



APSLEY HOUSE

PENINSULAR WAR TOUR SHEET

Wellington and the Peninsular War

The victory of the armies of Portugal, Britain and Spain, led by Arthur Wellesley, over Napoleon's forces in the Peninsular War (1808-1814) led to his creation as first Duke of Wellington in 1814. The Peninsular War, part of the Napoleonic wars, was fought in the Iberian Peninsula – Portugal and Spain – against French troops. The war began when Napoleon agreed with Spain that he would occupy Portugal to close it off to British trade and ended when Wellington's men captured Toulouse in southern France, followed by Napoleon's abdication.



Sir Thomas Lawrence: Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington, c.1815

Wellington's successful military career had begun in India, but his role in the Peninsular War saw him become established as the most important military figure in the British Army. He took command of the allied forces, becoming Marshal-General of the

Portuguese Army in 1809, and assuming overall command of the Spanish armies in 1812. Although Napoleon himself only remained in Spain for two months in 1809, Wellington's opponents included some of Napoleon's best generals, including Marshals Ney and Soult.

In 1814, Wellington and his family lived in rented accommodation round the corner from Apsley House, in Hamilton Place. They only moved into Apsley House in 1817, when the Duke bought the house from his brother, Richard, Marquess Wellesley. The collection here contains many works of art that were given to Wellington during, or

immediately after, the Peninsular War, reflecting his important role in defeating the French. This tour sheet looks at some of the objects associated with Wellington and the Peninsular War.

TIMELINE

October: Treaty of Fontainebleau – France and Spain agree to invade Portugal

November: French forces occupy Lisbon

February: French troops seize Pamplona and Barcelona

March: King Carlos IV of Spain abdicates in favour of his son, Ferdinand VII.

May: Insurrection breaks out in Spain, following news that Ferdinand VII is to be replaced by Napoleon's brother, Joseph Bonaparte, signalling the start of 'La Guerra de la Independencia' (the Peninsular War)

July: Joseph Bonaparte arrives in Spain; French defeated at Bailén

August: Wellington's forces land in Portugal; Battles of Rolica and Vimeiro; French evacuated from Portugal following Convention of Sintra

December: French retake Madrid led by Napoleon himself

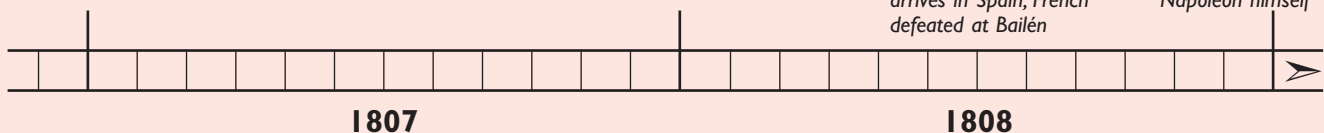


PLATE AND CHINA ROOM

Scenes from locations and battles in the Peninsular War are painted on plates in the porcelain dessert services round the room. Walking clockwise:

Prussian Service (Berlin or KPM porcelain)

The service was commissioned by King Frederick William III of Prussia in 1816 and presented to Wellington in 1819.

❶ Plate showing Port of Lisbon (left hand wall, 2nd window, 2nd row from bottom, 2nd plate)

❷ Vase with battle of Vitoria (left hand wall, 3rd window, bottom row)



❸ Tureen showing the battle of Rolica (left hand wall, end case, bottom shelf, back of right hand tureen)



❹ Tureen with a scene from the battle of Vimeiro (left hand wall, end case bottom shelf, front of right hand tureen)

❺ Tureen with battle of Orthez (left hand wall, end case, upper section, right hand side)



❻ Ice-cooler with assault of Ciudad Rodrigo (left hand wall, end case, lower section, left hand side)



❼ Ice-cooler with battle of Salamanca (left hand wall, end case, upper section, left hand side).



