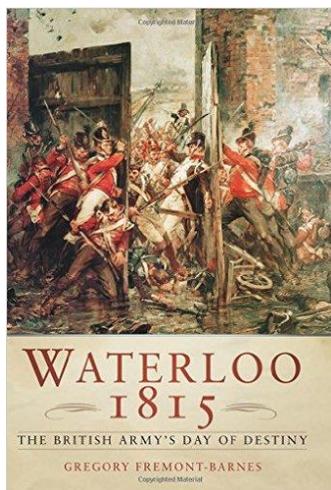


The Napoleon Series Reviews

Fremont-Barnes, Gregory. *Waterloo 1815: The British Army's Day of Destiny*. Gloucestershire (UK): The History Press, 2014. 440 pages. Illus. ISBN# 9780752462110. £25/\$49.95



The focus of the book is clearly set out in its title. You will find little on the other participants of the battle. This is fully discussed in the author's introduction. Gregory Fremont-Barnes is well known in Napoleonic History. He has authored five other volumes on the period as well as editing two other works. His current work is divided into a timeline, introduction, the main text, appendices, orders of battle, notes, bibliography, and Index. It has thirty-eight black and white illustrations and thirteen coloured illustrations and a number of maps which complement the text. The work is divided into seven parts and each part has one to three chapters detailing parts of the battle. For example, "Part 1" has three sections: "Historical Background," "British Troops at Waterloo," and "Opposing Strategies."

What makes the book interesting and enjoyable is the integration of eyewitness accounts into the text. The author describes an aspect of the battle and then supports/illustrates the description by using these accounts. The accounts include those by both officers and the rank and file as applicable. The book covers the latest research on Waterloo so you get discussions on the defeat of the Imperial Guard including details on the actions of Colin Halkett's, Maitland's and Adam's Brigades. A bonus is the section on "The Wounded and the Dead." Something not often covered in books on Waterloo. The appendices include a further eighteen letters on the battle including a discussion on the Waterloo Dispatch ("Appendix IX"). The book is extensively end-noted with 44 pages mainly devoted to identifying the writers and where to locate their correspondence. The bibliography has seven pages. The author has also included a list of "Forthcoming Publications," for 2014 and 2015, on the battle.

While not detracting from the enjoyment of the book, there are bound to be errors. Two non-essential ones are the identifying of Captain J. Thackwell, 15th Light Dragoons as a Major General at Waterloo and the other is the list of Brigade Commanders of the Hanoverian Reserve Corps on page 374. The list should be 1st Brigade under Bennigsen, 2nd Brigade under Beaulieu, 3rd Brigade under Bulow and 4th Brigade under Bodecker. Wissell was commanding his 3rd Line Battalion of the King's German Legion and succeeded to the brigade command at Waterloo. Still these are just minor cosmetic errors and I mention only in passing. All in all, the book is a nice addition to that ever growing Waterloo library. Recommended.

Reviewed by [Ron McGuigan](#)

Placed on the Napoleon Series: January 2016