



## A Regimental Affair

*Allan Mallinson*

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## **A Regimental Affair** Allan Mallinson

ALLAN MALLINSON'S **A Close Run Thing** and **Honorable Company** stirred readers and critics with the military adventures of young Captain Matthew Hervey at the Battle of Waterloo and amid the harsh terrain and treacherous intrigues of India. Now, in 1817, Hervey returns to an England whose hard-won peace is shaken by the distress and discord of its people. And even as he is caught up in the turbulent dawn of a new era, he must combat a deliberate attempt to orchestrate his own ruin.

The honors he won in India fell short of Captain Matthew Hervey's deepest desire—to return to his beloved 6th Light Dragoons. But now circumstances allow him to resume command of the unit—and to marry the beautiful Lady Henrietta Lindsay, whom he has loved since childhood. Meanwhile, however, his soldier's heart is pierced by the sight of men in British scarlet crippled in the service of king and country, now forgotten and cast off, reduced to begging and petty crime. It is no wonder that rabble-rousers clamor for reform and that lawlessness is erupting everywhere, from the cities to the countryside.

As for Hervey's own cavalry, guarding Regency Brighton and ambushing French smugglers in midnight coves, he finds them, too, vastly changed. Their new lieutenant colonel, Lord Towcester, is a cold-eyed martinet—vain, inept, and bigoted—who cares less for the welfare of his men than for keeping the shine on their gleaming brass buttons. Moreover, it soon becomes clear that he will stop at nothing to bring about Hervey's disgrace and downfall. For in this young officer, a war hero and former aide-de-camp to the Duke of Wellington, Towcester sees all that he himself once forfeited through cowardice.

But the scandal that haunts Towcester is an old and secret one and to expose it would cost Hervey his rank, the command of his beloved Sixth—and the means to support his radiant, passionate bride. Even the charming and determined Henrietta, not above a little politicking in high places to right wrongs, is unable to diplomatically put a stop to Towcester's vendetta.

As the Industrial Revolution builds and food riots give way to rioting Luddite mobs, Hervey's troop is posted to counter the threat of a general insurrection. But his field tactics and peacekeeping vision are jeopardized by enemies both within and without. And then fate calls his regiment to the dark frozen wastes of a distant frontier, where another people's way of life is being destroyed by the march of change, and where tragedy and bloodshed will force a showdown between Hervey and his nemesis.

**A Regimental Affair** is a stunning tapestry of vivid characters, rousing action, and authentic historical detail that re-creates a world of polite English drawing rooms, poverty-stricken London streets, and frozen battlefields, where human passion and blind fate give birth to the destiny of a nation—and a hero.

*From the Hardcover edition.*

## **A Regimental Affair Details**

Date : Published April 29th 2003 by Bantam (first published March 5th 2001)  
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Author : Allan Mallinson

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## From Reader Review A Regimental Affair for online ebook

### Dark-Draco says

Matthew Hervey is a Captain in the 6th Light Dragoons. A hero of Waterloo and India, he returns to the regiment to find Lord Towchester in charge - an arrogant, cruel and jealous man. But worse, he is a coward. Hervey only wants to bide his time under his command, enjoy his new marriage and the birth of his first child, but with morale failing and other jobs beckoning, he finds himself in a difficult position. But when the regiment is sent to Canada to help squash the Indian rebellion, the whole affair comes to a tragic end.

I'm a huge fan of the Sharpe novels by Bernard Cornwall and being nuts about ponies, I thought I couldn't fail to like this book. Unfortunately, it didn't quite live up to my expectations. I found the style a bit stilted, as if reading Austen rather than something penned this century, and with so much packed into the novel, I left it feeling a bit dazed. Some important things seemed to rush by without you having any time to really take them in, and the regiment went all over the world in a heartbeat that I felt left behind! Nonetheless, I will be tracking down the other novels in the series, but I don't think they will become as well thumbed as my Sharpe books.

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### John says

quaint language but absorbing.

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### Brian says

I really enjoyed A Close Run Thing but was terribly disappointed with The Nizam's Daughters. I thought I would give A Regimental Affair a shot and see if it was better than #2. I'll be moving on to #4 now. This was still too "horsey" for my liking but much better than The Nizam's Daughters. There is plenty of drama, some action, and a surprise ending that I never saw coming. The conclusion will obviously be continued upon in the next installment.

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### Jerry Haigh says

All of the Mathew Hervey adventures are gripping stories - as good a series of reads as the Patrick O'Brian Aubrey/Maturin seafaring adventures. Great for lovers of horses. I have read, and re-read, the lot.

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### Jeffrey says

Once again, I have really enjoyed a Matthew Hervey Novel. I love the way Mallinson writes. So much detail about a soldier's way of life that just does not exist anymore. BUT I cannot believe how Mallinson ended this

one. Such a cliffhanger, and it is hard for me to get my hands on these novels. I have to do inter-library loan. AAARRRGHHH!

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### **Mike says**

Thomas Hervey is a vicar. Matthew Hervey opposes the Luddites, serves in Canada, and encounters tragedy. #3 in the series.

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### **Dean David says**

Good

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### **Michael says**

This series is very different than other historical military fiction, dealing with a wider variety of subjects than others I have read. This book definitely moves the story along, and I found the book hard to put down. A fitting member of the series.

