
THE CARLIST WARS IN CATALONIA

Throughout the nineteenth century there were a number of civil conflicts between the liberals and the supporters of absolutism. The best known of them are the so-called Carlist Wars. Their origin was the dynastic claims to the Spanish throne of Don Carlos María Isidro of Bourbon- brother of late King Ferdinand VII- on the one hand, and of Elizabeth II- King's daughter- on the other. A large part of the armed clashes between the followers of both pretenders took place in Catalonia.

During the First Carlist War (1833-1840), thousands of volunteers fought alongside the Pretender Don Carlos. Amongst the most renowned leaders of this faction were General Guergué- who brought in troops from Navarre-, Brujó, Tristany, the Count of España and Cabrera. The latter was forced to cross the border in July, 1840.

The Second Carlist War (1846-1849) broke out after the failed attempt of bringing to an end the dynastic question by means of the marriage between Elizabeth II and Carlos Luis of Bourbon, Don Carlos' son. This war, of a much smaller scale than the previous one, was also mostly fought in Catalonia.

It was Catalonia, too, where the Third Carlist uprising erupted in 1872. Infante (king's relative who is not his direct heir) Don Alfonso Carlos, brother of the new Pretender Carlos VII, was in charge of the army and achieved an important victory in Alpens. The capture of Seo de Urgel in August 1874 marked the peak of Catalan Carlism. But the Bourbon Restoration with Alfonso XII was followed by an offensive that allowed putting an end to the fight in November, 1875.

The last of the Carlist partisan groups that still roamed Catalonia rose up in 1906.
