



Salamanca 1812: Wellington's Year of Victories

Peter Edwards

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1812 was the year in which the Peninsular War swung in the favor of the combined forces of the British, the Spanish and the Portuguese. This was the result of a series of victories over the French gained by the allied armies under Wellington, and this is the subject of Peter Edwards's compelling new history.

The year began with Wellington launching a series of raids in Estramadura to distract French attention from preparations for an assault on Ciudad Rodrigo, which was taken in late-January. There followed the capture of Badajoz and the advance on Salamanca, which was captured after a ten-day siege.

The Battle of Salamanca, on 22 July, saw some 50,000 French troops arrayed against a similar number of allies. Using ground astutely, Wellington gained a crushing victory, inflicting over 14,000 French casualties. Although there was a rebuff at Burgos later in the year, Wellington's forces were firmly on the march to victory in the Iberian Peninsula.

Peter Edwards uses an excellent range of sources to bring to life this pivotal year in the Peninsular War. His work offers a fascinating insight into the strategy, the command decisions and the experience of combat 200 years ago.

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