

*Susan Band & Friends - Peninsular Walking Tour  
Proposed Itinerary 25<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009*

## *'In the Footsteps of Nosey'*

*"I am going to take a little sleep. Watch with your glass. You see that large stone? Call me when the head of the French column reaches that point."*

*Wellington to Lord Fitzroy Somerset prior to his great victory at Salamanca, 22 July 1812*

~



*The Greater Arapile at Salamanca. 'That large stone' referred to by Wellington is at the western end (right).  
The Lessor Arapile, from where the above photograph was taken was the scene of the most formidable  
decision making by Wellington and most likely the location of the famous 'chicken bone story'.  
On Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2009 we walk this ground and learn its history.*

### *Walking Together*

*George & Susan Band  
Richard Fyjis-Walker  
Anthony & Veronica Goodenough  
Ian & Caroline Laing  
Graeme Cooper*

*"By God that will do"... Wellington, prior to his momentous victory at Salamanca.*

## *This Tour*

This walking tour strolls some of the peninsular battle sites that tested Wellington's army during the Napoleonic Wars. We visit the ruins of **Fort Conception** on the frontier and the **Almeida** fortress which suffered horrendously when its magazine exploded in 1810. We view the action by Craufurd's Light Division across the **Coa** and on the battlefield of **Fuentes de Onoro** where Wellington defeated **Masséna** to end the Marshal's career and the third and last invasion of Portugal. We visit Wellington's Headquarters at **Frenada**.

We walk the Tescos at **Ciudad Rodrigo**, stand where Craufurd died and where "The Fighting Irish" of the Connaught Rangers stormed the Citadel breach. Thereafter you will quite naturally relish spending the next two days in **Salamanca**, a recent European city of culture. Strolling its famous Plaza Mayor and a visit to Irish Convent are essential places to view. With ample time for shopping and site seeing, the city at night is irresistible.

Saving the best until last, you can visit the untouched scene of battle on the field of one of Wellington's principle campaign Victories.....that of **Salamanca**. You can walk the French and English Arapiles, Leith's Ridge and Los Torres and see exactly how Wellington's plan unfolded. Mesmeric, and adorned with incredible scenery a short distance from the city you will not fail to be fascinated by the event of 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1812. The tour will leave you fitter via a gentle pace and historically much wiser after seeing the ground and appreciating what a future Prime Minister and national hero did for Britain.

## *The Itinerary*

### **Day 1: Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September** (3 Miles or less if required)

- 1215 Hrs: Depart by hire cars from Valladolid Airport for Portuguese border
- **Lunch** en route (Via Salamanca and Ciudad Rodrigo)
- 1600 Hrs: Arrive 3\*\*\* Hotel Lusitano Vilar Formoso, Portugal
- **Light stroll to Wellington's left at the Battle of Fuentes de Onoro** (3-5 May 1811)
- **Dinner** in Hotel
- **Maps, Peninsula and Itinerary options**

### **Day 2: Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> September – The Action on the Coa, Fort Conception & Wellington's flank at Fuentes de Onoro** (9 Miles or less if required – Steep and very rugged)

- **Combat on The Coa:** We walk the French advance from the site of the windmill to bridge over the Coa, the scene of Craufurd's retreat on 24 July 1810 (1 mile descent over steep rough terrain followed by 2 road miles ascent)

*"...I am not desirous of engaging in an affair beyond the Coa. Under these circumstances, if you are not covered from the sun where you are, would it not be better that you should come to this side with your infantry at least?" - Wellington's letter to Craufurd on 22 July.*

In the summer of 1810, the French were about to begin their third invasion of Portugal in two years. They had just finished capturing the fortress city of Ciudad Rodrigo and were preparing to cross the frontier into Portugal. Wellington, the commander of the British - Portuguese Army, knew his forces could not stand up to the numerically superior French forces, so he ordered a retreat. The British Light Division, under the command of General Robert Craufurd had the mission of screening the slowly withdrawing British forces. General Craufurd decided to defend as far forward as possible and keep the Light Division on the east side of the River Coa.

The division's left flank was within sight of the fortified city of Almeida (which was the next French objective), while their right flank was on the ridge overlooking the river. The five battalions of infantry, two light cavalry regiments, and one horse artillery battery (about 4200 infantry, 800 cavalry, and 6 guns) occupied a front of 3 kilometers. This position left the division with a virtually impassable river to its back and only one bridge to retreat across. Should the French attack them, the division would be in grave danger of being surrounded and cut-off. Craufurd's deployment of the Light Division was in direct violation of Wellington's stated wishes.



