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*Subaltern: A Chronicle of the Peninsular War ...*

The Subaltern: A Chronicle of the Peninsular War by G.R. Gleig (Hardback, 2001) Be the first to write a review.

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Lieutenants, or "subalterns" as they were called, were very young in the British Army of the Napoleonic Wars, so George Gleig was not unique when he joined the 85th Light Infantry at the age of 17. Thrown into action in Spain against invading

**Subaltern: A Chronicle of the Peninsular War** by George Gleig (Hardback, 2001) Be the first to write a review.

First published in 1825, this book was one of the earliest personal accounts to appear in print after the termination of the Peninsular War. Sir Charles Oman, the great historian of that long-drawn-out contest then being fought out in Basque Provinces, stated that, in addition to its literary merit, Gleig's record 'may be better trusted than Blakeney's equally vivid narrative', among others which were to appear in later years. A recommended book and one which should help many get an insight into the army of that period.

**Subaltern: A Chronicle of the Peninsular War** by George Gleig (Hardback, 2001) Be the first to write a review.

Examining the memoirs and autobiographies of British soldiers during the Romantic period, Neil Ramsey explores the effect of these as cultural forms mediating warfare to the reading public during and immediately after the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. Forming a distinct and commercially successful genre that in turn inspired the military and nautical novels that flourished in the 1830s, military memoirs profoundly shaped nineteenth-century British culture's understanding of war as Romantic adventure, establishing images of the nation's middle-class soldier heroes that would be of enduring significance through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As Ramsey shows, the military memoir achieved widespread acclaim and commercial success among the reading public of the late Romantic era. Ramsey assesses their influence in relation to Romantic culture's wider understanding of war writing, autobiography, and authorship and to the shifting relationships between the individual, the soldier, and the nation. The memoirs, Ramsey argues, participated in a sentimental response to the period's wars by transforming earlier, impersonal traditions of military memoirs into stories of the soldier's personal suffering. While the focus on suffering established in part a lasting strand of anti-war writing in memoirs by private soldiers, such stories also helped to foster a sympathetic bond between the soldier and the civilian that played an important role in developing ideas of a national war and functioned as a central component in a national commemoration of war.

The 12th Light Dragoons served throughout Wellington's campaigns in the Peninsula, most notably at the Battle of Salamanca in 1812, and later at Waterloo where they suffered heavy casualties supporting the Union Brigade's famous charge. The principal source for this book are the papers of Sir James Steaurt Colonel of the regiment for almost all of the period in question supplemented by other regimental records, Horse Guards paperwork, and letters and memoirs, allowing both an official understanding of events, and several threads of human interest which develop through the narrative.The book is divided into two halves, first providing an overview of the regiment and the role of Steuart as Colonel, before moving onto an account of the regiment on home service during the early years of the Napoleonic Wars and then on active service in the Peninsular War and at Waterloo. This concludes with a discussion of the lessons learnt during the war, as particularly exemplified by the 12th being one of the regiments selected for conversion to lancers in the aftermath of Waterloo.

Although an army's success is often measured in battle outcomes, its victories depend on strengths that may be less obvious on the field. In *Sickness, Suffering, and the Sword*, military historian Andrew Bamford assesses the effectiveness of the British Army in sustained campaigning during the Napoleonic Wars. In the process, he offers a fresh and controversial look at Britain's military system, showing that success or failure on campaign rested on the day-to-day experiences of regimental units rather than the army as a whole. Bamford draws his title from the words of Captain Moyle Sherer, who during the winter of 1816–1817 wrote an account of his service during the Peninsular War: “My regiment has never been very roughly handled in the field. . . But, alas! What between sickness, suffering, and the sword, few, very few of those men are now in existence.” Bamford argues that those daily scourges of such often-ignored factors as noncombat deaths and equine strength and losses determined outcomes on the battlefield. In the nineteenth century, the British Army was a collection of regiments rather than a single unified body, and the regimental system bore the responsibility of supplying manpower on that field. Between 1808 and 1815, when Britain was fighting a global conflict far greater than its military capabilities, the system nearly collapsed. Only a few advantages narrowly outweighed the army's increasing inability to meet manpower requirements. This book examines those critical dynamics in Britain's major early-nineteenth-century campaigns: the Peninsular War (1808–1814), the Walcheren Expedition (1809), the American War (1812–1815), and the growing commitments in northern Europe from 1813 on. Drawn from primary documents, Bamford's statistical analysis compares the vast disparities between regiments and different theatres of war and complements recent studies of health and sickness in the British Army.

