

WELLINGTON Y OLIVENZA

¿EL GIBRALTAR PORTUGUÉS?



Luis Alfonso Limpo Piriz

On the 21st April 1811, in the midst of the Peninsular War, Portugal attempted with Olivenza to repeat the move that had led to the taking of Gibraltar. Godoy had incorporated that strategic enclave on the banks of the Guadiana into Spain at the end of the *War of the Oranges* (1801). Against expectations, the then Viscount Wellington used his authority to over-rule his ally and ordered that the town be returned to Spanish control under General Castaños. Beyond being a gentlemanly gesture, true to A. Wellesly's character, as all his biographers have noted, this book reveals the political context that lay behind his decision, related to the defence of British interests in the Caribbean.

To explore the relationship between Gibraltar, Olivenza and Colonia de Sacramento, leaving behind the habitual eurocentrism, the author of this work offers us a previously unexplored perspective on all three territorial disputes and comes to some surprising conclusions. The past, like the universe itself, has dark matter, and it is overdue for a book like this to illuminate those shadows.

Luís Alfonso Limpo brings together *Wellington and Olivenza* not only with the academic rigour of the historian but also the intrigue worthy of the best novels.

Spanish history remains so little cultivated that within its great unexplored waters it is still possible to seek out great unexpected treasures such as that which this book offers.

Just when it seems everything has been said about Godoy, Napoleon and Wellington, and having seen two centuries pass and many books published...
And yet, and yet..

We know that the great things exercise powerful influence over things much smaller
What we did not suspect was that something seemingly so insignificant could have so great a repercussion and in such a decisive way.

Is it possible that the history of one small frontier town, Portugal's own Gibraltar, obliges us to rethink Napoleon's Europe and had previously ignored consequences on the other side of the Atlantic?



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