*Right: The Bridge over the Coa. We cross it on Saturday.*

- **Lunch in Almeida**
- **Almeida:** A stroll around the citadel



*Almeida Garrison*

Almeida was a stronger fortress than Ciudad Rodrigo. Defended by more than 100 guns, 40 of which were of 18-pounder or heavier calibre, there was every reason for Wellington to hope that it could hold out until October when the autumn rains would hinder Masséna's further advance into Portugal. The garrison of 4,000 infantry, a squadron of cavalry and 400 gunners, all under the command of William Cox an English Colonel and Portuguese Brigadier, had ample supplies of food and ammunition.

- **Fort Conception** – We see it as it was in 1810. Very little has changed. Destroyed in 1810 but a treasure to visit at the end of the day
- **Hotel:** Lusitano, Vilar Formoso
- **Dinner**

**Day 3: Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September - The Battle of Fuentes de Onoro** (11 Miles or less – flat)

- **Fuentes de Onoro** – The village that took the brunt of the French infantry assault in May 1811. The Don Casas stream, its legendary bridges and the alleyways of death. The onslaught of the Irish of the 88<sup>th</sup> Foot.



*Fuentes de Onoro: the hinge in Wellington's line that protected his get out clause*

- **Pocho Velo** – The Village where the 7<sup>th</sup> Division were caught by French cavalry
- **Picnic Lunch**
- **Frenada** – Wellington's Headquarters in 1811
- **Hotel:** Lusitano, Vilar Formoso



*Fuentes de Onoro church passed which the 88<sup>th</sup> Foot thrust back the French Infantry hoards*

**Day 4: Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September – The Siege of Ciudad Rodrigo** (2 Miles)

- **Bridge over the Agueda:** Wellington's Strategy, his fears, the Citadel, and its garrison
- **Greater Teson,** The Reynaud Redoubt, Wellington's plan, the Light Division's night attack and the prize
- **Lessor Breach** – The Attack and the death of Craufurd

- **Craufurd's Memorial** – The Man, his standards and dealings with Wellington
- **Greater Breach** – Picton's Address to the 88<sup>th</sup> Foot Connaughts and the assault
- **Walk the Citadel Walls** and the old town
- **Lunch** in the citadel



*The Ciudad Rodrigo citadel view from the Greater Teson*

- Depart for Salamanca
- Check into Hotel



*Our Hotel at Salamanca*

- **The Roman Bridge**, the Salamanca Forts, the Spy in the Irish Convent



*The famous Roman bridge over which Pakenham's 3<sup>rd</sup> Division made haste to the south*

- **Salamanca.** European City of the Year 2003 (2 Miles) Cultural and unforgettable!
- **Dinner**

**Day 5: Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> September –The Battle of Salamanca** (13 Miles or less)

- **Calvarasa de Ariba** – The end of the parallel waiting game
- **Nuestra Senora de la Peria** – The French advance and early skirmish
- **Lesser Arapile** – The vista, the battle plan and the chicken bone. 22 July 1812



*Salamanca ... where it is said that 'Forty thousand French went down in forty minutes'*

- **French Arapile** – The monument and the motorway
- **Pico de Miranda** – 88<sup>th</sup> Foot in the front line again
- **Monte de Azan** – The Essex, the eagle and the retreat
- **Aldea Tejada** – Where Pakenham shook Wellington by the hand
- **Dinner**
- **Salamanca by night**



*The Plaza Mayor Salamanca ... where the ladies were waiting*

**Day 6: Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> September**

- 0900 Hrs: Depart Salamanca for Valladolid
- 1045 Hrs: Arr Valladolid Airport and hand over Hire cars

## Tour Information

1. **Transport:** 2 Hire Cars will be collected and returned from/to Valladolid Airport. Please be sure to wear your seat belt at all times when vehicles are in motion.
2. **Maps and Itineraries:** Produced by *Cooper's Waterloo Tours* and from released sources.
3. **Language:** In the Spanish-Portuguese border areas both languages are understood. English also but limited to the Hotels and city centres. Graeme's Spanish is not the best.
4. **Terrain & Weather:** The Terrain is rugged and can be tiring to negotiate on foot. It is advisable to wear stout walking shoes if possible as rough and uneven tracks and rocks abound. There is only one exhausting hill to negotiate, that on the ascent from the Coa. Although the weather is cooling please be prepared. Hat, sun cream and water are essential to have to hand.
5. **TAXI Service – Vilar Formoso:** 00351 271 573 503
6. **Cash Point:** Please ask Graeme for locations.
7. **Our Hotels:**