TIMELINE

January: British forces evacuated from La Coruña and their commander, Sir John Moore is killed

February: Major-General Beresford appointed commander of Portuguese army

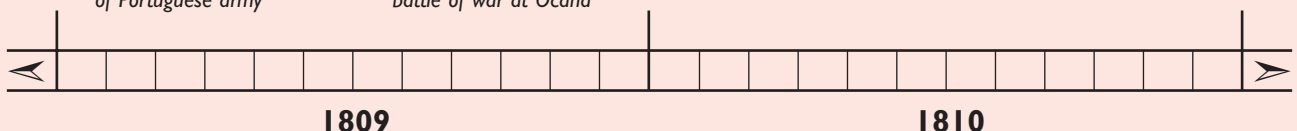
May: Battle of Oporto, Wellington defeats French Marshal Soult

July: Battle of Talavera – French forces defeated but Wellington's forces withdraw

November: Spanish army defeated in biggest battle of war at Ocaña

January: French conquer Andalucía

September: Battle of Buçaco – French forces under Massena repulsed



Saxon service (Meissen porcelain)

This service was commissioned by the King of Saxony, Frederick Augustus IV in 1818 and presented to the Duke of Wellington in 1820.

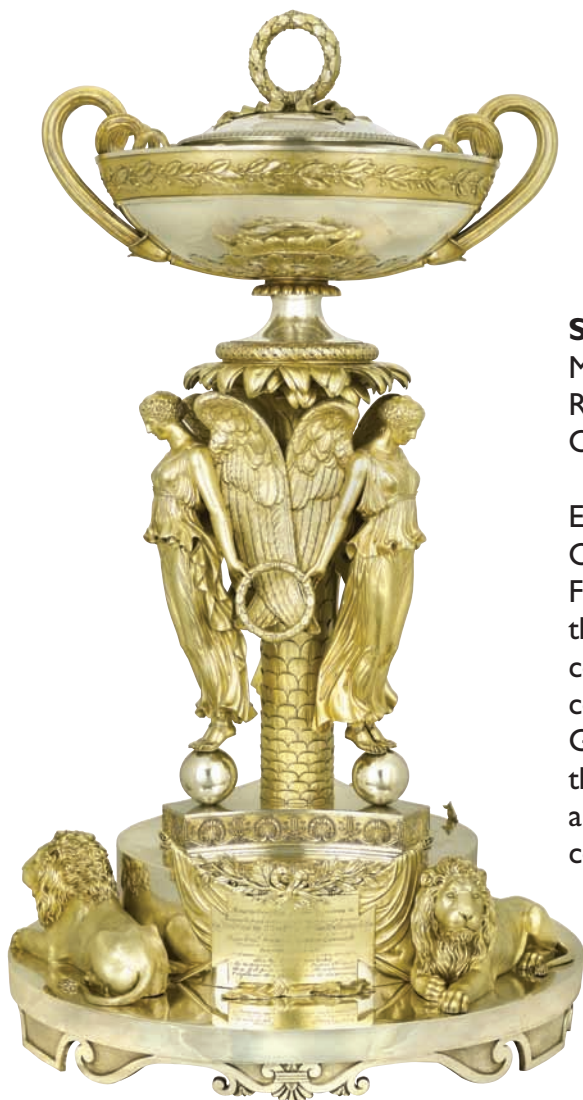
- ❶ Plate with Battle of Vimeiro (4th shelf, 1st plate)
- ❷ Plate with view of Salamanca (fifth shelf, 2nd plate)



❸ Battle of Talavera (4th shelf, 3rd plate)



❹ Battle of Albuera (top row, 6th plate)



Silver and silver-gilt centrepiece

Made by Paul Storr, 1810-11 for Rundell, Bridge & Rundell, presented to the Duke of Wellington by Field Officers of Peninsular Army.

