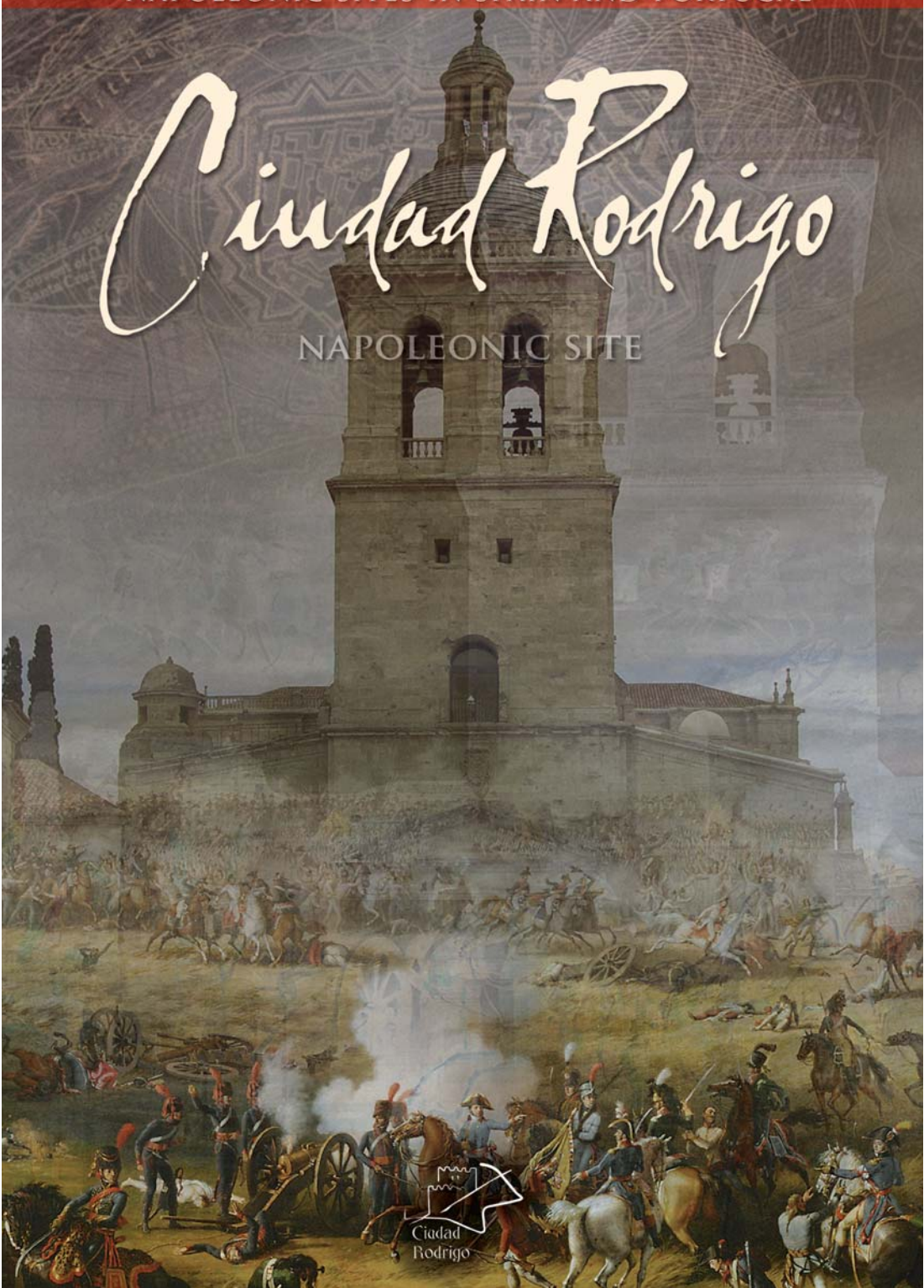


NAPOLEONIC SITES IN SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

Ciudad Rodrigo

NAPOLEONIC SITE



CIUDAD RODRIGO

Ciudad Rodrigo, a fortress situated on the road that leads to Portugal crossing the Spanish province of Salamanca, endured two sieges during the Peninsular War. The first, in 1810, was carried out by a French army sent by Napoleon to invade Portugal. The second, in 1812, took place when the allied force commanded by Lord Wellington counter-attacked and marched towards the heart of Spain.