Villa Formosa 25<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> Sep  
Hotel Lusitano (3 Nights B&B)  
B&B is situated on the Spanish  
Av Fronteira,  
Vilar Formoso,  
Guarda, 6355  
Portugal  
Tel: 00351 271 513 503

Salamanca 28<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> Sep  
Petit Palace Las Torres (2 Nights B&B)  
C/ Mayor 26  
37002 Salamanca,  
Spain  
Tel: 0034 923 212 100

8. **Battlefield Awareness:**
  - ***Barbed Wire*** – There is some about so please beware, especially if you are not immunised against tetanus.
  - ***Motor Trikes*** in lanes and on tracks. This activity, like in Britain, is increasing in popularity. Although you should hear them coming they do come at speed.
9. **Souvenirs:** These can be obtained ideally from Salamanca.
10. **Medical & Emergencies:**
  - **Emergency Services Tel: 112 - Police Tel: 101**
  - **First Aid:** There is a First Aid Kit in both cars and your Guide carries a lighter pack.

**Local Hospital: Guarda**  
**Hospital Distrital Da Guarda**  
Av. Rainha Dona Amélia  
6300 Guarda, Portugal  
Tel: 00351 271 200 200

**Local Hospital: Salamanca**  
**Hospital General de la Santísima Trinidad**  
Paseo Carmelitas 74  
37007 Salamanca, Spain  
Tel: 0034 923 269 300

- **Guide's Mobile:** 0044 (0)7968 984347

**Included in the price of your Tour:**

- Walking Tour of the battlefields of the Coa, Almeida, Fuentes de Onoro, Ciudad Rodrigo and Salamanca. (Tour starts and finishes at Valladolid Airport)
- Half Board - (Continental Breakfast, incl Dinner with wine)
- Hire Car self drive transportation
- 2/3 Star Hotel Accommodation
- Guild of Battlefield Guides - Qualified Guide

**Excluded from the price of your Tour:**

- Single Room occupancy available
- All Lunches
- Breakfast on 25 Sep
- Hotel extra services, telephone, bar and business facilities
- Evening Meal on 30 Sep
- Insurance



*'In Square' – Safe from Cavalry ..... but not from Horse Gunners*

***Your Guide - Graeme Cooper***

Graeme Cooper has been battlefield guiding for several years and operates *Cooper's Waterloo Tours* specialising in touring the Napoleonic Campaign battlefields of the Peninsular War and Waterloo for adults, and leadership training for the military. A Fellow of the *International Napoleonic Society* (FINS), he qualified as a Waterloo Campaign Guide with *Les Guides 1815* in 1998. Graeme's interest in the Waterloo Campaign was sparked during his time as a cadet at the *Royal Military Academy Sandhurst* by the lecturer and renowned military historian and author, the late Dr David Chandler. This intrigue, kept alive by a military career, has maintained his fascination for the Campaign and a strong concern for the preservation of the battlefield, which he first visited in 1973. In November 2002, Graeme founded *The Guild of Battlefield Guides*, of which he is now Secretary. In May 2006 he started *Corporate Battlefields*, a business leadership training company for corporate management. He is a recognised Great War and WW2 Guide, member of the *Battlefields Trust* and former Chairman of the *British Army of the Rhine Branch of the Western Front Association*. Graeme is married with a son currently serving in the Rifles and a daughter enlisting at Sandhurst in January. The family home is in Essex where he plays golf when battle time permits.

