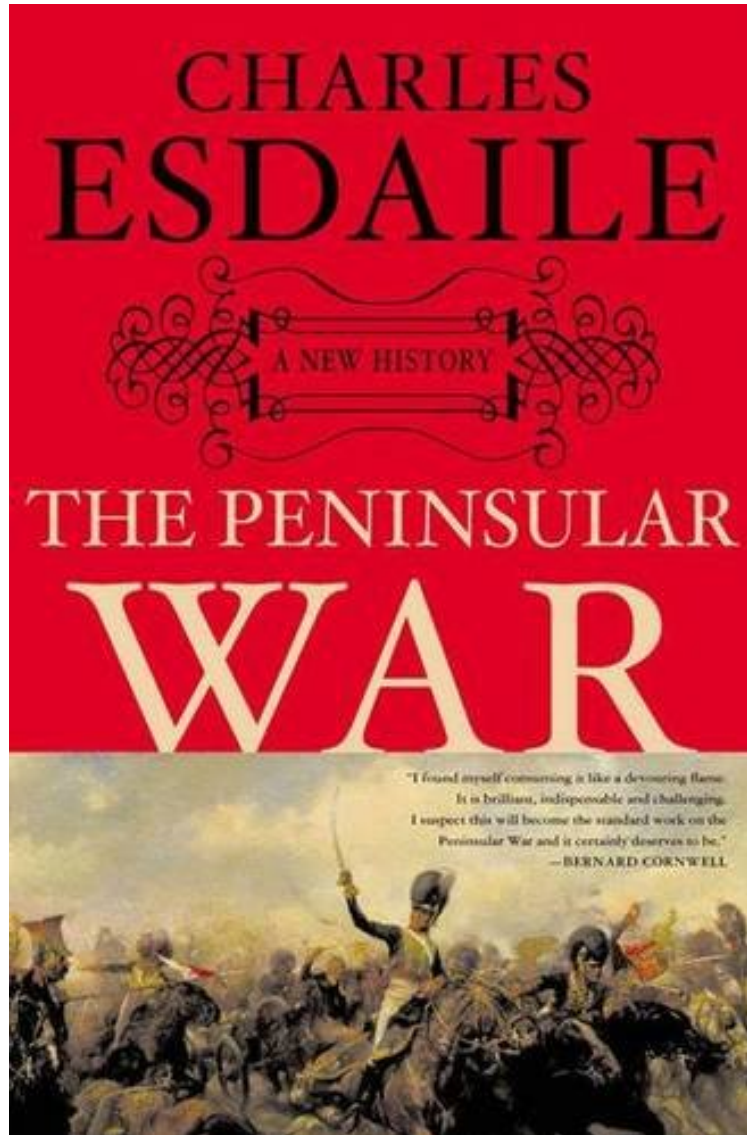


The Peninsular War: A New History

Charles Esdaile

audiobook / *ebooks / Download PDF / ePub / DOC



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#1918623 in Books Palgrave Macmillan 2003-06-14 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.60 x 1.83 x 6.361,
#File Name: 1403962316640 pages | File size: 75.Mb

Charles Esdaile : The Peninsular War: A New History before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Peninsular War: A New History:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Slightly different perspective on Peninsular War By James H. This book surprised me, because it strongly emphasized the Spanish contribution to the War in the Peninsula. The conventional approach, in so many other books, has been to mention the Spanish and their incredibly inept leadership and untrained soldiers. This book gives a substantial amount of information about why these conditions existed and