For today's traveller, the ancient fortified city of Ciudad Rodrigo is a fascinating place which allows us to relive the epic history of the Napoleonic Wars.



CIUDAD RODRIGO AND HERRASTI



General Andrés Pérez de Herrasti was the governor of the fortress when Napoleon's troops arrived before the walls of Ciudad Rodrigo in 1810. On 10th July that year, the fortress capitulated after enduring a terrible siege and keep up a heroic defence. The sacrifice of the Spanish troops was not in vain; the Imperial French army lost precious time whilst engaged in the siege operations, which allowed Wellington and his army

—composed of British, German and Portuguese soldiers—to complete his strategy for the defence of Portugal and repulse an invasion which, if it had been successful, would have made the Iberian Peninsula another trophy for Napoleon. After these events Ciudad Rodrigo became part of Napoleonic folklore.



Fusilier of the Regiment Provincial de Segovia



The British army crossing the river Águeda during the 1808 campaign.

CIUDAD RODRIGO AND THE MARSHALS

Two of the main characters of the Napoleonic Empire, Marshals Masséna and Ney, had to endure great difficulties before finally being able to force the capitulation of Ciudad Rodrigo in 1810. Nobody expected a small city on the border between Spain and Portugal to be able to fiercely resist the soldiers who had previously defeated Austria, Russia and Prussia.

Nevertheless, the French victory caused the name 'Ciudad Rodrigo' to be engraved for ever on the *Arc de Triomphe* in Paris, in the heart of a Napoleonic world which continues to fascinate us and remind us of the times when the thunderous fire of cannons, massive cavalry charges and disciplined advances of the infantry decided the destiny of Europe.



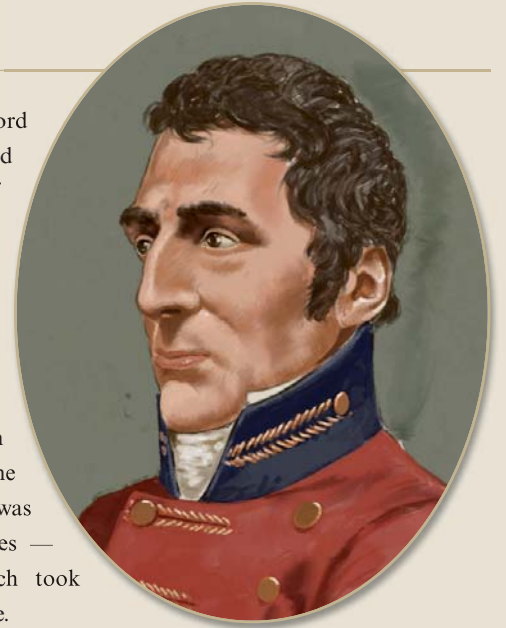
■ Marshal Masséna (above) and Marshal Ney (below).

THE DUKE OF CIUDAD RODRIGO

Traveller! Did you know that Lord Wellington, the general who defeated Napoleon at Waterloo, held the title of Duke of Ciudad Rodrigo?

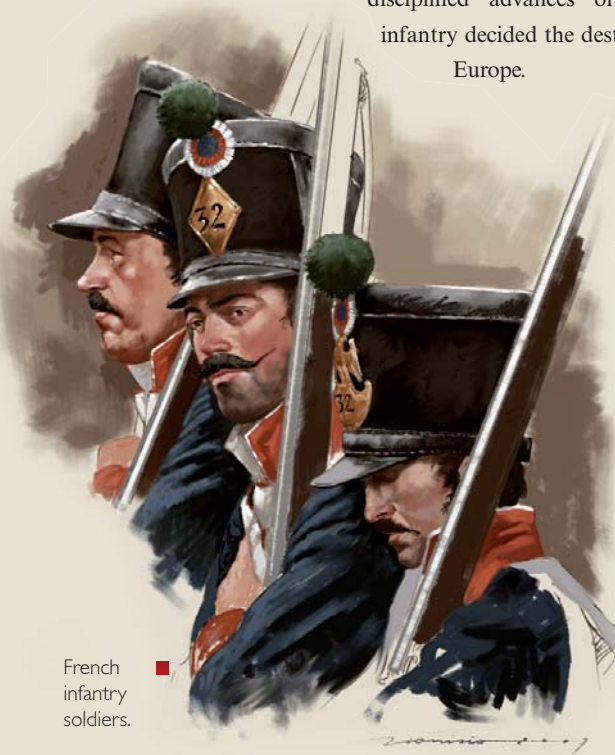
On the night of the 19th January 1812, British, German and Portuguese troops commanded by Wellington assaulted the two breaches which had been opened in the walls and, after a fierce fight against the French garrison commanded by General Barrié, the fortress surrendered to the Allies. This was the beginning of a series of victories — Badajoz, Salamanca, Vitoria— which took Wellington's army to the gates of France.

