

Peninsular Tour
26th - 31st May 2011

'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

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*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 29th September 2009 we walk this ground and learn its history.*

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

This Tour

This tour visits 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 22nd 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: Thursday 26th May

- 1215 Hrs: Depart by hire cars or mini coach 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

Day 2: Friday 27th May – The Action on the Coa, Fort Conception & Wellington's flank at Fuentes de Onoro

- **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 (an hour's stroll)

"...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 kilometres. 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 Friday.

- **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: Saturday 28th May - The Battle of Fuentes de Onoro

- **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 88th Foot.



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

- **Pocho Velo** – The Village where the 7th 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 88th Foot thrust back the French Infantry hoards

Day 4: Sunday 29th May – The Siege of Ciudad Rodrigo

- **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 88th 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 3rd Division made haste to the south

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

Day 5: Monday 30th May –The Battle of Salamanca

- **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** – 88th 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: Tuesday 31st May

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

Tour Preparation

1. **Terms and Conditions:** See attached
2. **Booking Forms** See Attached. Cheques please to be made out to 'Corporate Battlefields Ltd'
3. **Lunches** are taken en route or by picnic from the Hotel
4. **Transport** will be by 9 Seater Sprinter or two hire cars and using Taxis where appropriate
5. **Accommodation** will be 2/3 Star Hotel
6. **Recommended Reading:**
 - Wellington in the Peninsula – Jac Weller ISBN 1-85367-381-1
 - Adventures in the Rifle Brigade – John Kincaid
 - A History of the Peninsula War – Sir Charles Oman
7. **Maps and Itineraries** will be provided
8. **Pre Tour Conditioning:** 1 Hour walking per day in the week prior to travel is advisable

What to take?

Essential	Advisable	Optional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valid Passport • Proof of insurance • Stout Walking Shoes • Euros & Credit Cards • Personal belongings • Personal Medication • Hat(Spain in May can be hot) • Water bottle • Knapsack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunglasses • Umbrella • European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) *- See Note • Foul weather clothing. For the very short strolls from the vehicle it is advisable to wear stout walking shoes if possible as rough and uneven cobbles abound. Please ensure that wet weather clothing are at hand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camera & Films • Notebook & Pencil • Mobile Phone • Reference Material • Binoculars • Walking Boots • Dictionary

- *Note: EHIC Card is an entitlement to Medical Benefits in kind for Guests from European communities during a stay in a European Member State. The quickest and easiest way to apply for an EHIC is online. <http://www.dh.gov.uk/Home/fs/en>
- Your card will be delivered within seven days.
- If you are applying by post and you lose the pre-addressed envelope, send your completed application form to:

EHIC Applications
 PO Box 1115
 Newcastle upon Tyne
 NE99 1SW

Enquiries Line on 0845 605 0707

*Note: The Guide will have a small medical pack as will the transport.

Tour price per person sharing £935 - Deposit £250 – Single Supplement £180

Exclusive of Flights *Tour Ref: CWT Penn 11*)

Tour Starts and Ends at Valladolid Airport

Included in the price of the Tour will be:

- Accommodation – Hotel Half Board 2/3*
- Dinners include wine
- All museums entry fees
- Transport
- Qualified Guide

Excluded from the price of your Tour will be:

- Hotel extra services, telephone, bar and business facilities
- All Lunches
- Insurance
- Flights

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 a Director on Guild Council. 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 and a daughter both commissioned in the British Army. The family home is in Essex where he plays golf when battle time permits.

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*Graeme Cooper-Qualified Guide
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