***Cooper's Waterloo Tours***

***Cooper's Court***

***Moreton***

***Ongar***

***Essex***

***CM5 0LE***

Tel/Fax: 0044 (0)1277 890470

Mob: 07986 984347

E-mail: [cooper@waterlootours.co.uk](mailto:cooper@waterlootours.co.uk)

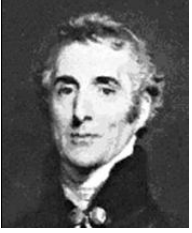
Website: [www.waterlootours.co.uk](http://www.waterlootours.co.uk)



***Graeme Cooper-Qualified Guide***  
***Guild of Battlefield Guides***  
***Badge No 7***

## THE LEADERS

### Arthur Wellesley - The 1st Duke of Wellington 1769-1852



Wellington was an Anglo-Irish British Army soldier and statesman, widely considered one of the leading military and political figures of the first half of the 19th century. Commissioned an ensign in the British Army, he rose to prominence in the Napoleonic Wars, eventually reaching the rank of Field Marshal. Wellington is often compared to the 1st Duke of Marlborough, with whom he shared many characteristics, chiefly a transition to politics after a highly successful military career. He was perhaps the most famous soldier, other than Napoleon Bonaparte, to come out of the Napoleonic era. He learnt his military trade in India and applied his study of the art of war practically. A careful leader, he tried to limit casualties and became a master of the reverse-slope tactic - keeping his forces screened from artillery fire behind the brow of a hill.

During the Peninsular War his numerous victories over the French kept him one step ahead of his numerically superior enemies. While careful with soldiers' lives in battle, Wellington often lost his caution in a siege. Yet, his brilliant victories at Salamanca and Vitoria paved the way for victory in the Peninsula. During the Waterloo Campaign he found himself out-manoeuvred by Bonaparte but managed to hold off the French at Quatre Bras long enough to stabilise his defensive line at Waterloo. Wellington's tactics, and the gutsy support of a bloodied Prussian army under Marshal Blücher, won victory. Known as 'Nosey', Wellington was worshipped by his men, but not loved. He had hanged too many for looting to be anything other than feared, but his policy made the red-coated army not only a formidable fighting machine, but a disciplined one as well. Albeit an army disciplined by the lash and the fear of the gallows. A long and turbulent political life followed. He became Britain's Prime Minister in 1828 despite his own reluctance for the position.

Arthur Wesley - later Wellesley when the family changed their name - was born to the Earl and Countess of Mornington on 1 May 1769, the third son of a family eventually consisting of five surviving boys and one girl. Unlike the others, he was a sickly child, possibly the result of catarrhal colds and infections and which may have accounted for a sleepy, facial appearance during boyhood. Someone said, "his slow, thick speech and dull manner gave him an air of stupidity," and accompanied by a general lassitude made him appear very different from his siblings. From birth his mother had taken a 'decided aversion' to him and, maybe because of his unprepossessing countenance, continually called him her 'ugly boy'. It was left to his brothers and sister to give him any affection which, it would seem, they did wholeheartedly. His father, in his own boyhood, had been a musical prodigy and passed on a love and ability to play the violin to Arthur but this positive bond with at least one parent was broken when his father died in 1781. Sent soon after to Eton, Arthur failed to shine and three years later he was removed, eventually spending a year at the Royal School of Equitation in Angers before returning to England aged 18. His eldest brother Richard then bought him a commission in the Army and also procured him a post as one of several ADCs to the Viceroy (later Lord-Lieutenant) of Ireland and over the next few years of early manhood he grew out of the childhood complaints and quietly began to educate himself in military matters, remarking that, "since I have undertaken a profession, I had better try to understand it", and, alongside the social duties of the vice-regal court, rose in rank through purchase, becoming in 1793 a lieutenant-colonel of the 33rd. Active service was first experienced in the Low Countries in 1794 when it became apparent to him that, "no one knew anything about managing an army," and the engagement at Boxtel in Flanders, when the 33rd successfully beat off an attack, was his baptism of fire. The dismal conclusion of this campaign, with the army evacuating home, meant that Arthur had to remain in Ireland until the regiment was posted to India in 1796 before bidding a final farewell to his youth and again undertaking active service.

He arrived in Calcutta in 1797 and between then and his return to England in September 1805 learnt the lessons not only of high command but also diplomacy, politics, the strengths and weaknesses of humanity, how to move armies comprising stores, weapons, food and men across great landscapes of jungle, rivers,

mountains and plains and send them into battle with such formation and skill that he always won. Without anyone realising it, possibly least of all himself, he possessed a towering intellect allied to supreme common sense, which applied to his profession would make him a military genius. Failures there were, but they became lessons which never needed repeating; he suffered his highs and his lows and learnt from every one. He insisted on the rule of law. Justice to him was paramount and debts an anathema; his armies paid all their bills and the Indians, unaccustomed to such honesty, were astonished and held him in the greatest respect. He was promoted to Major-General on the India List in 1803 and a Knight of the Bath in 1804, becoming Sir Arthur. Finally, the climate and conditions went against him and, recognising the signs of chronic illness, it was time to leave but he brought back to Europe a knowledge and understanding of his profession possibly far in excess of any military or political leader bar Napoleon and, one might argue, even of him.

