

The Napoleon Series

The Uniforms of the Loyal Lusitanian Legion

By [Richard Tennant](#)

It is interesting to note that the Chevalier de Sousa, who represented Portugal's interest in the raising of the Legion, could not be persuaded 'to adopt the red clothing. He says that with that uniform every man would refuse to enlist.'¹ The initial planning was that the LLL would consist of about two thousand effective men, clothed and appointed by the United Kingdom; the uniform of the infantry was green, that of the cavalry green with white facings and the artillery green with black facings. The authorisation for the uniforms and equipment was placed in August 1808. Robert Wilson set about the task of recruiting his Legion up to full strength and obtaining supplies and clothing for it. He soon found himself with many more recruits than he could clothe. By December 1808 only 700 of the 1st Battalion was well enough equipped to move; the rest being left behind under Baron Eben to await the clothing. A company of artillery was complete however the plans for a cavalry unit had been put on hold.

Most, but not all, of the officers were to be British. Captain Lillie was one of the first officers of the LLL with his commission dating from 17 December 1808. There is a painting in the National Army Museum, London titled **Major John Scott Lillie (1790 – 1868), 7th Caçadores Battalion**. This painting is thought to have been painted in celebration of Lillie's marriage in 1820. However, many of the honours and awards he wears were added later: he was awarded the CB in 1831 and the Military General Service Medal was not issued until 1848. He later rose to the rank of Lieutenant – Colonel.

For more information on this painting see: [Major \(later Lieutenant-Colonel\) Sir John Scott Lillie, Loyal Lusitanian Legion and 7th Cacadores, 1820](#)

The below illustrations of the uniforms worn by the LLL are published by Osprey Publishing, in their Men-at-Arms series, [The Portuguese Army of the Napoleonic Wars \(2\)](#) by René Chartrand and Bill Younghusband. The images below are used with permission of Osprey Publishing.

For more information on the LLL see my article [Loyal Lusitanian Legion](#)

¹ (WO 6/164) per Rene Chartrand

Uniforms of the Loyal Lusitanian Legion



Fusilier, LLL 1808-11

The Legion's infantry wore a green coat with green collar, pointed cuffs and shoulder straps, and three rows of pewter buttons in front; white lace edged the collar, cuffs, front, turnbacks and shoulder straps, and the latter had white fringes. Green pantaloons were worn in winter and white in summer. The shako had a brass oval plate and a pointed lower band bearing a triple 'L'; a green plume rose from the national cockade in front. The chasseurs were armed with British muskets, most likely of the India Pattern, except for 120 riflemen who had rifles – surely Bakers – with black rifle accoutrements. The artillery had black collars and cuffs. The light cavalry was to have green facings with white collars and cuffs.²



Fusilier, 2nd Battalion, LLL 1809-10

This figure is based on an inspection report of January 1810 which found the battalion deficient in many respects. The men were said to be 'in different kinds of clothing ... some green, grey & mostly worn out', with white summer trousers. This indicates that some of the grey jackets sent to Portugal in 1809 were issued to the Legion. The accoutrements were 'Portuguese large pouches' with 'black belts'; the arms were British, and serviceable in both battalions.³

² Museu Militar do Porto; PRO, WO 6/172) per René Chartrand.

³ PRO, WO 1/244) per René Chartrand.

In 1811 the Loyal Lusitanian Legion was disbanded so that its officers and men could be used to form the 7th, 8th and 9th Caçadores battalions. Normally the Caçadores wore brown uniforms. However, it was documented that, at least initially, the ex-LLL soldiers retained their green jackets, worn now over brown breeches.

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