

A Fine portrait of General Sir Stapleton Cotton
(1773-1865)

SOLD

REF: 4804



Short Description

General Cotton, later Field Marshal, 1st Lord Combermere, G.C.B., G.C.H., K.S.I. , was a military Leader, Diplomat, Politician, and Commander-in-Chief, Ireland,. He served with distinction under the Duke of Wellington in the Peninsular War, wearing full military uniform his Peninsula Gold Cross and three Stars, including the Order of the Bath and wearing the sash of the Portuguese Order of the Tower and the Sword Inscribed on the reverse Fotherson's (?) drawing/ of their/ Commander in/Chief/ Lord Combermere in London (?) 1816/ about that time, then in another hand the date 1824.

When only sixteen Stapleton Cotton obtained a second lieutenancy in the 23rd Regiment of Foot. A few years afterwards (1793) he became by purchase a captain in the 6th Dragoon Guards, and he served in this regiment during the campaigns of the Duke of York in Flanders. While yet in his twentieth year, he joined the 25th Light Dragoons (subsequently 22nd) as lieutenant colonel, and, while in attendance with his regiment on George III at Weymouth, he was noticed by the king. In 1796 he went with his regiment to India, taking part en route in the operations in Cape Colony (July–August 1796), and in 1799 served in the war with Tippoo Sahib, and at the storming of Seringapatam (Srirangapatna). Soon after this, having become heir to the family baronetcy, he was, at his father's desire, exchanged into a regiment at home, the 16th Light Dragoons. He was stationed in Ireland during Robert Emmet's insurrection, became colonel in 1800, and major general five years later.

From 1806 to 1814 he was M.P. for Newark. In 1808 he was sent to the seat of war in Portugal, where he shortly rose to the position of commander of Wellington's cavalry, and it was here that he most displayed that courage and judgement which won for him his fame as a cavalry officer. He was nicknamed the 'Lion d' Or' during his Peninsular War years, because of his fearlessness and the ostentatious splendour of his uniforms and equipment.

Lord Combermere was not present at Waterloo, the command, which he expected, and bitterly regretted not receiving, having been given to Lord Uxbridge. When the latter was wounded Combermere was sent for to take over his command, and he remained in France until the reduction of the allied army of occupation. In 1817 he was appointed governor of Barbados and commander of the West Indian forces. Between 1814 and 1820, Combermere undertook an extensive remodelling of his home, Combermere Abbey, including Gothic ornamentation of the Abbot's House and the construction of Wellington's Wing (now demolished) to mark Wellington's visit to the house in 1820.

From 1822 to 1825 Combermere was Commander-in-Chief, Ireland. In 1834 he was sworn a privy councillor, and in 1852 he succeeded Wellington as Constable of the Tower and Lord Lieutenant of the Tower Hamlets. In 1855 he was made a field marshal and G.C.B. He died at Clifton on 21 February 1865.

In 1801, he married Lady Anna Maria Clinton (d. 31 May 1807), daughter of Thomas Pelham-Clinton, 3rd Duke of Newcastle-under-Lyne. They had three children. In 1814, he married Caroline Greville (d. 25 January 1837), daughter of Captain William Fulke Greville. They had three children. In 1838, Combermere married Mary Woolley (née Gibbings), by whom he had no issue. There is a statue of him outside Chester Castle and an a memorial obelisk in Combermere park Wiltshire.

More Information

Year

Circa 1816