interred in a vault within this churchyard. This tablet is erected by their surviving relatives.

Checking up the family history in *Burke's Peerage* the 'surviving relatives' mentioned in the tablet do not at all agree with Burke - and I am afraid the relatives are in the wrong. The *Dictionary of National Biography* records the following:

John Maitland, second Earl and first Duke of Lauderdale (1616-1682), regarded as a rising hope of the ultra-covenanting party; Commissioner for the Solemn League and Covenant, 1643-6; with Charles II in Holland, 1649, followed him to Worcester and was taken prisoner, 1651; kept a prisoner to 1660; secretary for Scottish affairs 1660-80; aimed at making the crown absolute in Scotland both in state and church; Knight of the garter, privy councillor, and so forth.

So there we have him, the Lauderdale of the Cabal - or so much of him as the twentieth century can make of one of the many enigmas of the seventeenth: The young Presbyterian zealot who, recoiling from the death of one king, changed sides, followed the son into exile and spent a decade in the Tower for the sake of monarchy and high church, emerging to oppress the Covenanters with marauding Highlanders and, through Monmouth's agency, finally to crush them in 1679 at Bothwell Brig.

For centuries before an earldom came their way, the Maitlands' family seat had been at Thurlestane. John, the second Earl of Lauderdale, died without male issue, and the title passed to brother Charles, third Earl, who was succeeded in turn by his sons Richard and John. John, fifth Earl, was followed by his eldest surviving son, Charles, who married in 1710 and had eight sons and three daughters. The fifth of those sons was our friend General Alexander - a son of the sixth Earl, you will note, and not of the Eighth, despite the Totteridge tablet.

By entering the army, Alexander was but helping to establish a family tradition of service in the armed forces, leavened with a fair representation in that other outlet for numerous sons - the church. Nearly all of Alexander's brothers caught the occupational fever in one form or another; James later the 7th Earl, was a Lieutenant-Colonel; Charles, the second brother, seems to have missed the Services, while

George, the third brother, was Archdeacon of London; but Richard was a Colonel who distinguished himself at the capture of Quebec. All these were older than Alexander. Of the younger brothers, Frederick was a naval captain; Patrick, again, has no record of service; but John was a Lieutenant-Colonel of marines.

Burke runs through the ensuing generations, amongst whom could be found sufficient officers to staff a Combined Operations' headquarters. Let us briefly notice just one of them - Rear Admiral Sir Frederick Lewis Maitland, KCB, the third son of Alexander's brother Frederick. Burke does not have much to say about the Rear Admiral, yet it was he who, as Commander of the *Bellerophon*, brought Napoleon to England in 1815.

And now, what of Alexander? He finds no place in the D.N.B. and we must look elsewhere for further information. According to the tablet in the nave and to the inscription on the altar tomb outside, he died on the 15th of February, 1820 at the age of 97. Burke's Peerage says he was born on the 21st March, 1728 and died on the 14th February, 1820, when he would have been 91 by my reckoning. *The Gentleman's Magazine*, which I turned up for March, 1820, says that he was in his 96th year. I should like to think the old man grew a bit ambitious, as the magical three figures approached, and tacked on a year or two in the face of Khronos. The Maitlands come of long-lived stock, but I do not suppose there were many old enough and hardy enough to contradict an undoubted nonagenarian.

If Burke has the date of birth aright, Alexander missed, by a few months, living under the First George, and survived the Third George by less than three weeks. The grant is recited in *the Gentleman's Magazine* for October, 1818, as follows:

The Prince Regent has been pleased, in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty, to direct letters patent to be passed under the Great Seal, for granting the dignity of a Baronet of the United Kingdom to the following Gentlemen respectively, and to the heirs made of their bodies lawfully begotten, viz:

The Honourable Alexander Maitland, of Clifton, Co. Midlothian, and of Rose Hill, Co. Hertford, general in the army, and colonel of the 49th reg. (et al.)

So, with the baronetcy firmly established, we can return to Burke and see what the Baronetage has to offer us - this time, under the family name of Maitland, with Sir Alexander as the imposing head of the line.

He married, we read, on the 27th June, 1754, Penelope, the daughter of Colonel Martin Madan of the foot guards, MP and groom of the bed-chamber to Frederick, Prince of Wales. The lady who became Colonel Madan's wife and Penelope's mother had been baptised Judith, daughter of Mr Justice Spencer Cowper, brother of Earl Cowper, Lord Chancellor. We need not pursue the history of the Cowper family beyond remarking upon its connection with the Hertfordshire house of Panshanger in the Mimram valley, and alluding to the domestic tragedy which had clouded Spencer Cowper's earlier years. At the close of the seventeenth century, when he was in his twenties and already a married man, he had become acquainted with a young Quakeress of Hertford, one Sarah Stout, whose emotional impulses were never tamed by sectarian discipline and whose too-warm passion for the young lawyer found its death-chill among the stakes of a milldam on the Priory River. Spencer Cowper, with three others, was charged with her murder, brought to trial at Hertford Assizes and there acquitted. He subsequently became familiar with a more comfortable position in court, - the judicial bench - before dying on December the 10th 1728, at the age of 59.

