

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE LIBRARY COLLECTION

Books of enduring scholarly value

Naval and Military History

This series includes accounts of sea and land campaigns by eye-witnesses and contemporaries, as well as landmark studies of their social, political and economic impacts. The series focuses mainly on the period from the Renaissance to the end of the Victorian era. It includes major concentrations of material on the American and French revolutions, the British campaigns in South Asia, and nineteenth-century conflicts in Europe, such as the Peninsular and Crimean Wars. Although many of the accounts are semi-official narratives by senior officers and their relatives, the series also includes alternative viewpoints from dissenting leaders, servicemen in the lower ranks, and military wives and civilians caught up in the theatre of war.

Napoleon in Exile

These 'opinions and reflections of Napoleon ... in his own words' were published in two volumes in 1822 (the year after the ex-emperor's death). Little is known about the early life and medical training of their author, Barry O'Meara (1770?–1836), but he happened to be on H.M.S. *Bellerophon* when Napoleon came on board to surrender in August 1815. His medical experience and ability to speak Italian caused Bonaparte to ask him to act as his personal physician in his exile, and O'Meara obtained official permission to do so. However, relations between Napoleon's household and the governor of the island, Sir Hudson Lowe, deteriorated, and O'Meara was consequently required to leave in 1818. This fascinating and controversial work, which went into five editions, describes Napoleon's exile and records his opinions, but is also a polemic against Lowe's allegedly harsh treatment of his prisoner, later strongly denied by other witnesses.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press has long been a pioneer in the reissuing of out-of-print titles from its own backlist, producing digital reprints of books that are still sought after by scholars and students but could not be reprinted economically using traditional technology. The Cambridge Library Collection extends this activity to a wider range of books which are still of importance to researchers and professionals, either for the source material they contain, or as landmarks in the history of their academic discipline.

Drawing from the world-renowned collections in the Cambridge University Library and other partner libraries, and guided by the advice of experts in each subject area, Cambridge University Press is using state-of-the-art scanning machines in its own Printing House to capture the content of each book selected for inclusion. The files are processed to give a consistently clear, crisp image, and the books finished to the high quality standard for which the Press is recognised around the world. The latest print-on-demand technology ensures that the books will remain available indefinitely, and that orders for single or multiple copies can quickly be supplied.

The Cambridge Library Collection brings back to life books of enduring scholarly value (including out-of-copyright works originally issued by other publishers) across a wide range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences and in science and technology.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Napoleon in Exile

*Or, A Voice from St. Helena:
the Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon
on the Most Important Events of his Life
and Government in his Own Words*

VOLUME 1

BARRY E. O'MEARA



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

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/9781108081313

© in this compilation Cambridge University Press 2015

This edition first published 1822

This digitally printed version 2015

ISBN 978-1-108-08131-3 Paperback

This book reproduces the text of the original edition. The content and language reflect
the beliefs, practices and terminology of their time, and have not been updated.

Cambridge University Press wishes to make clear that the book, unless originally published
by Cambridge, is not being republished by, in association or collaboration with,
or with the endorsement or approval of, the original publisher or its successors in title.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and
Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and
Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)



*"JE PRIE MES PARENS ET AMIS DE CROIRE TOUT CE QUE LE —
DOCTEUR O'MEARA LEUR DIRA RELATIVEMENT À LA POSITION OÙ
JE ME TROUVE ET AUX SENTIMENS QUE JE CONSERVE."*

*Sit vos Mœbeare scripser
j'espère de permettre
qu'il lui baise la
main Napole
le 25 juillet 1808*

Engraved by T. WOOLNOUTH, from a CAMEO by MORELLI, presented to
M^{rs} O'MEARA BY MADAME MÈRE;
in the Year 1819.

Published by W. Simpkin & R. Marshall, June 1822.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and
Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and
Government in his Own Words: Volume 1
Barry E. O'Meara
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

NAPOLEON IN EXILE;
OR,
A Voice from St. Helena.
THE
OPINIONS AND REFLECTIONS OF
NAPOLEON
ON THE
MOST IMPORTANT EVENTS OF HIS LIFE AND GOVERNMENT,
IN HIS OWN WORDS.

