


***WILLIAM SIR  
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A photograph of a rocket launch. The rocket is a slender, blue-tinted object pointing upwards, with a bright, vertical trail of fire and white smoke extending from its base. The background is a clear, light blue sky. In the lower-left corner, the dark, silhouetted branches of a pine tree are visible. The overall scene is captured from a low angle, emphasizing the height of the launch.

***THE DETAILS  
OF THE ROCKET  
SYSTEM***

**William Sir Congreve**

# **The Details of the Rocket System**

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# INTRODUCTION.

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**HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE REGENT**, to whose gracious patronage the Rocket System owes its existence, having been pleased to command the formation of a Rocket Corps, on the 1st of January, 1814, by augmentation to the Regiment of Artillery, as proposed by his Lordship, the EARL OF MULGRAVE, Master General of the Ordnance; I have thought it my duty to draw up the following details of the System, for the Instruction of the Officers of the Corps, for the information of the General Officers of the British Army, and that of such departments as it is important for the good of the service, to make acquainted with the principles of this new branch of our naval and military means of offence and defence.

I have, indeed, conceived it the more incumbent upon me to prepare such a document for the use of the Rocket Corps, with as much expedition as possible, that nothing might be wanting on my part towards its completion, having been induced to decline the offer graciously made me of commanding it, with rank in the Regiment of Artillery; a decision, in which I trust I have sufficiently proved myself to have been actuated by the most sincere desire of manifesting my attachment to that Regiment; as, however flattering the offer, it was sufficient gratification to me to have brought my labours to a consummation, which enabled me to leave the undivided benefit of this new Corps in their possession: and to have succeeded in putting into their hands a weapon, which it is my greatest pride to have

already seen adding to their laurels, in the Plains of Leipsic, and on the Banks of the Adour; a weapon, which has so early given them pledges of future and greater successes, and which I hope the following pages will evince to have already been brought to a state of organization and perfection, at least commensurate with its age. I will hope, also, that the further progress and extension of the powers of the Rocket System will be such as not to discredit the discernment of the enlightened Prince, who first patronized it, or that of his Lordship, the Master General, by whose protection it is now placed on a permanent establishment. It is almost needless to add, that this volume is intended only for the use and instruction of such as it may concern, and not in any way for publication.

**WILLIAM CONGREVE.**

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# **GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS for the Use of ROCKETS, both in the FIELD and in BOMBARDMENT, shewing the Spirit of the System, and its comparative Powers and Facilities.**

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It must be laid down as a maxim, that “the very essence and spirit of the Rocket System is the facility of firing a great number of rounds in a short time, or even instantaneously, with small means,” arising from this circumstance, that the Rocket is a species of fixed ammunition which does not require ordnance to project it; and which, where apparatus is required, admits of that apparatus being of the most simple and portable kind.

An officer, therefore, having the use of this weapon under his direction, must ever bear this maxim in mind—and his first consideration must be—to make his discharges against the enemy in as powerful volleys as he possibly can.

Thus—if the defence of a post be entrusted to him, and the ground be at all favourable, he will, independent of the regular apparatus he may have at his disposal, prepare what may be called Rocket Batteries, consisting of as many embrasures as his ground will admit; these embrasures being formed by turning up the sod, so as to give channels of direction four or five feet long, and three feet apart: by