Two of the most acclaimed British generals perished at the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo: Robert Craufurd and Henry Mackinnon. Craufurd is supposedly buried in the ditch of the fortress and Mackinnon corpse was carried by a party to the village of Espeja, his remains being followed by his brother officers of the Coldstream Guards.

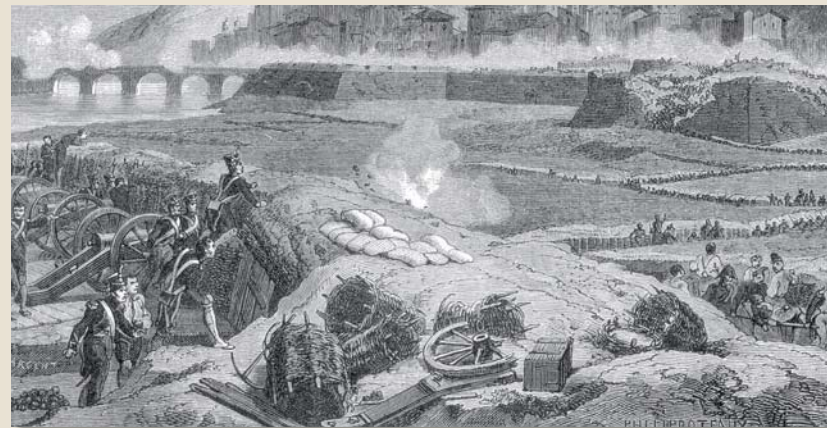


■ Lord Wellington.

■ British infantry soldiers.



■ French infantry soldiers.



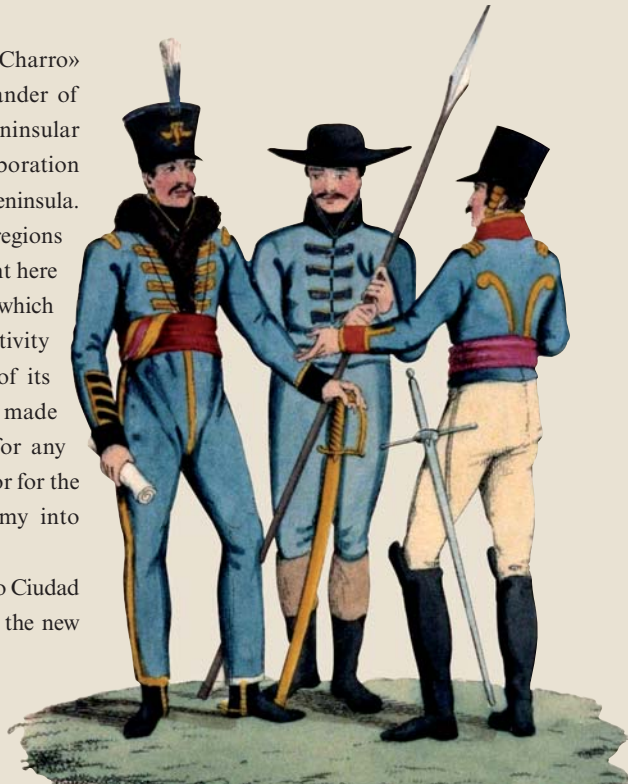
DON JULIÁN VERSUS NAPOLEON



The Regiment Lancers of Castile. ■

Don Julián Sánchez «el Charro» was a military commander of great renown during the Peninsular War due to his close collaboration with the British army in the Peninsula. Don Julián was born in the regions of Ciudad Rodrigo. He fought here also. It was an area in Spain which saw constant military activity during the conflict because of its geographical position. This made the city the obvious route for any French invasion of Portugal or for the advance of Wellington's army into Spain.