By BARRY E. O'MEARA, Esq.
HIS LATE SURGEON.

ἐγὼ δὲ ταῦθ' ἅπαντ' ἠπιστάμην,
Ἐκὼν ἐκὼν ἤμαρτον, οὐκ ἀγνόησομαι·
Θνητοῖς δ' ἀρχέγων, αὐτὸς εὐρέμεν πόνους.
Οὐ μὲν τι ποιναῖς γ' ὀρέμεν τοιαῖσί με
Κατισχυνεῖσθαι πρὸς πέτραις πεδασίοις
Τυχόντ' ἐρήμῃ τοῦδ' ἀγέιτονος πάγου.
ÆSCH. PROM.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.
FIFTH EDITION.

London :
PRINTED FOR W. SIMPKIN AND R. MARSHALL,
STATIONERS'-HALL-COURT, LUDGATE-STREET.

1822.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and
Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and
Government in his Own Words: Volume 1
Barry E. O'Meara
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

**J. M^cCreery, Tooks Court,
Chancery Lane, London.**

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and
Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and
Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

TO
THE RIGHT HON. LADY HOLLAND,
WHOSE HUMANE ATTENTIONS
TO
NAPOLEON IN ST. HELENA,
DREW FROM HIM,
IN HIS DYING MOMENTS,
THE GRATEFUL EXPRESSION OF HIS
“SATISFACTION AND ESTEEM,”
THESE VOLUMES
ARE,
WITH HER LADYSHIP’S PERMISSION,
MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,
BY
HER LADYSHIP’S VERY OBEDIENT
HUMBLE SERVANT,
BARRY E. O’MEARA.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

TRANSLATION OF THE MOTTO.

—

“ Of these things
I was not unadvised, and my offence
Was voluntary; in man's cause I drew
These evils on my head—but ills like these,
On this aerial rock to waste away,
This desert and unsocial precipice,
My mind presaged it not. ’

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and
Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and
Government in his Own Words: Volume 1
Barry E. O'Meara
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

THE cameo, an engraving from which is given in the frontispiece, was executed before the battle of Marengo, previous to the time when Napoleon became corpulent. *Madame Mère*,* when she presented it to me, informed me that it was then considered to be an excellent likeness: and indeed its resemblance to what he was when I saw him, was striking, making allowance for his features having lost much of the sharpness shewn in the cameo.

The engraving from the cameo has been pronounced by M. Revelli, of Duncan-place, Leicester-square, *Professore emerito* of the University of Turin, to be a most striking likeness of Napoleon at the period mentioned. It may be necessary to observe, that no other painter was favoured with such opportunities of forming a correct judgment on the subject as M. Revelli; as, independent of having frequently seen him at an early age, he resided for several months with Napoleon at Elba, as his painter, and executed a beautiful portrait of him, which is now in his possession.

The following is a translation of the fac-simile of Napoleon's handwriting under the cameo—" *If he sees my good Louise, I beg of her to permit him to kiss her hand.*"

The engraving from the medal to be placed after the Prefaces in Vol. I.

The whole length portrait of Napoleon to face the title of the second volume.

* Napoleon's mother.

Explanation

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and
Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and
Government in his Own Words: Volume 1
Barry E. O'Meara
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

*Explanation of the Figures in the Representation of the
House, in front of the Appendix, Volume II.*

Fig.	Fig.
1. Billiard-Room.	8. Count Las Cases' first Room.— The Garret above for his son.
2. Drawing-Room.	9. Orderly Officer's Room.
3. Napoleon's Writing-Room, af- terwards converted into a Bed-Room.	10. General Gourgaud's.
4. His first Bed-Room.	11. Mr. O'Meara's.
5. Marchand's Room.	12. New Rooms built for Count and Countess Montholon and family.
6. Inferior Servants' Hall.	
7. Kitchen.	

The Commissioners were allowed to come as far as the
gate represented in the plate.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE.

