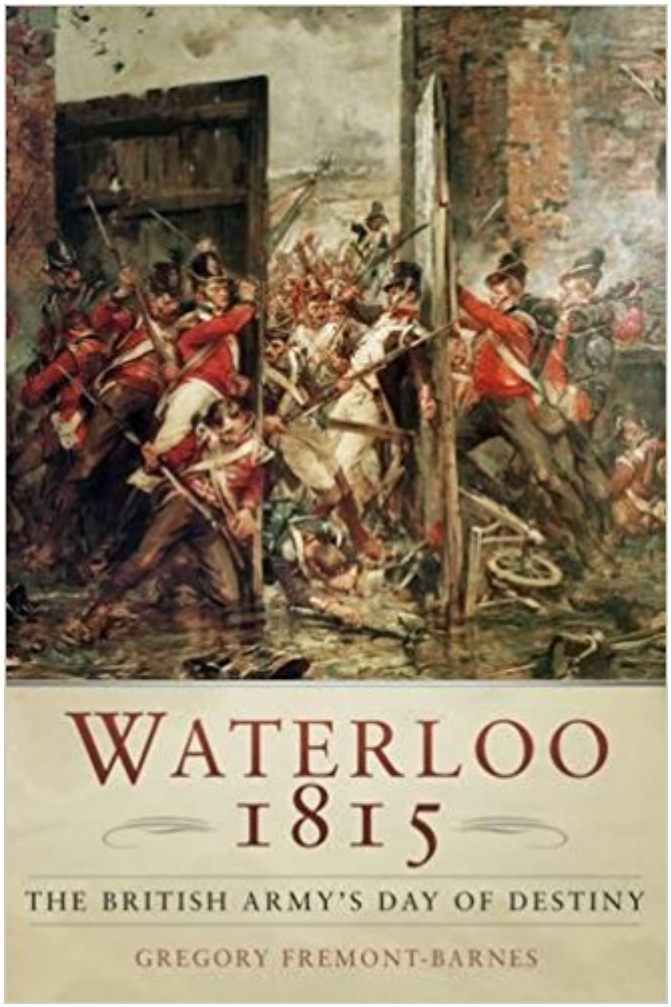
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Waterloo 1815: The British Army's Day Of Destiny



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Synopsis

A major reassessment of the battle from one of the world's leading authorities, toÃ Â commemorate the 2015 bicentenary The Battle of Waterloo is one of the most important moments in military history. This book seeks to not only tell the story of this great battle, but also to challenge conventional thinking about the opposing forces and the British victory. At noon on June 18,Ã Â 1815, the might of the Imperial French Army under Napoleon faced the Anglo-Allied Army, commanded byÃ Â the Duke of Wellington and bolstered by the Prussian Army. It has recently been argued that the British Army alone would never have been able to withstand NapoleonÃ¢â ¬â„¢s troops and that the glory for the victory should be laid at the feet of the Prussians, who swept into battle in the evening. Leading Napoleonic expert Gregory Fremont-Barnes is one of the first authors to challenge this stance, proving that the British Army alone was more than equal to the French, and that victory would ultimately have been theirs with or without the arrival of the Prussians. He uses numerous previously unpublished sources to examine both armies and give one of the most insightful accounts of the battle yet to be published.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gregory Fremont-Barnes has written widely on military history,Ã Â including editingÃ Â the recent three-volume work, The Encyclopedia of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. He is also the author of The Boer War, 1899-1902 and Waterloo 1815.

The bicentennial of the Battle of Waterloo has prompted a small avalanche of books on the subject.

"Waterloo 1815", by experienced historian Gregory Fremont-Barnes, turns out to be a very worthwhile read. The author went back to the source material; his narrative is meticulously built around a variety of first-person accounts of the battle. His point of view is decidedly British; the subtitle is "The British Army's Day of Destiny" and the story is very much about the British Army and its German Legion cohorts.For a battle that has been so thoroughly studied, Fremont-Barnes manages to find plenty to offer both the general reader and the student of the Waterloo Campaign. The book walks the reader through the major actions of the battle, including the defense of Hougoumont, D'Erlon's attack, the massed French cavalry assaults, the fall of La Haye Sainte and the attack of the Imperial Guard. Throughout, the author offers incisive commentary of the actions of Wellington and his opponent Napoleon, and just how narrow was the margin of victory or defeat.The author's close review of first person sources does offer some very interesting perspectives. This reviewer was very interested to learn that the extended French artillery bombardment of the Mount St Jean ridge was the biggest single source of casualties among the British units. This reviewer was also fascinated by the key role played by the surviving British light cavalry units in the general advance at the end of the battle. They appear to have been instrumental in keeping the French Army from rallying after the repulse of the Imperial Guard. The narrative is nicely supported by an interesting collection of maps and period illustrations. Well recommended as a worthwhile read on an historic battle.

This is the best account of Waterloo that I have read. It is detailed, accurately annotated and liberally scattered with graphic first-person accounts of the battle. These really brought home the horrors of 19th century warfare. I particularly liked the description of the political events preceding and following the battle, as well as detailed chapters on weaponry, strategy, supply and medical services (such as they were). I found my understanding of this critically important battle was enormously enhanced. My only criticism was that although there were maps, they were rather unhelpful because they were not very legible and did not always feature places mentioned in the text.

One of the best books on the battle.

A good overview of the service of the British Army during the Waterloo Campaign. I especially found the author's conclusions to be of interest.

given as gift...well received

WATERLOO: THE BRITISH ARMY'S DAY OF DESTINYGREGORY FREMONT-BARNESTHE HISTORY PRESS, 2015HARDCOVER, $49.95, 440 PAGES, MAPS, NOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, ORDERS OF BATTLE, TIMELINE, APPENDICES, INDEXNapoleon's return to France in 1815, and his rapid re-assumption to power, led the British Army into its final and climatic action of the period, -the Waterloo Campaign. The force Wellington led in this campaign, however, bore little resemblance to his magnificent Peninsula army; as seen in the British contingent that included inexperienced units. Even the battalions with recent combat experience had numbers of newly enlisted men in their ranks. The remainder of the Allied army commanded by Wellington (itself only a portion of the forces with which Napoleon faced in the 1815 campaign) comprised Dutch, Brunswick, and Hanoverian militia, few of whom were regarded as reliable; hence Wellington's famous remark concerning his "infamous army".The events of the Waterloo Campaign are too familiar to require recapitulation of how the Allies, initially surprised by the spreed of Napoleon's advance, fought delaying actions on 16 June 1815 at Quatre Bras and (by Blucher's Prussian Army) at Ligny; and how Wellington retired to the ridge of Mont St. Jean and on 18 June 1815, held off numerous French attacks until the Prussian arrival late in the day wrecked Napoleon's army, effectively ending the Napoleonic Wars. Waterloo wasn't only the most decisive battle of the age but, even in the opinion of hardened Peninsula veterans, was the hardest fought.WATERLOO: THE BRITISH ARMY'S DAY OF DESTINY will not disappoint the students of this campaign because it is very well written and packed full of information and analysis. In particular, the author has gone to great lengths to base his book on eyewitness accounts, which he then skillfully weaves together to ensure the reader how the campaign unfolded through the eyes of the British soldier. Although not a general history of the campaign, the author does include some information on other aspects of the day that didn't directly involve the British. This helps place the experiences of the British soldier within the context of the campaign as well as offer the reader an understanding of the action overall.Colonel Robert A. Lynn, Florida GuardOrlando, Florida

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