

**MEMOIR OF THE EARLY  
CAMPAIGNS OF THE  
DUKE OF WELLINGTON  
IN PORTUGAL AND SPAIN**

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Memoir of the early campaigns of the Duke of Wellington in Portugal and Spain by John Fane Westmorland

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**JOHN FANE WESTMORLAND**

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MEMOIR,

&c.

Westmorland, John Fane

**MEMOIR**

OF

UNIV. OF  
CALIFORNIA

**THE EARLY CAMPAIGNS**

OF THE

**DUKE OF WELLINGTON,**

IN

**PORTUGAL AND SPAIN.**

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BY AN OFFICER EMPLOYED IN HIS ARMY.

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LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

1820.

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# MEMOIR,

&c.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

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THE following sheets pretend to no merit in composition, the writer pretends to no reputation as an author; the subject must be interesting to every British reader, and if the events are faithfully recorded, the work will deserve some attention.

Unaccustomed for a series of years to any great or continued exertion upon the continent, the people of England almost doubted their power or means of supporting one. The genius of Lord Wellington, the bravery of British troops, have removed this doubt.

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To the detail of the brilliant exploits by which the early campaigns in Portugal and Spain were distinguished, this work is dedicated. The author has undertaken it, emboldened by the consideration, that from the opportunities which he enjoyed of observing the transactions in the Peninsula, in most of which he was personally engaged, he has the means of relating them correctly.

In the summer of 1808 the first deputies from the Asturias arrived in England; they were so rapidly succeeded by others from every part of the Peninsula, that after a very short time there remained no doubt that the great people, whom they came to represent, were determined to struggle for independence.

The British ministers did no more than echo the sentiments of the nation when they decided to give every support to this people; and Sir Arthur Wellesley, who had been appointed to the command of a corps destined



for a different service, was selected to lead the first armament which should carry assistance to Portugal and Spain.

The force under his orders sailed from Cork in the beginning of July; Sir Arthur Wellesley himself proceeded in a single ship to Corunna. The state of things upon his arrival at that port was unfavourable to the Spaniards. The Gallician army under Blake, and that of Castile under Cuesta, had been defeated by a French corps commanded by Marshal Bessières, in the neighbourhood of Rio-Seco; and there appeared no obstacle to the march of the enemy to Corunna. In this situation of affairs Sir Arthur Wellesley hinted to the Junta, that if a request to land his army for the protection of Galicia should be made to him, he would not hesitate in acceding to it. The Junta, however, actuated by a feeling of pride and jealousy which has so often brought the affairs of Spain to the brink of ruin, neglected to make this proposal. Sir Arthur consequently proceeded to the coast of Portugal, and arrived in Mondego Bay on

the 26th of July. Leaving there the expedition he commanded, he went to the mouth of the Tagus, to procure information, and to combine his operations with Admiral Sir C. Cotton. When these objects were accomplished, he returned to the Mondego, determining to land his troops as soon as the corps which he expected, either from Cadiz, under General Spencer, or from England, under General Ackland, should have arrived. The former joined on the 2d of August; and Sir Arthur Wellesley immediately disembarked his army. At this moment three-fourths of Portugal were in insurrection against the French. Junot, who had entered the country in the November preceding, had commanded a corps of 40,000 men, of which about 10,000 were Spaniards; Oporto was occupied by a part of the Spanish troops, the rest of them were at Lisbon.

At the commencement of the revolution in Spain, Junot entertained so great a suspicion of the Spaniards in that capital, and in its neighbourhood, that, under pretence of sending them

to other quarters, he succeeded in surrounding and disarming them, and afterwards in placing them as prisoners on board ships provided for that purpose in the Tagus. As soon as the intelligence of this event reached Oporto, the Spanish garrison seized the few French officers who were in the town; invited the inhabitants to follow the example of Spain, and resist the French; and themselves marched off to join their companions in Galicia.

The Portuguese had, however, before this time, raised the standard of their prince. The Bishop of Oporto assumed the government of the northern provinces of Portugal; and General Frere and other persons took the lead in the insurrection in the other parts of that country. The old soldiers, who had been disbanded by the French, were called to arms; and in a short time three armies were formed; one at Oporto, another at Coimbra, and the third at Viseu. Officers had already been despatched from England to ascertain the state of the Oporto and Coimbra corps; and Sir