Engraved with the inscription: 'From the General Officers serving in the British Army originally landed at Figuera (sic) in Portugal in the Year 1808. To Lieut-Genl the Rt. Honble Sir Arthur Wellesley K.B. etc their commander// Major-General Spencer second in command// Major Generals Hill & Ferguson, Brigadier Generals// Nightingale, Bowes, Fane & Crauford offer this Gift to their leader In testimony of the high Respect and Esteem they feel for him as a man & the unbounded confidence they place in him as an officer'.

TIMELINE

March: Battle of Barrosa – British forces under General Graham victorious

May: Battles of Fuentes de Oñoro and Albuera – Beresford victorious

January: Ciudad Rodrigo (important border fortress) falls to British troops

April: Badajoz (important border fortress) falls to British troops

July: Battle of Salamanca

August: Wellington enters Madrid, but withdraws early September

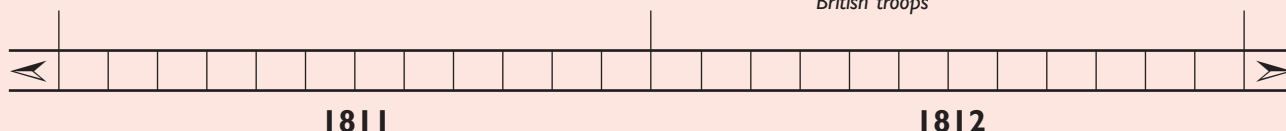


PLATE AND CHINA ROOM (cont.)

Wellington Shield

The silver-gilt Wellington Shield was designed by the artist Thomas Stothard, R.A. (1755-1834). In the centre is the figure of the Duke of Wellington, crowned by Victory. Around the sides of the shield are 10 rectangular cartouches, 8 of which show scenes from the Peninsular War. These are inscribed: (running anti-clockwise from bottom)

- *The Battle of Vimiero [sic] August 21 AD 1808*
- *Passage of the Douro Oporto liberated 1809*
- *The Line of Torres Vedras March 6 1811*
- *Badajoz assaulted and taken April 6 1812*
- *The Battle of Salamanca July 22 1812*
- *The Battle of Vittoria gained June 21 AD 1813*
- *Battle of the Pyrenees Bourdeaux deliverd*
- *The Entrance into Toulouse April 12 1814*
- *Dukedom of Wellington conferred AD 1814*



Drawing by Thomas Stothard, 1814, for the Passage of the Douro cartouche of the Wellington Shield (third from bottom, anti-clockwise). The original drawing is close to the finished design except that Wellington wears a hat in the sketch.

The shield is displayed in the original case designed for the Duke, which has a turning mechanism so that it can be rotated and all the scenes can be inspected equally.



Candelabra

On either side of the Wellington Shield sit two candelabra, which were made by Benjamin Smith in 1816. The left-hand candelabra is supported by figures of an Indian soldier (sepoy), a Portuguese soldier (left) and a Spanish guerrilla (right)



TIMELINE

June: Battle of Vitoria

July: Battles of the Pyrenees

August: Fall of San Sebastian to Allies

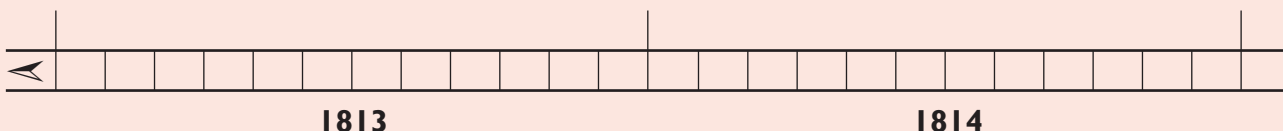
October: Allies take Pamplona and Wellington invades France

December: Battles on the Nive

February: Battle of Orthez

March: King Ferdinand VII of Spain re-enters Spain

April: Battle of Toulouse, Napoleon abdicates and the Peninsular War ends



STAIRWELL

Portrait of King John VI of Portugal

Portuguese School, c.1822

John VI only became king of Portugal in 1816, but he was already Regent when he fled to Brazil in October 1807, following the French invasion of Lisbon. During his absence, Portugal was run by a Regency Council, to which the 1st Duke of Wellington was

appointed in August 1810. The royal arms of Portugal are embroidered on the tablecloth on the right. King John returned to Portugal in 1822.