Bruce Collins's in-depth reassessment of the Duke of Wellington's siege of San Sebastian during the Peninsular War is a fascinating reconstruction of one of the most challenging siege operations Wellington's army undertook, and it is an important contribution to the history of siege warfare during the Napoleonic Wars. He sets the siege in the context of the practice of siege warfare during the period and Wellington's campaign strategies following his victory at the Battle of Vitoria. He focuses on how the army assigned to the siege was managed and draws on the records of the main military departments for the first time to give an integrated picture of its operations in the field. The close support given by the Royal Navy is a key aspect of his narrative. This broad approach, based in fresh archive research, offers an original perspective on both San Sebastian's significance and the nature of siege warfare in this period.

Winner of the Luigi Napolitano Award (2006) from the International Academy of Astronautics This book presents the fascinating story of the events that paved the way to space. It introduces the reader to the history of early rocketry and the subsequent developments that led into the space age. People of various nations and from various lands contributed to the breakthrough to space, and the book takes the reader to faraway places on five continents. It also includes many quotes to give readers a flavor of how the participants viewed the developments. Most publications on the topic either target narrow aspects of rocket history or are popular books that scratch the surface, with minimal and sometimes inaccurate technical details. This book bridges the gap. It contains numerous technical details usually unavailable in popular publications. The details are not overbearing and anyone interested in rocketry and space exploration will navigate through the book without difficulty. There are 340 figures and photographs, many appearing for the first time.

The leading Wellington historian's fascinating reassessment of the Iron Duke's most famous victory and his role in the turbulent politics after Waterloo. For Arthur Wellesley, First Duke of Wellington, his momentous victory over Napoleon was the culminating point of a brilliant military career. Yet Wellington's achievements were far from over: he commanded the allied army of occupation in France to the end of 1818, returned home to a seat in Lord Liverpool's cabinet, and became prime minister in 1828. He later served as a senior minister in Peel's government and remained Commander-in-Chief of the Army for a decade until his death in 1852. In this richly detailed work, the second and concluding volume of Rory Muir's definitive biography, the author offers a substantial reassessment of Wellington's significance as a politician and a nuanced view of the private man behind the legend of the selfless hero. Muir presents new insights into Wellington's determination to keep peace at home and abroad, achieved by maintaining good relations with the Continental powers and resisting radical agitation while granting political equality to the Catholics in Ireland rather than risk civil war. And countering one-dimensional pictures of Wellington as a national hero, Muir paints a portrait of a well-rounded man whose austere demeanor on the public stage belied his entertaining, gossipy, generous, and unpretentious private self. "[An] authoritative and enjoyable conclusion to a two-part biography."—Lawrence James, *Times* (London) "Muir conveys the military, political, social and personal sides of Wellington's career with equal brilliance. This will be the leading work on the subject for decades."—Andrew Roberts, author of *Napoleon and Wellington: The Long Duel*

The news of Wellington's momentous victory at Vitoria on 21 June 1813 reached London in early July. Celebration spawned an expectation of a rapid conclusion to events in the Peninsula. His Majesty's Government gave authority for Wellington to invade France and made noises and plans for the redeployment of the Peninsular Army in support of Russia and Prussia. Wellington, however, did not see things in quite the same way. His army was worn out and there remained sizeable French forces in Spain, so what followed had to be a carefully thought out and planned campaign. The invasion itself commenced with the daring Allied crossing of the Bidassoa estuary in early October 1813 and was followed by an operational pause prior to the Battle of Nivelle in November. The subsequent operations, which commenced early in 1814, provided the aftermath to the invasion and the conclusion to the Peninsular War. These actions focus primarily on the investment of Bayonne and the pursuit of Soult's army east, and include the battles and engagements at Garris, Orthez, Aire, Tarbes and the final showdown at Toulouse in April 1814.

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