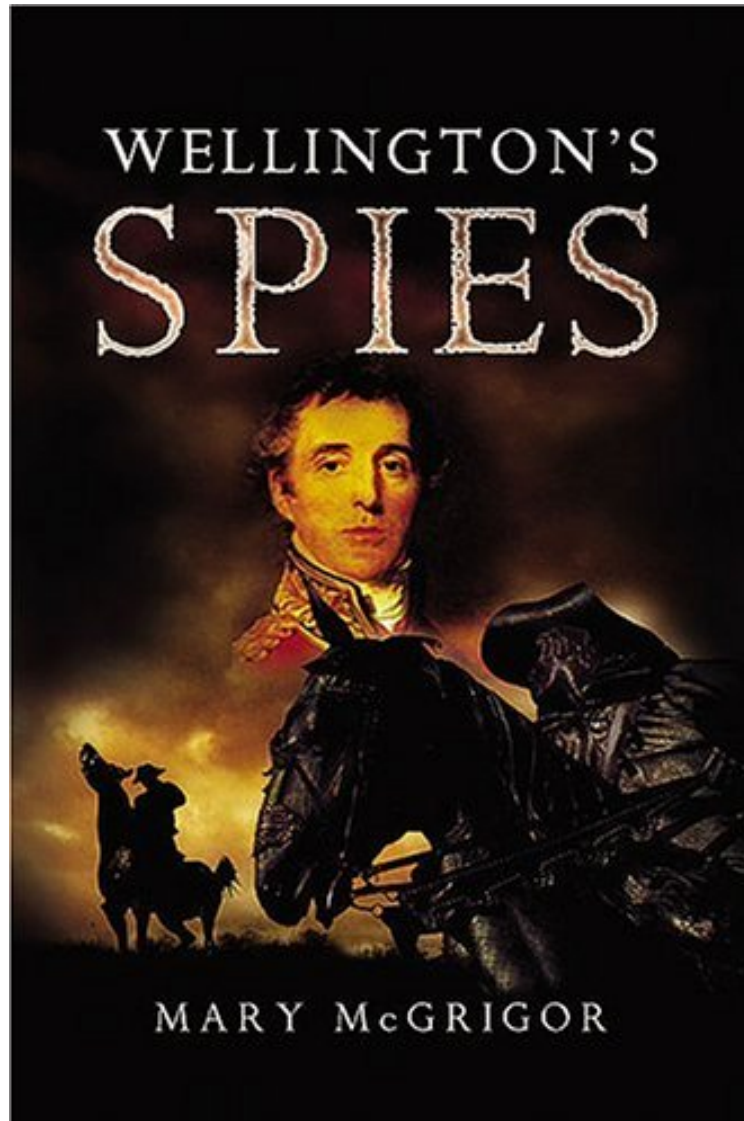


(Mobile book) Wellington's Spies

Wellington's Spies

Mary McGrigor

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Mary McGrigor : Wellington's Spies before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Wellington's Spies:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. For Peninsular BuffsBy CustomerThis is a very informative book on the little known spies for Wellington during the Peninsular War in Portugal and Spain, especially the more famous three; Andrew Leith-Hay, Colquhoun Grant and Edward Cocks. Each of them have interesting backgrounds and family histories. It is detailed with contemporary sketches detailing many battle sites before the battles, paintings of the more famous military men of the day, including Napoleon, but I could have done without the four pages of paintings that

Leith-Hay saw in the Museo de Prado. I very much enjoyed the backgrounds of those men, for it made them seem more human, rather than just dry descriptions of what they accomplished. The book focused not only on the British and French combatants, but the local people and the guerillas, rather than an all-around discussion of where battles were fought, who fought them, but why they were fought where they were, who won and why, how each side treated the local people. I especially liked reading the letters sent home to their families by these men, but also the British reactions to those men and those battles. I wish I was able to find a book reflecting the French side of spying. It's one of those books I will read more than once.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Requiem for three spies....By HMS Warspite

Mary McGrigor's "Wellington Spies" is an interesting addition to the literature on the Peninsular War of 1809-1814. The Duke of Wellington's survival and success against larger French Imperial Armies in Portugal and Spain was due in significant degree to his skill in gathering intelligence on his enemies. McGrigor has mined the surviving papers of three of his most successful spies for first-hand accounts. The three men, Colquhoun Grant, Charles Cocks, and Andrew Leith-Hay, were Scottish officers on active service with Wellington's Army. They were bold, resourceful, and observant men who regularly traveled behind French lines to bring Wellington valuable information on French units and their intentions. As McGrigor brings out, their exploits were colorful but the work was highly dangerous. Cocks was killed in action. Grant and Leith-Hay were captured by the French while on missions. McGrigor has selected a series of excerpts from the papers of the three men, which provide the reader with a good sense of their often detailed observations on the campaigns of the Peninsular War. McGrigor stitches the selections together with a running narrative of the war, providing some context for their espionage. McGrigor's connecting narrative on the Peninsular War is neither original nor sometimes very precise. As an example, she manages to describe the retreat of the 7th Division under fire during the second day of the Battle of Fuentes de Onoro without mentioning the legendary covering action by the Light Division that made their escape possible. McGrigor makes no systematic evaluation of the value of the information collected by the three spies, nor of the contributions of Wellington's networks of correspondents and guerillas in Spain. Within its limitations, "Wellington's Spies" is a very approachable popular history for the general reader. It also provides enough insight on Wellington's intelligence gathering to be recommended as a book of interest to the dedicated student of the Peninsular War.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I am so happy it exists

By Julia Massie I am still using this book for research but it appears to have the information I want. I am so happy it exists.

Intelligence was just as important in the Napoleonic Wars as it is today. Then there was only one way of obtaining it – by spies and informers. The Author uses first-hand accounts of three of Wellington's most daring and successful Intelligence Officers. The three men, all of Scottish descent, were very different in character. One was killed in action and another taken prisoner and after narrowly avoiding summary execution made a dramatic escape. There is a romantic angle too. Their stories skillfully interwoven against the backdrop of the brutal Peninsula War where atrocities were common place. This book gives a fresh insight into Wellington's remarkable triumph over Napoleon's armies.

About the Author Mary McGrigor is a highly experienced author and historian. *Defiant and Dismasted at Trafalgar* was published by Pen and Sword in 2004. Her other books include *Argyll - Land of Blood and Beauty* and *The Scalpel and The Sword*.