

APPENDIX

In the course of examining old papers in connection with the writing of this book, it was found that owing to the exertions of Lord Curzon the Governor General in Council decided in 1912 that the original picture of Wellesley by Home, a Morgan copy of which is in the Brown Drawing Room, and a picture of Cornwallis by Devis should remain for ever in government House, Calcutta. Through oversight they were allowed to be removed to the Viceroy's House, but when the facts were brought to the notice of Their Excellencies Lord and Lady Willingdon they at once agreed to the return of the pictures. Their Excellencies' assent came as this book was going to Press and so, without this Appendix, the book would be out of date almost as soon as it was published.

Wellesley's picture will be hung in the Brown Drawing Room, a new Home being found for the Morgan copy either in the Viceroy's House or in the Victoria Memorial Collection.

The picture of Cornwallis was painted by A. W. Devis in 1793 at a cost of Rs. 20,000 or (pound)2,166, the money for which was raised by public subscription in Calcutta, the subscribers asking that the picture might be hung in government House. It is a full length picture and shows him dressed in a scarlet military coat with epaulettes, a white cloth waistcoat and knee-breeches with buckled shoes. He is wearing the Ribbon of the Garter. In the background is a view of Seringapatam, which he besieged and reduced in 1792. This picture will be hung in the Brown Drawing Room in place of the picture of the Duke of Wellington which will be hung in the blue Drawing room.

Lord Cornwallis was Governor General from 1786- 1793 and again from July to October, 1805, when he took over from Wellesley. He and Curzon are the only Governors General to have served for a second term of office. He came out in 1786 with instructions from the Directors to pursue a policy of all-round economy. He abandoned public breakfasts, dispensed with the country house of his predecessors at Alipore and was content with the Commander-in-Chief's bungalow at Barrackpore (he was Commander-in-Chief as well as Governor General). He wrote soon after his arrival: " My life is not a very agreeable one, but I have ventured to leave off a good deal of the buckram, which rather improves it" and in 1789 when writing to his son, Lord Brome then a boy at Eton, he said: " My life at Calcutta is perfect clockwork; I get on horseback just as the dawn of day begins to appear, ride on the same road and the same distance, pass the whole forenoon after my return from riding in doing business, and almost exactly the same portion of time every day at table, drive out in a phaeton a little before sunset, then write, or read over letters or papers of business for two hours, sit down at nine with two or three officers of my family to some fruit or a biscuit, and go to bed soon after the clock strikes ten. I don't think the greatest sap at Eton could lead a duller life than this." Cornwallis, though he discouraged extravagance, entertained very hospitably himself but by precept and example did much to stop the excessive drinking and gambling which in those days were customary among Englishmen in Calcutta. William Hickey was in Calcutta during Cornwallis's time and in his famous Memoirs mentions Cornwallis's great hospitality of which he occasionally partook.

Cornwallis was a professional soldier and a politician, having entered the House of Commons at the early age of 22 when he was Lord Brome. At the age of 23 he got command of his regiment, the 85th, and saw active service in the fighting in the Low Countries. He entered the House of Lords in 1762 at the age of 24 on the death of his father and held various offices under the Crown which, however, did not prevent his advancement in the Army under the system of promotion which prevailed in those days for, in 1775, at the age of 37, he became a Major General. In the American War of Independence of 1776-1781 he commanded a division with conspicuous success.

Cornwallis was a man with a sterling character, a great fund of Common sense and a superb and untiring devotion to duty who left a considerable mark upon Indian administration. He filled post after post in the internal and external service of Britain and even when he failed nobody ever blamed him. He was the first Governor General to be sent out from England- his predecessors having been promoted servants of the Company - and his rank and station gave him great prestige which was enhanced by the fact that he had insisted, as a condition of acceptance of office, on being given power to override his Council the lack of which had been such a stumbling block to Warren Hastings. His administration was remarkable for his internal reforms in which he set his face against the jobbery and corruption that still persisted in spite of the labors of Clive and Warren Hastings to eradicate them. He provided for adequate salaries to all civil servants in return for the prohibition of private trade; reformed the Civil and Criminal Courts and tackled the notorious inefficiency of the military forces. The Permanent Settlement Regulation I of 1793, which has had such a vast effect on the political, economic and social history of Bengal, was issued by him, and he insisted on it being a permanent and not a decennial settlement on account of his fear of the corruption that was rife in those days, one form of which was the taking of bribes from zemindars in return for letting them off lightly in the matter of assessment of revenue.

In 1790 there came the Third Mysore War against Tippu Sultan. Cornwallis himself went to Madras to direct operations at the end of the year and after a series of preliminary victories in 1791, Tippu's capital, Seringapatam, fell in February 1792. For this Cornwallis was made a Marquis. The brass gun on the South lawn of Government House was taken in this campaign but the inscription on the plinth "French Gun at Seringapatam 1789" is puzzling. As the war did not break out till 1790, it seems probable that it is a mistake for 1792.

After his return to England he became a Cabinet Minister in 1795 and was Viceroy and Commander-in-Chief in Ireland from 1798-1801.

When he came out for the second time in 1805 he carried his taste for simplicity even further than he had done before and must have been rather embarrassed to find himself installed in Wellesley's palace instead of the old Buckingham House in which he had dwelt previously. He dropped the title of His Excellency and also of Most Noble, usually attached to the holder of a Marquisate, and asked to be addressed as "Honorable" only. He reduced the Body Guard and dismissed the greater part of the servants, divesting the remainder of their turbans and badges. In a letter written to Warren Hastings by his old Military Secretary, William Palmer, Government House was described as a desert and it was related that Lord Cornwallis had been seen to come out of his room himself to hunt for a messenger.

It was in keeping with his high sense of duty that he should have consented to return to India for a second period of office in 1805 at the advanced age of 67, but unfortunately he died in less than three months while on his way up the Ganges to take charge of military operations. His death took place at Ghazipur in October 1805, and there he lies buried while over his grave is a mausoleum preserved in good condition to this day by Government.