

Wellington's Wars: The Making of a Military Genius  
by Huw J.Davies.  
Yale University Press, 2012.

The Iron Duke, one of the greatest of the heroes in our national pantheon, and an enduring object of fascination to me for many years, continues to be a source of study and analysis almost 200 years after his greatest triumph.

In Wellington's Wars, Huw Davies, lecturer in defence studies at King's College London and the Joint Services Command and Staff College, investigates over the course of nine chapters and a conclusion the transformation of Arthur Wellesley from a panicky and tearful 29 year old lieutenant-colonel in India to the Duke of Wellington who defeated Napoleon at Waterloo.

Davies makes a compelling case for the fact that Wellington learned his trade the hard way, his judgement both military and political being far from perfect, but that with a combination of a forceful and determined character, an ever shrewder tactical eye, and a strong self-belief he brought everything that he had learned from the defeats of Tipoo Sultan and Dhoondiah Vagh, as well as the Maratha Wars, to bear on chasing the French from the Spanish and Portuguese Peninsular (probably the most enthralling of his campaigns), liberating France and finally defeating the little Emperor at Waterloo.

Wellington's Wars is replete with detail, has an excellent bibliography and should be a must-read book for anyone interested in the Duke of Wellington, the Napoleonic Wars, or the shaping of British military doctrine and practice in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

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