PLACED by peculiar circumstances arising from my profession, near the person of the most extraordinary man perhaps of any age, in the most critical juncture of his life, I determined to profit by the opportunities afforded me, as far as I could consistently with honour. The following volumes are the result. The reader will see in the very outset of the work, how it was that I became attached as a medical officer to the household of Napoleon. That it was in consequence of his own application, by the advice of my superiors, and with the full concurrence of the lords of the admiralty. I never sought the situation; it was in some degree assigned me; and most assuredly I should have shrunk from the acceptance of it, had I contemplated the possibility of being even remotely called on to compromise the principles either of an officer or a gentleman. Before, however, I had been long scorched upon the rock of St. Helena, I was taught to appreciate the embarrassments of

b 2

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

my situation. I saw soon that I must either become accessory to vexations for which there was no necessity, or incur suspicions of no very comfortable nature. Fortunately for my honour, my happiness, and indeed for every thing except my interests, I did not hesitate. Humanity required of me a consideration for my patient. The uniform I wore imperiously commanded that I should not soil it by indignities to a captive, and my country's character pledged me to hold sacred the misfortunes of the fallen. This I did. It is my pride to avow it: a pride inferior only to that which I feel in finding those men my enemies who consider it a crime.

The few alleviations which I had it in my power to offer, Napoleon repaid by the condescension with which he honoured me; and my necessary professional intercourse was soon increased into an intimacy, if I may speak of intimacy with such a personage. In fact, in the seclusion of Longwood, he soon almost entirely laid aside the emperor; with those about him, he conversed familiarly on his past life, and sketched the characters, and detailed the anecdotes which are here presented faithfully to the reader. The unre-

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE.

ix

served manner in which he spoke of every thing can only be conceived by those who heard him; and though where his own conduct was questioned, he had a natural human leaning towards himself, still truth appeared to be his principal, if not his only object. In the delineation of character he was peculiarly felicitous. His mind seemed to concentrate its beams on the object he wished to elucidate, and its prominent features became instantly discernible. The intimate acquaintance which he necessarily possessed with all the great characters who figured in Europe for the last thirty years, gave to his opinions and observations more than ordinary interest; indeed from no other source could such authentic information be acquired. Notwithstanding the interval which elapsed since many of the occurrences alluded to took place, and the distracting occupations which must have employed his mind, it was wonderful to see how freshly he remembered every transaction which became the subject of inquiry. If there was any thing more extraordinary than this, it was the apathy with which he perused the libels which were written on him—he seemed inspired

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

X

PREFACE.

with a conviction of posthumous fame, beyond the reach of contemporary depreciation. But perhaps a knowledge of the man may be better acquired from seeing him—as he really was during the first three years of his residence at St. Helena, than from any speculative deduction—as he appeared, spoke, acted, and seemed to feel, the reader shall have him.—It may perhaps be only right to add, that some of the observations or arguments on particular subjects were committed to paper from Napoleon's own dictation.

Before, however, we go further, I feel that the public have a right to demand how far they can depend on the authenticity of these volumes. To the friends who know me I hope no verification is necessary—to my detractors even mathematical proof would be unavailing—to those who are prejudiced neither on one side nor the other, the following corroborations are submitted.

In the first place, then, I refer to the fac simile of Napoleon's hand-writing prefixed to the frontispiece, and given to me by himself as a proof of the confidence with which he treated me—the original of this any person who chooses to apply to me shall see. I refer

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE.

xi

also to the whole Longwood household, more particularly to the executors, Counts Bertrand and Montholon, and to Count Las Cases, as to the facilities I had, and the familiarity with which I was honoured. This, I hope, will be sufficient on the score of opportunity.