Spencer Cowper's daughter, as we have noted, married Martin Madan. Burke says he was Colonel of the foot guards and I think we should get it clear that there were two officers - probably brothers - of that name. For if you look at the altar tomb outside you will see that there are two Penelopes sharing the vault with Alexander; the younger, as the inscription shows at the eastern end, was Penelope Madan 'daughter of the late Major Madan, formerly of the Horse Guards'. She was younger than Penelope Maitland, whom she survived by a year and eight months.

Burke's further detail regarding Colonel Martin Madan - I mean, that he was a groom of the bedchamber to Frederick, Prince of Wales - is also most illuminating; because in its obituary notice of our friend, Sir Alexander, *The Gentleman's Magazine* says this:

Sir Alexander was one of the oldest officers in the army; and, we believe, the last surviving servant in the household of Frederick, Prince of Wales, father of his late Majesty.

So it was doubtless in that close atmosphere of Hanoverian ritual and domestic intrigue that Alexander first met Penelope. A century and a half ago it was fashionable to commemorate the departed with all the virtues that money could afford, so one reads with some reservations that

quaintly condescending eonium the old man though fit to bestow upon his Penelope when death had severed a partnership of 50 years - I mean that inscription in the churchyard:

Who for Beauty in her Youth, Good Sense, Religion and Piety in her Riper Years, was excelled by Few, if any of her Sex.

He had married her, as we observed, in 1754, three years after the death of the Prince of Wales. The union was blessed with four sons and two daughters. The first-born, Alexander Charles, succeeded to his father's title and was also in the nineties when he died in 1848. The careers of the other four sons exemplify how strong were the claims of service upon the progeny of Alexander. William, the second son, was drowned in the Bay of Bengal in 1781, at the age of 24. Next came Augustus, a Lieutenant Colonel in the Guards, who fell, mortally wounded, at Egmont-on-Zee in 1797. Frederick, the youngest, became a General and Colonel of the 56th Regiment; he, too, finds a place in the D.N.B.; he was present at the relief of Gibraltar in 1782 and, later, Governor in turn of Grenada and Dominica in the West Indies. Two of his children are in the Totteridge register of baptisms - John Madan in 1793, when Frederick was a brevet Major, and Alexander in 1797, when the father had risen to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Then what of Alexander's daughters? Here, oh joy! Burke brought me an unexpected pleasure, for I found that the elder, christened Penelope (after her mother) married the Revd Thomas Marsham - and that gentleman, was our very own Thomas Cope Marsham, curate here throughout the stormy Napoleonic years, the man who figures so frequently in the Vestry Minutes.

Thomas and Penelope the younger may have been married here in Totteridge. I do not know. The marriage register for the period 1789 to 1812 is missing; and, since Penelope was born in 1765 or 1766, it is a fair chance that the wedding took place in the last decade of the eighteenth century. Marsham had succeeded Liptrott as curate in 1784. You will find no trace of our Marsham's marriage, up to 1788, in these registers. But see this first entry after the gap - April 1813: a marriage witnessed by Penelope Judith Marsham. So Alexander and Penelope the elder gave their daughter in addition the name of her maternal grandmother, Spencer Cowper's child. Alexander's younger daughter, Charlotte, is commemorated by the tablet in the nave. More of her anon.

This leads me to the question as to where the Maitland family lived. All the information I have points to *Garden Hill*, which was formerly called *Rose Hill*. Let me marshal my facts:

1. The entry in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, I quoted above, concerning the baronetcy and stating that General Maitland was of *Rose Hill*.

2. An article by J.H. Busby in *Hertfordshire Countryside*¹ upon the history of the County Regiment, in which he states: 'This regiment was the 49th Foot, and when county titles were first adopted in 1782 it became the Hertfordshire Regiment. This was no doubt because its Colonel, General the Hon. Alexander Maitland, lived at Rose Hill, Totteridge. General Maitland was Colonel of the 49th from 1769-1820'...

3. The tithe map of 1840 - At that time Penelope Marsham was living in a house marked, with gardens, numbers 162 and 163 on the schedule and covering in all about one and a third acres. Abel Lendon was the owner. I think you will find that numbers 162 and 163 correspond to *Garden Hill*. I do not know when Marsham died, but it appears that the widow and her spinster sister lived on in the Maitland home until death came to each in turn. I have no evidence that Sir Alexander ever owned any property in Totteridge. Certainly, when the church rates were levied to defray the cost of rebuilding the chapel in 1790, he was only a tenant, a Mr George Bruce being the owner of the property then occupied by the General.

