

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910786129203321
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Titolo	Wellington's Operations in the Peninsula 1808-1814 . Volume 1 // Captain Lewis Butler
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Luton, England : , : Andrews UK Ltd., , [2013] ©2013
ISBN	1-78149-087-2
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (436 p.)
Collana	Wellington's Operations in the Peninsula 1808-1814
Disciplina	940.2742
Soggetti	Peninsular War, 1807-1814
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di contenuto	Cover -- Contents -- Front matter -- Half title -- Frontispiece -- Title page -- Copyright page -- Preface -- List of Sketch Maps -- Body matter -- Part I -- Chapter I -- Chapter II -- Chapter III -- Chapter IV -- Chapter V -- Chapter VI -- Part II -- Chapter VII -- Chapter VIII -- Chapter IX -- Chapter X -- Chapter XI -- Part III -- Chapter XII -- Chapter XIII -- Chapter XIV -- Chapter XV -- Chapter XVI -- Chapter XVII -- Chapter XVIII -- Chapter XIX -- Part IV -- Chapter XX -- Chapter XXI.
Sommario/riassunto	Written almost a century after the events they describe, Lewis Butler's two volumes on Wellington's Peninsula War campaigns have rightly been judged a classic of military history. The story of how the Iron Duke turned disaster into triumph, and defeat into a final victory, has surely never been told with more authority. Butler's first volume begins with the Spanish popular revolt against the imposition of Napoleon's brother Joseph as their king and their appeal to Britain for aid. Early British disasters culminate in Sir John Moore's retreat and death at Corunna. Wellington fought back at the battles of Talavera and Busaco, but was compelled by Marshal Massena to retreat once more into Portugal, and only his foresight in constructing the impregnable lines of Torres Vedras, and denuding the country before them, saved the day. The first volume concludes with Wellington taking the offensive again at the battle of Fuentes d'Onoro and Albuera. Both volumes are liberally illustrated with maps and sketches of the battles and other

operations. What Napoleon called his 'Spanish ulcer' has never been more minutely described and dissected, with the author paying a military man's due attention to the sinews of war as well as to the action.