PORTICO ROOM

Portrait of Marshal Nicolas Jean-de-Dieu Soult (1769-1852)

George Healy, 1840

Marshal Soult commanded the French armies in the Peninsular War from 1808-13 and made an important collection of Spanish paintings. He represented France at the coronation of Queen Victoria in 1838, when he was the guest of the 1st Duke of Wellington. After the war, Soult showed his collection of works of art to Colonel Gurwood, editor of the Wellington dispatches. Gurwood noted that Soult stopped in front of a painting and said: 'I value that picture very much; it saved the lives of two estimable men'. An aide-de-camp whispered to Gurwood: 'He threatened to have them both shot if they did not send him their painting'.



WATERLOO GALLERY

Many of the paintings on view at Apsley House were part of the 'Spanish Gift' of works of art, given to the 1st Duke of Wellington by King Ferdinand VII of Spain in 1816. When the Duke of Wellington defeated Joseph Bonaparte at Vitoria in June 1813 and captured his baggage train, he discovered cases of looted paintings from Spanish royal palaces, which he sent home for inspection. The white inventory numbers on some of the pictures can be traced to specific rooms in the royal palaces in Madrid and Segovia. For further information see *Catalogue of Paintings in the Wellington Museum, Apsley House* by C.M. Kauffmann revised by Susan Jenkins, 2009.

Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (1746-1828): *Equestrian portrait of the 1st Duke of Wellington (1769-1852)*

Goya painted this portrait of the Duke during the three-week British occupation of Madrid in August 1812. Wellington entered Madrid on 12 August, following his victory over the French at Salamanca on 22nd July and the painting was exhibited in the Royal Academy of San Fernando on 2nd September.

Wellington is depicted wearing civilian dress, his customary battle dress. An X-radiograph of the head area shows that Goya painted over the head of an earlier sitter who was wearing a large curved hat. One theory suggests that the original sitter may have been Joseph Bonaparte!

Goya, who lived in Madrid throughout the war, was commissioned to produce paintings for both sides in the Peninsular War, including pictures of Spanish citizens opposing French invasion at Saragossa in 1808, alongside portraits of the 'intruder' king, Joseph Bonaparte in 1809. In 1814 he painted his two famous canvases of the Madrid uprisings against the French – the *Second of May 1808* and the *Third of May 1808* (Prado Museum, Madrid), which depict the horror of the Napoleonic invasion.

Correggio (?1489-1534):
The Agony in the Garden c.1525

King Philip IV of Spain, the patron of Velázquez, acquired this painting for the Spanish royal collection, and hung it in the royal palace in Madrid, where it is recorded in inventories from 1666 onwards. It was one of the most celebrated works to be captured at the Battle of Vitoria on 21st June 1813. The Duke of Wellington's brother, Lord Maryborough, examined the works sent over from Vitoria and commissioned a list of them to be sent back to Spain. In February 1814, he wrote to tell Wellington that Benjamin West, President of the Royal Academy, 'Said that the Corregio (*sic*) and the Julio Romano ought to be framed in diamonds, and that it was worth fighting the battle for them'.

Velázquez:
The Waterseller of Seville, c.1620



In 1813, William Segulier (a Huguenot picture restorer and adviser to Wellington, who became the first Keeper of the National Gallery) made a list of the paintings that had been captured at Vitoria and he mis-attributed

The Waterseller, to Caravaggio. The work of Velázquez was relatively little known in England at that time, but this painting has subsequently been recognised as one of the artist's most outstanding early works.

Reni: Head of St. Joseph;
Italian School: Sainted Nun

These two paintings are distinguished by the fact that they both came from the Palace of La Granja de San Ildefonso in Segovia, and were among twelve works presented to the Duke of Wellington on 15th August 1812, just before he entered Madrid.



