

Redcoats Against Napoleon: The 30th Regiment During the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars

Carole Divall



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Military histories of the struggle against the French armies of the Revolution and Napoleon often focus on the exploits of elite units and famous individuals, ignoring the essential contribution made by the ordinary soldiers – the bulk of the British army. Carole Divall, in this graphic and painstakingly researched account, tells the story of one such hitherto ignored group of fighting men, the 30th Regiment of the Line. She takes their story from one of the opening clashes of the long war, the Siege of Toulon in 1793, to the decisive Battle of Waterloo in 1815. She gives us a fresh perspective on key events the men took part in – Massena's retreat from the Lines of Torres Vedras, the bloody storming of Badajoz, the retreat from Burgos, the ordeal of the troops holding the centre of Wellington's Waterloo position. The regiment's history – which she describes using some hitherto unpublished and vivid memoirs left by the men themselves and those they fought alongside – offers a fascinating insight into the life of British soldiers two centuries ago.

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