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### **Al says**

Matthew Hervey returns from India in 1817 to rejoin his 6th Light Dragoons, only to find that the regiment is now commanded by a lying incompetent. He struggles to balance his loyalty to the service with his principled objections to the commander. Mr. Mallinson writes with precision and elegance, very much in the voice of the novel's times. At times his technical military and equine terminology are a bit murky, at least to this neophyte, but the power of the story, the characters, and the overall effect of the settings are compelling. Highly recommended to enthusiasts of great historical fiction.

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### **TheIron Paw says**

Another very good book by Mallinson: Bernard Cornwell or Alexander Kent type novel written in Jane Austen style. This book, 3rd in the series, provides an excellent insight into the British regimental tradition, much of which is still visible in the British army today (and to a lesser extent, in the Canadian army): the loyalty and dedication of the individual soldier/officer to the regiment itself. Mallinson also provides a great deal of insight into cavalry tactics of the era. Again, I would have liked a glossary of cavalry terminology as well as pre-victorian language. A very worthwhile read for interested the military historical fiction genre (along with a good dollop of romance).

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## **Tony says**

He's not quite got that O'brian magic, but still, I am beginning to lookm forto the new book each year

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## **Ron Decaigny says**

OK so I'm a big fan of the genre to start with but in spite of that this is still a good read, not Mallinsons best but still very good. The use of period dialogue could make it a slog for some but very worth the effort. Unlike most books of this type this one does not cronical the fictional characters contribution to some major historial battle but sets him at home in England dealing with both his own domestic life and the concerns of civil unrest of the time. I read historical fiction to painlessly add to my historical curiosity without having to slug through dry texts which don't usually paint the individuals personalities. I'm generally ready to take the authors I know and trust's interpretation of people and events because I know they have done their homework and generally they tell you when they fiddled things around to aid the story line. This book takes you to a time and place typically oveerlooked by most so for that alone it's worth the time.

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## **Winifred says**

captain hervey has returned from india. he goes with the 6th light dragoons, but his commanding officer does not like harvey. hervey marries henrietta. this book is set during the luddite troubles in england and the regiment has to deal with them. they then go to canada and henrietta goes as well even thouth she is pregnant. the regiment has to deal with the cold weather and the native indians. when hervey is away the colonel orders henrietta out of the barracks and tells her to go to detroit, but armstrong says it is not safe. henrietta dies and the men that where escorting her are killed by shawnasee indians. great book the author is well versed in military history.

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## **Johnny says**

By now, those of you who are regularly updated with my material know that I am sufficiently addicted to this series of Napoleonic cavalry adventures that I plan to read through them book by book. In this case, I am doubly cursed because this book ends with a major unresolved plot element (realistic, but annoying) and the fourth book was not available at our library when I finished this one. A *Regimental Affair* continues the very healthy tradition of not being afraid to have major characters die. It does, after all, deal with war, and it doesn't have any convenient "red shirt" fatalities. Almost all of the deaths in this series have been costly.

This book, even more than others in the series, expands upon the author's conviction that the purchasing of commissions in the Napoleonic Era cavalry (and army) was a very bad idea, leading to having incompetence and cowardice in the brass even more than the M.B.A. approach to modern business has contributed the same in the management ranks of modern U.S. corporations. This element, present in this novel more than in its predecessors, allows the author to challenge the reader (like the protagonist) to agonize over loyalty to country versus immediate superior, efficiency and order over egotistical command structure, and judicious use of influence over reckless self-aggrandizement.

The decisions to be made by Captain (now Brevet Major) Hervey are not that dissimilar to those that any of us have had to face when serving incompetent and egotistical superiors. However, the fact that the decisions take place in a time of war when each decision may affect multiple lives and the security of the country exacerbates each decision, raising the piles of chips awaiting each throw of the dice.

As usual, the author as a former cavalry officer, introduces some of the basic lessons of strategy and tactics into the narrative. These are not “forced lessons” where the author lectures us, but the exposition flows naturally in both external dialogue between characters and internal dialogue as the protagonist weighs the costs of differing approaches to the military problems faced. This novel, more than the others, places a high value on that most necessary but unsung factor in victory—LOGISTICS. At two points, in particular, the conflict between superior and reporting officer hinges on a logistical question. On one occasion, begrudging success is granted the careful attention to detail. On another, our hero must find a way to save his commander’s face while still doing what is logically correct.

In this novel, we find out a little more about the protagonist’s interest in the Psalms and his personal faith. Naturally, this is interesting to me (as a sidequest in a well-designed D&D campaign), but not so overt and in one’s face that it should put off those who have no interest in either the Bible or the institutional church. For me, it is near-perfect balance. I’d be glad to hear from others.

As for setting, *A Regimental Affair* is fairly distinctive in this, as well. The action takes place on the U.S. and Canadian border after the War of 1812. In this case, the British forces based in Canada are working with the U.S. forces based at Fort Niagara and Fort Detroit to deal with the Native American “problem.” Kudos to the author for choosing this relatively obscure British “campaign setting” when the more well-trodden ground would have been to transport us back to the India of *The Nizam’s Daughters* (aka *Honourable Company*). I suspect we’ll get back to India, but this is fresh and welcome territory for adventuring.

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**Eurydicegirl@gmail.Com says**

**3rd in an addictive series.**

Historical accuracy and deft narration recreates a complex world. of service to crown and country in cavalry regiments. The storyline captures the challenges in coping with the contracting economy of the post napoleonic era aggravated political and social class tensions.

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