STRIPED DRAWING ROOM

Sir Thomas Lawrence:

William Carr, Viscount Beresford, G.C.B. (1768-1854)



Beresford served with distinction at La Coruña and was made commander of the Portuguese army, which he led throughout the Peninsular War. He is shown wearing the uniform of a

Portuguese Field Marshal and the Portuguese Order of the Tower and Sword. Behind him is the Alcantara Aqueduct. The Duke of Wellington commissioned this portrait from Sir Thomas Lawrence.

George Dawe:

General Miguel Ricardo de Alava (1771-1843) 1818



Alava was Wellington's Spanish liaison officer, and it may have been he who introduced the artist Goya to the Duke. He wears the uniform of a Spanish officer and on his chest is the red cross of Santiago. He lived in exile in London at the Duke of Wellington's invitation from 1824-34.

(For the State Dining Room see p. 8)

BASEMENT GALLERY

Joseph Bonaparte's coffee set or 'déjeuner':

This was a travelling coffee set made by the Paris-based porcelain firm of Dihl and Guérhard. It was probably made in 1808 to celebrate the appointment of Napoleon's brother, Joseph, as King of Spain. The circular tray is painted with allegorical figures representing Spain and winged victory. The set was captured by Wellington at the Battle of Vitoria on 21st June 1813 and sent back to England, together with the paintings that were found in Joseph's baggage train, many of which now hang in the Waterloo Gallery. Joseph was known as 'Pepe Botellas' in Spain ('Joe Bottles') in reference to his supposed love of wine. Although he infuriated his brother, Napoleon, through his lack of military ability, Joseph is credited with trying to establish a national art gallery in Madrid and engaging in major works of urban improvement.

Presentation Silver:

Presentation Tray, silver-gilt, presented to the Duke of Wellington in August 1812 following his entry into Madrid after the Battle of Salamanca (silver cabinet, 3d shelf).

Silver Keys of the Cities of Pamplona (1813) and Ciudad Rodrigo (1812)

Orders (10 + 11): Triumphant Collar of Honour and Gold Cross of Triumphant Collar – commemorating victories in the Peninsula. The collar bears the names of Peninsular war battles – Vitoria, Badajoz, Ciudad Rodrigo, Nive, Orthes. Prince George, the Prince Regent commissioned the Collar to commemorate the Peninsular war and drawings were presented to Wellington in 1814. The Collar and Cross themselves, however, were not presented to him until 1825.

Orders (12 + 13): Jewel of the Order of the Golden Fleece and Miniature Jewel, conferred 1st August 1812.

The Order of the Golden Fleece was the most prestigious order of chivalry in Spain, founded in 1430. It was conferred on the Duke of Wellington by the acting government in Spain, the Junta, and this was confirmed by King Ferdinand VII when he was restored to the throne. The Duke of Wellington was the first Protestant recipient of the Order.

THE STATE DINING ROOM

The Portuguese Service Silver centrepiece

This silver and silver-gilt centrepiece was part of the Portuguese service of over 1,000 pieces of silverware commissioned by the Portuguese Regency Council in 1811. The service was designed by the court portraitist Domingos António de Sequeira (1768-1857) and was presented to Wellington in 1816, in

commemoration of his victories over Napoleon in the Peninsular War. Other pieces from the service are on display in the Slip Corridor adjacent to the Dining Room and in the Plate and China Room (ground floor). Drawings for the service survive in the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga in Lisbon.

The silver centrepiece commemorates the battles in the Peninsular War. To follow the sequence of inscriptions (translated from Portuguese) below, proceed to the window end and walk clockwise round the table:

Window end of centrepiece

1 Left hand column: ROLICA. 17 August 1808 (Combat given by English and Portuguese) **TALAVERA.** 27 and 28 July 1809 (Battle won by English and Spanish)

2 Centre plaque: 'The resurgence of Spain and Portugal proclaiming their legitimate sovereigns and throwing off the yoke of Bonaparte in June 1808'.