On arrival in England in September 1805 he was put on stand-by to take an infantry brigade to north Germany and found himself on the banks of the River Weser in mid winter and where he learned of Napoleon's overwhelming victory at Austerlitz. In February 1806 his unit returned without having fired a shot, and he entered Parliament. Weeks later he was offered the post of Chief Secretary of Ireland by the newly appointed Lord Lieutenant and he took it up almost as an interim, while remaining in the army and ready for active service. He also married Kitty Pakenham, an old love from his youthful ADC days, a match which he sadly, later regretted; they were mis-matched.

A brief escape from civilian employment came in August 1807 when the Government feared Napoleon had designs on seizing the neutral Danish fleet and receiving no positive response this would be refused, Wellesley was sent with a brigade to secure it. After landing north of Copenhagen, he fought the Danes at Køge and won, thus saving the fleet. And he returned to Ireland. At the beginning of May 1808 he was promoted Lieutenant-General and in July, with the French having now captured Portugal and most unwelcomingly settled in the northern provinces of Spain, Britain was invited by the Spanish and Portuguese to come to their aid. Government despatched Wellesley and he landed with a force of 13,000 at the mouth of the Mondego river close by Coimbra and immediately set out to challenge the occupying French under General Junot.

In quick succession he won two battles in five days thus securing the defeat of the French and forcing their evacuation but Government, now deciding to send a larger force to assist Spain, meant a more senior general ie. higher on the Army List, must command. Consequently, General Sir Hew Dalrymple, with nothing remotely equating his experience, duly arrived, and Wellesley returned once again to Ireland. However, Sir Hew's mishandling of affairs with the Portuguese soon proved so embarrassing for Britain that he was recalled and General Sir John Moore, also higher on the list than Sir Arthur, took his place. Moore's gallant winter campaign of 1808-January 1809 ended in the retreat to Corunna and evacuation but just hours before the army embarked the French attacked, resulting in a battle on the outskirts during which Moore was mortally wounded. He died soon after news of the victory reached him. However, within weeks of the Army's return, Government responded to the Portuguese plea for the British to continue the fight against Napoleon, a request Spain also welcomed, and when it came to the choice of the commander the British public settled it, never mind lists, a general who won battles was the right man for the job.

On the 22nd April 1809 Wellesley came ashore at Black Horse Square in the heart of Lisbon, where its citizens, vociferous in their welcome, shared this belief, and after a few days in the capital he rode north to join his troops. The day he reached them was born a British army which would stand, steadfast and reassuring, among the polyglot forces arrayed on the 18 June six years later at Waterloo. A British army as yet bearing little resemblance to that on Mont St Jean, but their General was back with them, breathing confidence, common sense and a lasting care for their welfare. All would be well.

## **Michel Ney, Duc d'Elchingen, Prince de Moskowa**

1769-1815



From a humble background he enlisted into a hussar regiment in 1787. Under the Revolution, he fought at the frontiers where he was noticed by Kléber in 1794. His men had already nicknamed him “the Indefatigable”. When war resumed in 1798, Ney became famous after using trickery to take Mannheim with only 150 men; he was then promoted to Major General. After a series of exploits in the Army of the Danube, he was given temporary command of the Army of the Rhine. He fought at Hohenlinden, where his lightning attack took 10,000 prisoners. In 1803, he was given command of the 6th Army Corps at the Boulogne camp. The following year, Napoleon made him Marshal. Nobody could equal Ney in leading attacks. He was, however, a poor strategist, and the Emperor always had to direct him closely. In 1805, he launched into the campaign at the head of the 6th Army Corps. At Elchingen, he pushed the Austrians back towards Ulm; this victory earned him a duc’s title in 1808.

