This is the first comprehensive history of the campaign that determined control of Germany following Napoleon's catastrophic defeat in Russia. Michael V. Leggiere reveals how, in the spring of 1813, Prussia, the weakest of the great powers, led the struggle against Napoleon as a war of national liberation. Using German, French, British, Russian, Austrian, and Swedish sources, he provides a panoramic history that covers the full sweep of the battle for Germany from the mobilization of the belligerents, strategy, and operations to coalition warfare, diplomacy, and civil–military relations. He shows how Russian war weariness conflicted with Prussian impetuosity, resulting in the crisis that almost ended the Sixth Coalition in early June. In a single campaign, Napoleon drove the Russo-Prussian army from the banks of the Saale to the banks of the Oder. The Russo-Prussian alliance was perilously close to imploding, only to be saved at the eleventh hour by an armistice.

Michael V. Leggiere is Professor of History and Deputy Director of the Military History Center at the University of North Texas.
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Napoleon and the Struggle for Germany: The Franco-Prussian War of 1813

Volume I

The War of Liberation, Spring 1813

MICHAEL V. LEGGIERE

University of North Texas
For my little girl,
Jordyn Elise Leggiere
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Maps that are required for more than one chapter appear in the Introduction, pp. 10–16. In the text, I employ native, modern spellings of villages, towns, smaller cities, and geographic features as much as possible. Larger cities, capitals, and rivers are Anglicized. I also provide at first mention the modern Polish, Russian, Lithuanian, and Czech names of population centers and geographic features in regions that once belonged to Prussia or Austria. Names of persons are likewise native, except for monarchs, whose names are Anglicized. To avoid confusion, all general officers are referred to simply as “general.” Lastly, I use “imperials” to refer to the French and their allies after 1804.