3 Right hand column: DOURO. 12 May 1809

(Passage made by English and Portuguese). **TOULOUSE.** 10 April 1814 (Battle won by English, Portuguese and Spanish).

Moving clockwise:

4 Central column: BARROZA. 5 March 1811 (Combat given by English, Portuguese and Spanish)

5 Column with female and garland: ARROIO MOLINOS. 28 Oct. 1811 (Surprised by English, Portuguese, Spanish)

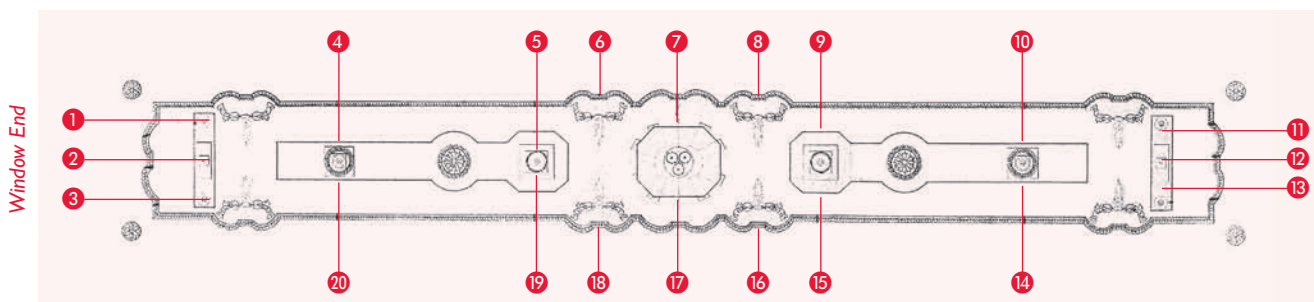
6 'Griffin' plaque: CIUDAD RODRIGO. 19 June 1812 (Taken by assault by English and Portuguese)

7 Centrepiece with continents: 'By order of his royal Highness and Prince Regent of Portugal to Grand Duque de Victoria the governors of the realm in memory of glorious triumphs in the Peninsular War – armies of Portugal, England and Spain at his command 1808-1814.'

8 'Griffin' plaque: BADAJOZ. 6 April 1812 (Taken by assault by English and Portuguese)

9 Column with female and garland: S. SEBASTIAO. 31 August 1813 (Taken by assault by English and Portuguese)

10 Central column: S. MARCAL E STO ATO. 31 August 1813 (Combat given by Portuguese, English and Spanish)



Sideboard end of centrepiece

11 Right hand: NIVE. 9-13 December 1813 (Combat by Portuguese and English). **BORDEAUX.** 12 March 1814 (Entry of Portuguese and English)

12 Centre plaque: 'Entry of the Allies of the North into Paris, deposition of Buonaparte, restoration of Louis XVIII on the throne of France and general peace April 1814'.

13 left hand: ORTHEZ. 27 February 1814 (Battle won by Portuguese and English). **VIMEIRO.** 21 August 1808 (Battle won by Portuguese and English)

14 Central column: PIRINEOS. 25 July – 2 August (Successive combat given by English Portuguese and Spanish)

15 Column with female and garland: VICTORIA. 21 July [it was June] 1813 (Battle won by English, Portuguese and Spanish).

16 'Griffin' plaque: SALAMANCA. 22 April 1812 (Battle won by English, Portuguese and Spanish)

17 Centrepiece with continents: 'By order of his royal Highness and Prince Regent of Portugal to Grand Duque de Victoria the governors of the realm in memory of glorious triumphs in the Peninsular War – armies of Portugal, England and Spain at his command 1808-1814.'

18 'Griffin' plaque: MADRID. 12 August 1812 (Entry by Portuguese and English)

19 Column with female and garland: ALBOHERA. 16 May 1811 (Battle won by Portuguese, English and Spanish).

20 Central column: BUSSACO. 27 September 1810 (Battle won by English and Portuguese).

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