

Fighting for Napoleon : French Soldiers' Letters 1799-1815

Bernard Wilkin, Rene Wilkin



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The French side of the Napoleonic Wars is often seen from a strategic point of view, or in terms of military organization and battlefield tactics, or through officers' memoirs. It is rarely seen from the perspective of the lowest ranks of the army, and the experience of the ordinary soldiers is less well known and is often misunderstood. That is why this account, based on more than 1,600 letters written by French soldiers of the Napoleonic armies, is of such value. It adds to the existing literature by exploring every aspect of the life of a French soldier during the period 1799-1815.

The book will be fascinating and informative reading for military and cultural historians, but it will also appeal to anyone who is interested in the war experience of common soldiers. It offers the English-speaking audience a French view of a conflict which is too often limited to the traditional memoirs of Captain Coignet, Colonel Marbot or Sergeant Bourgogne.



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