In 1808, Julián Sánchez went to Ciudad Rodrigo to join the ranks of the new



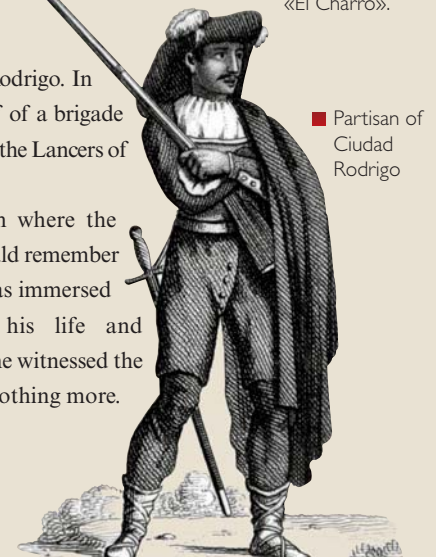
■ Medal awarded to the defenders of Ciudad Rodrigo in 1810.



■ The Brigadier Don Julián Sánchez «El Charro».

Cavalry Regiment Volunteers of Ciudad Rodrigo. In 1811 he was promoted commander in chief of a brigade which was composed of the 1st Regiment of the Lancers of Castile and two infantry battalions.

When you stand before the mausoleum where the mortal remains of Don Julián lie, you should remember you are before the grave of a man who was immersed in tragic events which determined his life and immortalized his name. At the same time he witnessed the ruin of his country. A great soldier asks nothing more.



