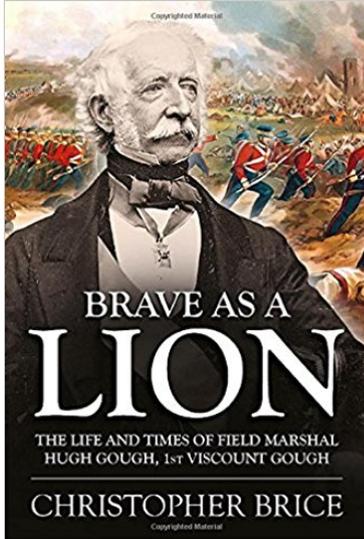


## The Napoleon Series Reviews

Brice, Christopher. *Brave as a Lion: The Life and Times of Field-Marshal Hugh Gough, 1st Viscount Gough* (War and Military Culture in South Asia, 1757-1949). Solihull (UK): Helion & Co, 2017. ISBN# 9781910294611. 577 pages. Hardcover. \$69.95/£35



Hugh Gough had the reputation of having fought more battles than any other general of his time and of never having been beaten. This book covers the whole of his extremely long career with four chapters on his background and early career; thirteen on his service in the Peninsular War; six on his service in Ireland and unemployed period; thirteen on his campaign in China; a total of thirty-seven chapters on India and a further nine on his retirement, final years and some conclusions. There is an extensive bibliography: much of the campaign history is taken from other published works, which is made clear in the footnotes, but good use has been made of original correspondence. The narrative is clear, except for some repetition which is most noticeable in the passages describing the controversies arising over the Sikh wars, and includes good military details. There are useful maps and plans and some

lovely pictures.

I did not find the book easy to read, partly due to an unimaginative style and partly due to a high rate of typos, misplaced sentences and badly constructed sentences. Given how long it has taken to get this book to publication it is a pity the editing was not more thorough. I also found the tone unnecessarily apologetic, the Sikh war controversies being allowed to overshadow the whole of Gough's career, and also felt that the final chapters on conclusions and on the psychology of military incompetence were distinctly redundant. It seems to me that the character of the subject might have come to life better with a little more enthusiasm from the author.

However, it is a good, substantial work and I would certainly recommend the book to anyone who wants to know more about Hugh Gough or about the lesser-known campaigns in China and India. For me, the particular points of interest were the opposing views of Gough taken by earlier historians and the influence of the press campaign against him during the second Sikh war on his reputation: a reminder not to judge a character by the first writings about them. A curiosity of the British promotion system of the time was that Gough only became a full General after he retired, having served several years as Commander-in-Chief with the temporary rank of Lt-General.

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