At Jena he led his divisions against the Prussian lines, but carried away in the heat of the battle, found himself surrounded. Lannes extracted him from this tight spot. Ney was everywhere: at Eylau, at Guttstadt, where he and his 14,000 men fought 70,000 enemy soldiers; at Friedland, where he attacked the enemy’s left flank and drove it into the Alle River. He was extremely popular and his soldiers adored him. From 1808 to 1811, Ney served in Spain and Portugal. Despite several victories his disputes with Masséna demanded that Napoleon finally discharged him in March 1811. Sent back to France, he was asked to prepare an army corps for the invasion of Russia. This would be the Marshal’s most glorious campaign. He fought in the storming of Smolensk, where he received a bullet in the neck. During the battle of Borodino, his redoubt attack was decisive. Napoleon made him prince of Moskowa and called him “the bravest of the brave.” During the retreat, he worked wonders. In command of the rear guard, harried by the enemy, he miraculously managed to join Napoleon before crossing the Berezina. He made countless efforts and sacrifices to save 3,000 men from the disaster. He was one of the last Frenchmen to leave Russian soil.

Ney later fought at Lützen, Bautzen, Dennewitz and Leipzig. In April 1814, he was one of those who asked the Emperor to abdicate. On the King’s return, Ney gave the sovereign his allegiance. Louis XVIII welcomed the Marshal he joined the court but was hurt by cool reactions to his common origins. He finally retired to his estate. When the news of Napoleon’s return reached Paris, he offered to bring back the Emperor “in an iron cage.” to the King. While en route, he discovered that the majority of the French people were pro-Bonaparte.

When he met Napoleon, he once again rallied to his cause. He fought at the battle of Waterloo in June 1815, at the side of his former master. At Quatre Bras, his attacks lacked force. At Waterloo, the battle charges were poorly organized and directed at the wrong places. After the defeat Ney was tried and executed in Paris. Ney was the only Marshal executed in 1815 by Louis XVIII. Napoleon would say: “Ney is the bravest of men, and therein lies the limit of his faculties.”

## **Andre Massena Marshal Prince de Essling Duc de Rivoli**

1758-1817



Originally eager to go to sea, Andre Massena found life on the waves was not what it should be and so set out for a career in the French army. Very quickly he discovered he had made the right choice and rose rapidly to sergeant. Despite his promise, the army released Massena in 1789 and he took up smuggling on the Cote d'Azur. Within two years, however, the call of the drums took him back to the army and he joined the National Guard and was voted in as colonel. By 1793, he was a general of division and his abilities gave him first battle victory at Lonato in 1795. After that, Massena teamed up with a young General Napoleon Bonaparte and was a key soldier in the stunning 1796 Campaign and the battles of Montenotte, Lodi, Castiglione, Bassano, Caldiero, Arcola, and Rivoli. In 1799, Massena took command of the army in Switzerland and ran into Russia's Field Marshal Suvarov at the second battle of Zurich. Victorious, his reputation soared and even the harrowing siege and eventual

surrender of his men at Genoa could not tarnish it. He succeeded Bonaparte as commander of the Army of Italy, but his unashamed looting required his almost instant dismissal. All was forgiven in time and in 1804 he became a marshal and a year later had taken Verona and fought at Caldiero. Given command of the campaign against Naples he was recalled, again for massive pillaging, and had his loot taken from him by the emperor. In the Danube campaign of 1809, Massena again put soldiering first and proved his abilities at Landshut, Eckmühl, Ebelsberg, Aspern-Essling, Wagram and Znaim. His courage and skill at Aspern-Essling earned him the title Prince d'Essling. From Austria, Massena was moved to Spain, together with his mistress who dressed as a dragoon, and found himself sorely tested by British troops in the Peninsular War. His first taste was at Bussaco, where he was given a brutal lesson by the Duke of Wellington, and then again at Fuentes d'Onoro. Returning to France, Massena did not hold an active field command again, a harsh end for a talented, but flawed, leader.

Major-General **Robert Craufurd** - "Black Bob". 1764 - 1812



Craufurd was a Scottish soldier and MP. After a military career which took him from India to the Netherlands, he was given command of the Light Division in the Napoleonic Peninsular War under the Duke of Wellington. Craufurd was a strict disciplinarian and somewhat prone to violent mood swings which earned him the nickname "Black Bob". He was mortally wounded storming the lesser breach in the Siege of Ciudad Rodrigo on 19 January 1812 and died four days later. Craufurd was born at Newark Castle, Ayrshire, the third son of Sir Alexander Craufurd, 1st Baronet and his wife, Jane Crockatt, and the younger brother of General Sir Charles Gregan Craufurd. He was educated at Harrow

School (1779), and later at Göttingen University (1787). He entered the army as an ensign in the 25th Regiment of Foot in 1779, was promoted lieutenant in 1781, and captain into the 75th Regiment of Foot in 1783.