why they weren't able to correct most of them. It is an important addition to anyone's collection of books about this conflict. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Iberian Microinformation By kenneth macrosson EXcellent detail for those dwindling few that appreciate reading about the events in and around 1812--though tends to go over the top in this regard when you tire of the micro information so expertly ladelled out--if only for a day or two--and once refreshed back we come to drink at the Iberian well 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. And Now For Something Completely Different... By HMS Warspite Charles Esdaile's 2002 "The Peninsular War" is something rather different among the many British histories of this conflict, most of which focus on the heroic role of the British Army in ejecting Napoleon's Imperial forces from Portugal and Spain. Esdaile takes a long step back in perspective, seeing the Peninsular War of 1808-1814 as primarily between Spain and France, with Portugal as a secondary theater and the legendary Anglo-Portuguese Army under the future Duke of Wellington as supporting players until late in the conflict. In Esdaile's highly detailed narrative, Napoleon's effort to seize Spain as a kingdom for one of his brothers triggers a political revolution within the rotting Spanish Empire, setting the Spanish against the French invaders and against each other. He traces the wildly erratic efforts of several Spanish juntas, interim governments, and a regency to execute political reform while simultaneously waging war against French occupation forces. Esdaile then goes the next step in attempting to assess the effectiveness of these measures. The result is a balanced and often surprising look at the contributions of Spanish guerrillas and regular army formations toward defeating the French. His conclusions set the stage for a century and more of Spanish political unrest. Esdaile is no obvious fan of the Duke of Wellington, although he is prepared to grant the Duke his due for keeping his small army alive and in the game against long odds, and in orchestrating the decisive defeat of French forces in Spain in 1813. Esdaile is able to set these events in perspective against Napoleon's ultimately poor decisionmaking as leader of the French Empire, and to assess their contribution to Napoleon's eventual departure from power. By way of warning, the general reader may find the long discussions of Spanish societal politics and conflict to be dry and less unrewarding, while the author's coverage of the various battlefields is necessarily compressed. This book is however a worthwhile corrective to the standard narrative, as a more balanced account from the Spanish perspective. It is highly recommended to students of the Peninsular War on that basis.

At the end of the 18th century Spain remained one of the world's most powerful empires. Portugal, too, was prosperous at the time. By 1808, everything had changed. Portugal was under occupation and ravaged by famine, disease, economic problems and political instability. Spain had imploded and worse was to come. For the next six years, the peninsula was the helpless victim of others, suffering perhaps over a million deaths while troops from all over Europe tore it to pieces. Charles Esdaile's brilliant new history of the conflict makes plain the scope of the tragedy and its far-reaching effects, especially the poisonous legacy that produced the Spanish civil war of 1936-9.

From Publishers Weekly The Peninsular War could fairly be called Napoleon's Vietnam--a bloody, protracted struggle, part conventional and part guerilla, that sapped the strength of the French Empire and left Spain and Portugal in ruins. This new history is a sure guide through the quagmire. The war was on one level a military epic--Napoleon's nemesis Wellington made his name on the Peninsula--and Esdaile (The Wars of Napoleon) provides an enthralling narrative of the major campaigns and battles, along with a detailed assessment of the character and quality of the armies that fought there. But he also probes the political and social dimensions of the conflict, where nothing was simple. The Bonapartist regime in Spain, he finds, combined well-meaning reform with corruption and repression; the Spanish resistance was a blend of liberal and reactionary tendencies; the celebrated Spanish guerilla fighters were often no better than bandits; and the Spanish people were by turns patriotic and apathetic, hostile to both the traditional Spanish élites and the French interlopers who piled on new forms of exploitation. In this chaotic context, the Peninsular War became a byword for brutality: civilians were regularly pillaged and massacred by soldiers on every side acting out of starvation, reprisal for guerilla attacks or sheer drunken rage. Drawing on first-hand accounts of the conflict, Esdaile paints an indelible picture of the cruelties of Napoleonic warfare. His vigorous writing, comprehensive analysis and even-handed judgments make this an indispensable treatment of one of the watersheds of European history. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Well written and featuring rational conclusions based on solid research, it is highly recommended..."--Lt. Col. Charles M. Minyard, Library Journal "His vigorous writing, comprehensive analysis and even-handed judgements make this an indispensable treatment..."--Publishers Weekly Annex