



On Waterloo: Clausewitz, Wellington, and the Campaign of 1815

Carl von Clausewitz, Arthur Wellesley 1st Duke of Wellington

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This book at last makes available a penetrating exchange between two of history's most famous soldiers concerning the dramatic events of the Waterloo campaign of 1815. The Duke of Wellington is considered one of the greatest military commanders in British history; General Carl von Clausewitz is often seen as the greatest military thinker in the history of Western civilization. Both men were prominent participants in the campaign of 1815. Wellington commanded the Anglo-Allied army, while the much younger Clausewitz was chief-of-staff of the Prussian 3rd Corps. Wellington went on to become prime minister of Great Britain and commander-in-chief-for-life of the British Army. Clausewitz went on to write *Vom Kriege (On War)*, a seminal and still hotly debated treatise on the theory and philosophy of war. Via the works of his disciple, military historian Hans Delbrück, he also became the founder of modern, "scientific" military history.

Despite considerable interest in Clausewitz in Britain and America, Wellington's once-famous response to Clausewitz was largely ignored by historians of Waterloo writing in English after 1914, and no efforts were made to publish a translation of Clausewitz's original campaign study before this project was launched in the 1990s. Hence the importance of this book's examination of the exchange of ideas between these two famous soldiers. It contains Wellington's official 1815 report on the battle of Waterloo; two of Clausewitz's post-battle letters to his wife; previously unpublished correspondence within Wellington's circle discussing Clausewitz's work; a completely new translation of Clausewitz's strategic analysis of the entire campaign (including for the first time the rare maps to which he refers); Wellington's detailed 1842 essay--the *only* serious essay Wellington ever wrote on the subject--responding to Clausewitz's analysis; and analytical essays by prominent experts on Clausewitz, Wellington, and Waterloo. This book makes clear the importance of grasping the views of these two famous participants and will be of great interest to readers wishing to learn more about the Battle of Waterloo, the campaign of 1815, the development of Clausewitz's thinking on war and military history, Clausewitz's evaluation of key command decisions, and Wellington's reactions to Clausewitz's analysis and criticisms.

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