

PICTON, Sir THOMAS (1758 - 1815), a soldier

Name: Thomas Picton
Date of birth: 1758
Date of death: 1815
Parent: Thomas Picton
Gender: Male
Occupation: a soldier
Area of activity: Military
Author: Samuel Henry Fergus Johnston

Born in August 1758, a younger son of Thomas Picton of Poyston, Pembrokeshire. He was commissioned in 1771 as ensign in the 12th regiment, then commanded by his uncle, but did not see active service until the capture of S. Lucia in 1796. His period of office as military governor of Trinidad occasioned violent controversy. His reputation was mainly due to his command of the 'fighting' 3rd division in the Peninsular War, but his name was omitted from the lists of generals raised to the peerage at the conclusion of the campaign. Bitterly disappointed, he returned to Carmarthenshire with a view to contesting a parliamentary election, but was recalled to command the 5th Division after Napoleon's escape from Elba. He concealed the severe wound which he received at Quatre Bras and was killed in action at Waterloo, 18 June 1815. Monuments were erected to his memory at S. Paul's cathedral and at Carmarthen.

[Editorial note 2020: Thomas Picton was accused of cruelty to slaves and of torturing a 14-year old girl amongst other crimes during his period in Trinidad. He was found guilty of the accusation of torture by the Court of King's Bench in 1806, but the verdict was overturned in a second trial in 1808.]

Author

Professor Samuel Henry Fergus Johnston, (1908 - 1991)

Sources

H. B. Robinson, *Memoirs of Lieutenant - General Sir Thomas Picton, G. C. B. & C. including his correspondence, from originals in possession of his family* (London 1835), two vols., 1835
West Wales Historical Records (1910-29), xii, 133-62, xiii, 1-32

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Thomas Picton](#)

Additional Links

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