■ Partisan of Ciudad Rodrigo

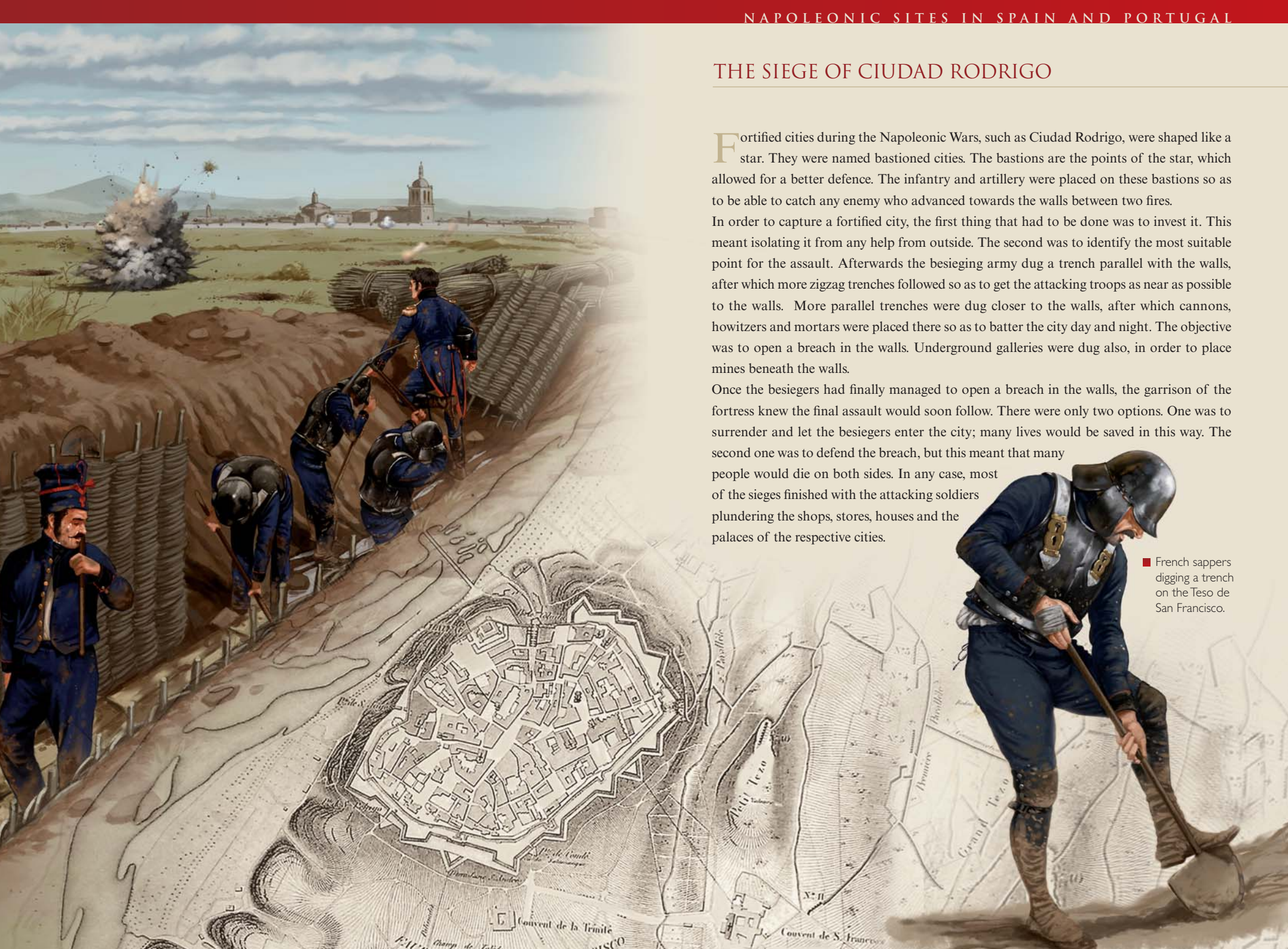
THE SIEGE OF CIUDAD RODRIGO

Fortified cities during the Napoleonic Wars, such as Ciudad Rodrigo, were shaped like a star. They were named bastioned cities. The bastions are the points of the star, which allowed for a better defence. The infantry and artillery were placed on these bastions so as to be able to catch any enemy who advanced towards the walls between two fires.

In order to capture a fortified city, the first thing that had to be done was to invest it. This meant isolating it from any help from outside. The second was to identify the most suitable point for the assault. Afterwards the besieging army dug a trench parallel with the walls, after which more zigzag trenches followed so as to get the attacking troops as near as possible to the walls. More parallel trenches were dug closer to the walls, after which cannons, howitzers and mortars were placed there so as to batter the city day and night. The objective was to open a breach in the walls. Underground galleries were dug also, in order to place mines beneath the walls.

Once the besiegers had finally managed to open a breach in the walls, the garrison of the fortress knew the final assault would soon follow. There were only two options. One was to surrender and let the besiegers enter the city; many lives would be saved in this way. The second one was to defend the breach, but this meant that many people would die on both sides. In any case, most of the sieges finished with the attacking soldiers plundering the shops, stores, houses and the palaces of the respective cities.

■ French sappers digging a trench on the Teso de San Francisco.



THE SIEGES OF CIUDAD RODRIGO ROUTE



■ Aerial view of the bastioned city of Ciudad Rodrigo.



- 1 Avenida de Portugal
- 2 Avenida de Salamanca
- 3 Avenida de España
- 4 Avenida de Yrramendi
- 5 Avenida de Sefarad
- 6 Ronda de San Pelayo
- 7 Avenida de la Concha
- 8 Cuesta de Santiago
- 9 C. Juan Arias
- 10 General Pando Diez Taravilla
- 11 C. La Colada
- 12 Cardenal Pacheco
- 13 Julián Sánchez
- 14 C. La Peña
- 15 C. San Vicente
- 16 C. Estacadilla
- 17 C. del Almendro
- 18 C. Toro
- 19 C. Madrid
- 20 Sepulcro
- 21 Campofrío
- 22 San Juan
- 23 C. Colegios
- 24 Diego Centeno
- 25 Rúa del Sol
- 26 C. del Arco
- 27 C. Templo
- 28 Plaza del Castillo
- 29 Plaza de Dámaso Ledesma
- 30 Plaza Mayor
- 31 Plaza de Cristóbal Castillejo
- 32 Campo del Pozo
- 33 Plaza del Buen Alcalde
- 34 Plaza de Amayuelas
- 35 Plaza de San Salvador
- 36 Plaza de Mazarrosa
- 37 Plaza del Conde

- 1 Herrasti Square
- 2 Tower of the Cathedral
- 3 Julián Sánchez «el Charro» Mausoleum
- 4 Great Breach
- 5 Lesser Breach
- 6 Ditches
- 7 Convent of San Francisco
- 8 Teso de San Francisco (Great Crest)
- 9 Castle of Enrique II of Trastámara
- 10 Bridge
- 11 Glacis
- 12 Monastery of Nuestra Señora de la Caridad



■ Herrasti Square



■ Plaza Mayor (Main Square)



THE SIEGES OF CIUDAD RODRIGO ROUTE



1

Herrasti Square

In the centre of this emblematic square you will find the monument devoted to the Spanish units which defended Ciudad Rodrigo during the siege of 1810.



