



## “A Christmas Dinner before Sebastopol”

The dinner took place in the tent of Captain George Higginson on the heights before Sebastopol in 1854 after four months of bitter campaigning - the battle of Alma had been fought on 20th September and Inkerman on 5th November. The 3rd Battalion was enduring a gruesome winter in camp and the trenches, and not many were likely to have enjoyed a Christmas dinner on the scale depicted in the picture.

The officers (treading clockwise from the gentleman in front grasping the bottle) are: Frederick Bathurst, Sir Charles Russell Bt, VC, Charles Turner, Alexander Viscount Balgonie, Edwin Burnaby, The Hon Charles Lindsay, Frederick Hamilton, Prince Edward of Saxe-Coburg, George Higginson, Robert Hamilton, Sir James Fergusson Bt and H W Verschoyle.

Higginson, the Adjutant, who later became a general, recorded the event in *Seventy One Years of a Guardsman's Life*: "The tent in that drawing was mine. I had decorated it as best I could, so that I and my brother officers could celebrate Christmas with as much cheeriness as we might muster. We had secured from a French sutler at Kamyesh some fearful effervescing stuff which was called champagne, some scraggy fowls and a ham, and the evening passed with due conviviality, and interchange of those expressions of goodwill and friendship which only the strange tenour [sic] of our daily lives could draw forth."

### About the artist

Michael Alford is a prize-winning artist who has exhibited widely in Britain, Europe and America. His works decorate many notable hotels, restaurants, public spaces and private homes in Britain, America, Europe, Asia and the Middle East. He has exhibited with leading galleries including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, The Chatto Gallery, London, and Collins & Hastie, London. He's held solo exhibitions at the Duncan Campbell Gallery, London (2004, 2006, and 2007) and the Neville Gallery, Canterbury (2006).

He was awarded the Agnes Reeve Memorial Prize in 2000, the Primaluce International Mural Festival Prize (Lodi, Italy) in 2003, and the Green & Stone Oil Painting Prize in 2005.

### About the print

A 36.5 x 35 cm print on 61 x 45 cm 350 gsm paper. Made from renewable resources, this paper has a warm tone and its smooth surface shows the painter's original mark making.

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