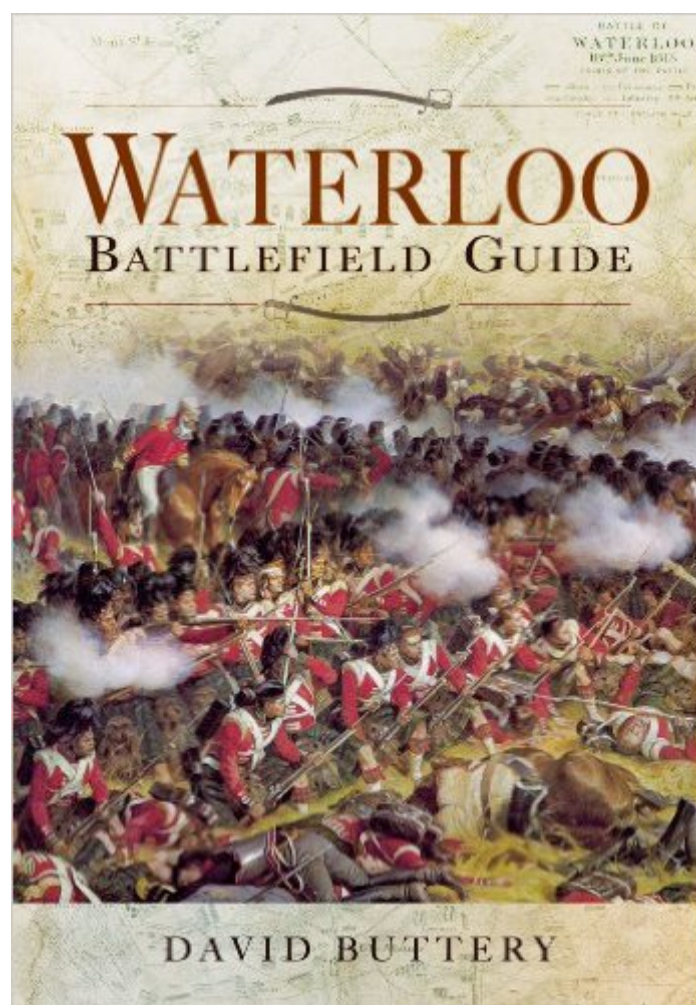


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Waterloo Battlefield Guide



Synopsis

The defeat of Napoleon's French army by the combined forces of Wellington and Blücher at Waterloo on 18 June 1815 was a turning point in world history. This was the climax of the Napoleonic Wars, and the outcome had a major influence on the shape of Europe for the next century and beyond. The battle was a milestone, and it cannot be properly understood without a detailed, on-the-ground study of the landscape in which it was fought – and that is the purpose of David Buttery's new battlefield guide. In vivid detail, using eyewitness accounts and an intimate knowledge of the terrain, he reconstructs Waterloo and he takes the reader – and the visitor – across the battleground as it is today. He focuses on the pivotal episodes in the fighting – the day-long struggle for the chateau at Hougoumont, the massive French infantry assaults, repeated cavalry charges, the fall of La Haye Sainte, the violent clashes in the village of Plancenoit, the repulse of the Imperial Guard and rout of the French army. This thoroughgoing, lucid, easy-to-follow guide will be a fascinating introduction for anyone who seeks to understand what happened on that momentous day, and it will be an essential companion for anyone who explores the battlefield in Belgium.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The first thing that I noticed about this book was the maps. There are lots of them, they are clear, sufficiently detailed and colourful. Now that, which should be standard, is refreshing and a great start. This good, first impression did not disappoint as I delved more deeply into what is an excellent publication. From the title I expected that this would be a guide to the famous battle and ostensibly it is, but it is also much more. The book's eleven chapters cover the background to the campaign, the

armies, plans and initial manoeuvres, the battles of Quatre Bras, Ligny, Waterloo (in phases) and Wavre, the aftermath and visiting the battlefield. Each chapter includes an historical description. Those about the battles include a description of key points of interest to the visitor (or armchair visitor). Each chapter also features several 'sidebars', most of which provide a brief biography of some of the key people from both sides, as well as numerous reproductions of paintings, photos, and maps. I began reading this book with some trepidation, having read Buttery's book "Wellington vs Junot" and being decidedly under-impressed. I found that to be a subjective and value-laden version of history and also to contain numerous errors and breaks in the flow of logic of the text. I need not have been concerned. This book is easy to read and is, in the main, a fine example of the objective writing of history at its best. Buttery demonstrates great skill in his writing, producing a text that is written with no assumed knowledge, making it suitable for the novice, but also with sufficient detail and insights to reward the experienced Waterloo 'campaigner'. The detailed, descriptive and insightful text is far beyond what I expected in a guidebook.

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