2

Tower of the Cathedral

Even today the tower retains signs of the impact of some of the thousands of cannon balls fired at the city during both sieges.



3

Julián Sánchez «el Charro» Mausoleum

The remains of the Spanish commander, Julián Sánchez, lie here. Sánchez was one of the most dogged adversaries for the French in the Peninsula.



4

Ramparts - Great Breach

On the ramparts in front of the tower of the Cathedral, you will see two plaques commemorating the sieges. The Great Breach was opened here. The British General, Henry Mackinnon died on this spot following the explosion of a mine.



5

Lesser Breach

The British General, Robert Craufurd, was mortally wounded on this spot during the siege of 1812, whilst leading the Light Division. You can see a plaque devoted to him and his troops on the wall.



6

Ditches

If you get into the ditches, you will realize how a fortified city was built and see the damage caused in the walls in the area where the Great Breach was opened.

Convent of San Francisco

There are only a few ruins remaining. This building was extremely damaged during the sieges. From here a short walk takes you to the Great Crest.



7

Teso de San Francisco (Great Crest)

If you climb up to the top of this prominence dominating the bastioned city, you will have the point of view of the besiegers and be able to see the remains of the assault trenches.



8

Castle of Enrique II of Trastámara

Although it had no role in the defence of Ciudad Rodrigo during the Napoleonic Wars, the Castle and the Cathedral, with their thick walls, provided a good refuge and an ideal place for storing powder.



9

Bridge

One of the final attacks during the siege of 1812 was carried out across this bridge with the aim of getting into the ditches and advancing to the Great Breach.



10

Glacis

The slope which protects the walls and finishes at the edge of the ditches is called a glacis. Walking along it affords the visitor splendid views of the city. At the same time you can imagine the difficulties faced by the attacking troops.



11

Monastery of Nuestra Señora de la Caridad

This was Marshal Ney's headquarter during the siege of 1810. It is situated close to the village of Sanjuanejo, four kilometres away from Ciudad Rodrigo.



12

OTHER NAPOLEONIC SITES

■ Tamames

Battle: 18 October 1809.

The VI Corps commanded by the French general, Marchand, was defeated by here by the Spanish army commanded by the Duque del Parque.



■ Alba de Tormes

Battle: 28 November 1809.

The Duque del Parque was defeated here by the cavalry of the army commanded by the French general, Kellermann.



■ Puerto Seguro

Combat of Barba del Puerco: 19-20 March 1810.

The French general of brigade, Ferey, was defeated here when he attacked the advanced posts of the British Light Division at Barba del Puerco.

■ Villar de Argañán

Combat of Villar del Puerco: 10 July 1810.

A unit of French infantry, having formed square, repelled an attack by German and British cavalry, largely thanks to the courage displayed by Captain Gouache and Sergeant Patois of the 22nd Line.

■ Real Fuerte de la Concepción

During the first siege of Ciudad Rodrigo Craufurd's Light Division was stationed here. It was later abandoned and its defensive key points blown up and turned into the headquarters for the French during the siege of the Portuguese city of Almeida.



■ Almeida

Siege: 25 July-27 August 1810.

Here, close to the Pousada, you will see the grave of a British officer, John Beresford. He fell during the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo in 1812.

■ Fuentes de Oñoro

Battle: 3-5 May 1811.

The French Marshal Masséna was defeated here by Wellington's allied army. You can see a commemorative plaque by the church.

■ El Bodón

Combat: 25 September 1811.

This is a singular combat. The British infantry attacked the French cavalry and forced it to retreat.

■ Fuenteguinaldo and Freineda

These are Wellington's headquarters situated on both sides of the frontier.

■ Espeja

British general, Henry Mackinnon, was buried here after he fell at the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo.

■ Salamanca - Arapiles

Battle: 22 July 1812.

The great allied victory over Marshal's Marmont army.

There is an interpretative centre open on Saturdays between 10.30 and 14.00. Further information: +34 615 537 288.

■ Garcihernández

Combat: 23 July 1812.

One of the most famous cavalry charges of the Napoleonic Wars. A German cavalry unit serving in the British army broke the French infantry squares which were retreating after the defeat at Salamanca.

Information:

Interpretative Centres of Ciudad Rodrigo and Real Fuerte de la Concepción: + 34 902 910 009.

Interpretative Centre of the Battle of Salamanca: +34 615 537 288.

Military Museum at Almeida: +351 271 570 020.

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