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# WELLINGTON'S BRIGADE COMMANDERS

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PENINSULA & WATERLOO

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RON MCGUIGAN & ROBERT BURNHAM



## Wheatley, William

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<b>Date of Birth:</b>	14 August 1771
<b>Date Commissioned:</b>	Ensign 1st Foot Guards: 23 June 1790 purchase?
<b>Promotions:</b>	Lieutenant & Captain 1st Foot Guards: 14 August 1793 without purchase Captain-Lieutenant & Lieutenant Colonel 1st Foot Guards: 25 November 1799 without purchase Captain & Lieutenant Colonel 1st Foot Guards: 12 January 1800 without purchase Brevet Colonel: 25 October 1809 Major General: 1 January 1812
<b>Major Commands under Wellington:</b>	On staff of Cadiz: c. August 1810–c. May 1811 Brigade 1st Division: 7 May–1 September 1812
<b>Awards:</b>	AGM with one clasp: Barrosa & Salamanca
<b>Date of Death:</b>	1 September 1812 of typhus at San Lorenzo de El Escorial, Spain

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William Wheatley was born in 1771, the son of William Wheatley of Lesney House, Kent, and Margaret Randall. His younger brother was Sir Henry Wheatley, Baronet, a major general in the Hanoverian Service. William was commissioned as an ensign in the 1st Foot Guards. Whether he purchased his commission or was appointed is not known. William served in the regiment for twenty-two years until he was promoted to major general in 1812. Unlike most of his contemporaries, he never served as a staff officer outside of the regiment.

Ensign Wheatley was assigned to the 1st Battalion when it was part of General Gerard Lake's Guards Brigade that was sent to Flanders on 27 February 1793. He was promoted to lieutenant and captain on 14 August and fought at the Battle of Lincelles on 18 August. After word of his promotion was received, Captain Wheatley returned to England. By July 1794, he was the adjutant of the Guards Light Infantry Battalion that was formed for service in Flanders. Captain Wheatley was wounded in the fighting on 14 January 1795 at Rhenen along the Waal River. He returned to England when the British Army was evacuated from Bremen in late April 1795. Four years later, Captain Wheatley was still with the light companies of the 1st Foot Guards and participated in the raid on the Ostend-Bruges Canal on 19 May 1798. After they successfully destroyed the canal's locks, they were unable to retreat back to their transports due to the high surf and he and his men were captured. Captain Wheatley remained as a prisoner-of-war in Lille until he was released in November 1798.

In November 1799, Captain Wheatley was promoted to captain-lieutenant and lieutenant colonel in the 1st Battalion. He was the only officer in the regiment to hold this rank at the time. He was assigned to the Colonel's Company of the Regiment and commanded it when the regimental colonel was absent.<sup>1</sup> Two months