

Napoleon and the Struggle for Germany

VOLUME I

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.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-08051-5 — Napoleon and the Struggle for Germany
Volume 1: The War of Liberation, Spring 1813
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Napoleon and the Struggle for Germany: The Franco-Prussian War of 1813

Volume 1

The War of Liberation, Spring 1813

MICHAEL V. LEGGIERE

University of North Texas



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University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.
 It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of
 education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
 Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107080515

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First published 2015
 Reprinted 2015

Printed in the United Kingdom by TJ International Ltd. Padstow Cornwall

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Leggiere, Michael V., 1969-

Napoleon and the struggle for Germany: The Franco-Prussian War of 1813; The War of
 Liberation, Spring 1813 / Michael V. Leggiere, University of North Texas.
 page cm. — (Cambridge military histories) ISBN 978-1-107-08051-5 (Hardback) —
 ISBN 978-1-107-43973-3 (paperback) 1. Napoleonic Wars, 1800-1815—Campaigns—
 Germany. 2. Wars of Liberation, 1813-1814—Campaigns—Germany. 3. Napoleon I,
 Emperor of the French, 1769-1821—Military leadership. 4. France. Armée. Grande Armée—
 History. 5. France—History, Military—1789-1815. I. Title.

DC236.L443 2015
 940.2'740943-dc23
 2014022386

ISBN 978-1-107-08051-5 Hardback
 ISBN 978-1-107-43973-3 Paperback

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Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-08051-5 — Napoleon and the Struggle for Germany
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For my little girl,
Jordyn Elise Leggiere

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Preface

This seven-year project has been greatly assisted by many dear friends and colleagues who gave limitless support, shared their research, and focused early drafts. Alexander Mikaberidze is a friend like no other: for years he has not merely graciously provided me with Russian sources, but he also translates them; I am deeply indebted to Alex. His help in canvassing Russia's archival collection as well as his insight have greatly improved this work. Other dear friends such as Rick Schneid, Huw Davies, Jack Gill, Dennis Showalter, Jeremy Black, Chuck White, and Peter Hofschröder have provided endless support, inspiration, and assistance. I must also convey my deepest appreciation to Peter Harrington of the Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection at Brown University for providing all the artwork that accompanies the text on the shortest notice. At Cambridge University Press, I wish to thank Hew Strachan for his support, Michael Watson for his patience and understanding, and especially for granting me the opportunity to present the 1813 campaign in two volumes, and Rosalyn Scott for seeing the manuscript through production. At the University of North Texas, I am indebted to the Department of History, the Military History Center, and the College of Arts and Sciences for their generous financial support. Behind all three is my chairman, colleague, and friend, Rick McCaslin, who has been a steady source of support and encouragement. I am fortunate to have worked with two of the foremost military historians in the world: Geoff Wawro and Rob Citino. Both set the standard extremely high but their steadfast advice and encouragement are boundless. I especially want to thank Geoff for his friendship, confidence, and support. Last but not least, I thank my graduate students for their patience when they found the door to my office closed: Jon Abel, Chad Tomaselli, Jordan Hayworth, Nate Jarrett, Casey Baker, and Eric Smith.

I must thank the Sixth Count Bülow von Dennewitz, Hasso, for providing a constant stream of documents and information. I offer special thanks to

Bertrand Fonck as well as the staff of the Service historique de l'armée de terre at Vincennes for patiently handling my requests to exceed the daily limit of cartons. I also express my gratitude to the helpful staff of Berlin's Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz for producing repositiorium from the former German General Staff archive previously thought to have been lost during the Second World War. I express my sincere gratitude to my mentor, Donald D. Horward, for seeing the potential in me, releasing it, and stopping me from making the mistake of attending law school. My wife of sixteen years and companion of more than twenty, Michele, has always been my source of strength. Our beautiful children, Jordyn and Nicholas, have likewise endured countless hours of having to entertain themselves while I was writing. Finally, I wish to thank my mother, Rosalie, who is always a source of solid support. Many others have contributed in many ways. To them: thanks and an apology for any omission. Whatever merits this work has are due in part to their contributions; whatever faults may lie here are those of the author.

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.