4. The census returns of 1841 and 1851 show the following:²

1841	<i>Garden Hill House</i>	<i>Penelope Marsham, independent aged 75</i>
1851	<i>Rose Hill</i>	<i>Catherine Maitland spinster 83.</i>

Penelope died in 1846 and Charlotte (whom I take to be Catherine) in 1853, apparently the last of their clan at Totteridge.

The 49th was raised in the West Indies in 1714 by drafts from other regiments, saw service in American War of Independence and in 1782 was in Ireland.³ It held the title of the Hertfordshire Regiment, which it first adopted in that year, until the Cardwell Reforms of a century later, when it became linked with the 56th to form the Royal Berkshire Regiment.

There was need in 1754 for young officers on active service. The rivalry between France and Britain was spluttering angrily in both Canada

and India, and the shadows that it cast must have flickered across that June wedding of two hundred years ago. The following year, rivalry flared into open war, which soon spread to the Mediterranean and caught the old world in its toils. Poor Byng's house-warming, across there at Wrotham Park, beyond Hadley, never got going in its planner's life time, which was abruptly terminated on the *Monarque's* quarter-deck one March noontide in Portsmouth harbour, with all the world agape at this novel English method of encouraging her admirals.

At some time or another, we must suppose, Alexander took leave of Penelope and set out on the path which led through the Seven Years' War to the colonelcy of his regiment some half-a-dozen years after the end of that sanguinary episode. By 1789 the policy of taxation and the 'Kings Friends' had alienated the American colonies and the final breach was not far off. Since the 49th Foot saw service in the American War of Independence, it is in that sphere, rather than with Hastings in India, that we are likely to find General Alexander Maitland at the close of his military career.

By 1779, at the latest, he had gone into his Totteridge quarters with Penelope and their two young, but not yet eligible daughters. The boys, probably, had already gone forth into the world; even young Frederick may have already donned an ensign's uniform.

The Maitlands came here, then, in old parson Liptrott's times; and, turning for a moment to the Liptrott Register, you will see that three days after this Vestry Meeting of the 22nd July, 1779, the worthy Liptrott read out in the old chapel 'the King's letter permitting and recommending a publick collection for the incorporated society for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts'. The following week he went round dunning the parishioners, and here is 'The Hon. Gen. Maitland' contributing three guineas towards a total collection of £8.14.6d.

From then until his death Alexander Maitland continued to live in Totteridge and contribute financially to the needs of its residents. His wife predeceased him. She died on the 22nd December 1805 and six days later her body was laid in the grave outside St Andrew's church. Marsham recorded 'Mrs Penelope Maitland buried in linen. Sum of 50/- being half the Penalty due to the Poor was received. It had generally become the thing to disregard the Acts of 1666 and 1678, which called for burial in wool, under pain of a penalty for default of £5, of which half went to the informer and half to the poor. The law was not repealed

until 1814, and I think that, so long as it was in force, the General would have regarded its observance as a matter of punctilio. Orders were orders.

By 1814, even the register which records our last extract was full, but it did not greatly matter to Marsham. For thirty years he had served the parish - at first in the sleepy atmosphere in which Liptrott had left it, but subsequently as a wide-awake, earnest, active man. Now the time had come for him to depart. His last entry in the Briefs relates to the collection of 10/6d, on behalf of a new chapel erected to meet the needs of industrial growth in Derbyshire in August 1814.

Old General Maitland died early in 1820. He left £50 in trust for the parochial charities, but I have not enquired after the other details of his will. The daughters, elderly women now, lingered on at Garden Hill, whose Georgian front looks at us from across the way. Legends grew up around them - some real, some fabled, I fancy. I like the story of how the two sisters grew eccentric with old age and how Charlotte, to be early for morning Service would go to bed on a Saturday night with her bonnet on and with tissue in the bows to keep them in shape, forgetful of the need for removing the tissue, she appeared one Sunday morning thus arrayed in church. So let them sleep, not quite forgotten.

Here at the family vault, for the time we must part. Dusk has fallen, here in the churchyard; one cannot read the Inscription now. Last Post has sounded; stand and salute.

On the 5 March 1954 Richard Cowley sent a copy of a paper he had written on General the Honourable Sir Alexander Maitland to fellow local historian James R. Curry, to whom it was dedicated. This bulletin is taken directly from that paper but has been edited and shortened. The article was amongst the papers, books and prints passed on to us following Cowley's death in 1995. It is apparent that Richard Cowley's interest in Alexander Maitland did not stop with the writing of his paper, for amongst the other material is correspondence he had with the family and a copy of an account written by Alexander Maitland of his capture of an army deserter. All are to be found in the Maitland file in the local history files of the Museum.

The Society would like to put on record our thanks to Richard Cowley for bequeathing to the Museum his vast local history collection.

Gillian Gear Phd.

¹J.H. Busby, Herts. Countryside Winter 1952/53

²Barrett's *History of Totteridge*

³J.H. Busby, Herts. Countryside Winter 1952/53