He served with this unit in India in Lord Cornwallis's campaigns against Tipoo Sultan between 1790 and 1792, establishing a reputation as a good regimental officer. In the early 1790s, Craufurd returned to Europe and was employed on attachment, under his brother Charles, with the Austrian armies operating against the French, remaining there after Charles was severely wounded. He returned to England in December 1797 and was promoted lieutenant-colonel. On 6 February 1800 he married Mary Frances Holland (d. 1842), daughter of the architect Henry Holland of Hans Place, Chelsea, London. They had three sons and a daughter. In 1802 he was elected MP for East Retford in Nottinghamshire. Craufurd was promoted colonel on 30 October 1805 and gave up his seat in 1806 in the hope of going on active service. After service in South America he joined Sir John Moore's army at Mayorga on 20 December, and Craufurd's command was repeatedly engaged, especially at Castro Gonzalo on the 28th. On 31 December the light division was ordered to leave the main army for Vigo, where it embarked for England.

In 1809 Craufurd returned to the Peninsula, with the rank of brigadier-general, to take command of the Light Division (43rd, 52nd and 95th). While on his way to join the army of Sir Arthur Wellesley (later the duke of Wellington), he heard rumours that during the battle of Talavera on 27–28 July, Wellesley had been killed. The march which followed is one almost unparalleled in military annals. ***The three battalions of the Light Division started in full marching order, and arrived at the front on the day after the Battle of Talavera, having covered 62 miles on foot in twenty-six hours.***

Beginning their career with this famous march these regiments and their chief, under whom served such men as Charles and William Napier, Shaw and Colborne, soon increased their reputation as one of the best corps of troops in Europe, and almost every engagement following added to their laurels. Craufurd's operations on the Côa and Águeda in 1810 were daring to the point of rashness; the drawing on of the French forces into what became the Battle of the Côa in particular was a rare lapse in judgement that almost saw his removal from command. Although Wellington censured him for his conduct, he at the same time increased his force from brigade-strength to division-strength by the addition of two picked regiments of Portuguese *Caçadores*. Craufurd's reputation for resorting to unnecessarily harsh treatment of his troops only increased during the peninsular war. His style of leadership was at times inconsistent with the function of the light infantry he

commanded, who had been trained under Sir John Moore to operate more independently than conventional infantry of the day. Craufurd "stands out as a particularly fearsome martinet who flogged his units into obedience, ensuring that they were more afraid of their officers than of any foe." In one diatribe delivered to the assembled division he insisted that they maintain straight lines of march regardless of the conditions of the terrain. *'If I ever have any occasion to observe any man of the Brigade pick his road and go round a pool of water instead of marching through it I am fully determined to bring the officer commanding the Company to which that man belongs to Court Martial. Should the court acquit the officer it shall not deter me from repeating the same ceremony on any other officer again and again ...I will insist on every soldier marching through water and I will flog any man attempting to avoid it.'* ..... Napier

The winter of 1810-1811, Craufurd spent in England, and his division was poorly commanded in the interim by another officer, Sir William Erskine. When Craufurd reappeared on the field of the battle of Fuentes d'Onoro, it was to the cheers of his men. In the fighting the light division again played a distinguished part, covering the change of front which Wellington found it necessary to make when outflanked by the French. Craufurd was promoted major-general on 4 June 1811 and, in the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo the following winter, led the light division in the attack on the smaller breach when the fortress was stormed on 19 January. At the very beginning of the assault he was mortally wounded in the abdomen and he was carried out of action by his staff officer, Lieutenant James Shaw-Kennedy of the 43rd, and, after lingering four days, he died on 23 January 1812. He was buried in the breach itself.

His death was marked by tributes in both houses of parliament, and, at public expense, a monument was erected to him and General Mackinnon, who was killed in the same siege, in St Paul's Cathedral, London. One of the quickest and most brilliant, if not the very first, of Wellington's generals, he had a fiery temper, which rendered him a difficult man to deal with, but to the day of his death he possessed the confidence and affection of his men in an extraordinary degree. As his friend, the fellow soldier George Napier concluded: *Brilliant as some of the traits of his character were, and notwithstanding the good and generous feelings which often burst forth like a bright gleam of sunshine from behind a dark and heavy cloud, still there was a sullenness which seemed to brood in his innermost soul and generate passions which knew no bounds.*