The next point is as to the accuracy of the transcript. Upon this subject my plan was as follows. I spoke as little and listened as attentively as I could, seldom interposing, except for the purpose of leading to those facts on which I wished for information. To my memory, though naturally retentive, I did not entirely trust; immediately on retiring from Napoleon's presence, I hurried to my chamber and carefully committed to paper the topics of conversation, with, so far as I could, the exact words used. Where I had the least doubt as to my accuracy, I marked it in my journal, and by a subsequent recurrence to the topic, when future opportunities offered, I satisfied myself; this, although I have avoided them as much as possible, may account for some occasional repetitions, but I have thought it better to appear sometimes tedious, than ever to run the risk of a misstatement. My long residence at Longwood rendered

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

those opportunities frequent, and the facility of communication which Napoleon allowed, made the introduction of almost any subject easy. Thus did I form my original journal; as it increased in interest, it became of course to me an object of increased solicitude; and as nothing which could possibly occur at St. Helena would have surprised me, I determined to place its contents at least beyond the power of that spoliation which afterwards was perpetrated on some of my other property. Having purchased in the island, a machine for that purpose, I transmitted at intervals the portions copied to a friend on board one of his majesty's ships in the roads, who forwarded them as opportunities occurred, to Mr. Holmes of Lyon's Inn, Napoleon's respectable agent in London. The entire of this copy Mr. Holmes duly received some time previous to my return to England, as appears below by his own authentication,* and part of the silver paper manuscript as he received it, I have deposited with my pub-

* 3 *Lyon's Inn*, June 22d, 1822.

I certify that I received all the papers alluded to by Mr. O'Meara in the Preface, a considerable time before his arrival in England.

WILLIAM HOLMES.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE.

xiii

lishers for the satisfaction of the sceptical. Thus, for the authenticity of the following conversations the reader has the guarantees, first, of the undoubted opportunities afforded me, 2ndly, of their having been taken on the spot, 3rdly, of their having been transmitted at the moment, and 4thly, of the original document itself, authenticated by the person to whom it had been consigned and now submitted to general inspection. Independent of these, I think I may refer with confidence to those third persons, whose interviews with Napoleon are occasionally introduced; and some of the official members of his majesty's government cannot with truth deny, that many of the political conversations were by me communicated at no great interval after their occurrence. Such communications I considered it my duty to make wherever I thought their import might benefit the country. What use ministers may have made of them I know not, but certainly the preventive system with respect to smugglers was adopted soon after the transmission of Napoleon's conversation on the subject. Perhaps, however, after all, the best proof of the authenticity of these volumes will be found in their own contents—independent of the internal evidence

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xiv

PREFACE.

contained in the anecdotes themselves, there was, on whatever came from Napoleon's mind, an inimitable impress. On this subject, if I appear to many unnecessarily minute, it is because I am well aware that every attempt will be made to deny the authenticity of these conversations; there are too many implicated—too many interested—too many who must wish to cast an impenetrable shade over the transactions of St. Helena, to suffer the truth to obtain an undisputed circulation. The following official letters will shew, that it was at least the desire of his majesty's ministers to bury Napoleon's mind with his body in the grave of his imprisonment. If I have disobeyed the injunction, it is because I thought that every fragment of such a mind should be preserved to history, because I despised the despotism which would incarcerate even intellect:—and because I thought those only should become subsidiary to concealment, who were conscious of actions which could not bear the light. The following creditable documents emanating from the ministers of a free country, were transmitted by authority to me at St Helena, soon after the publication of Mr. Warden's book. Every feeling heart will make its own comment on them.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE.

XV

*His Majesty's ship Conqueror,
St. Helena Roads, 2nd January, 1818.*

Sir,—I herewith inclose to you a copy of a letter I have just received from Mr. Secretary Barrow, (relative to a work published by Mr. Warden, late surgeon of his majesty's ship Northumberland,) which I desire you will pay most particular attention to. I am, Sir,

Your most obedient, humble Servant,

ROBT. PLAMPIN,

Rear Admiral, Commander-in-chief.

To Mr. Barry O'Meara, Surgeon,

R. N. Longwood, St. Helena.

(No. XII.)

Admiralty Office, 13th September, 1817.

Sir,—My Lords Commissioners of the admiralty having had under their consideration a work which has been published by Mr. Warden, late surgeon of his majesty's ship Northumberland, their lordships have commanded me to signify their directions to you to acquaint all the officers employed under your orders, that they are to understand, that if they should presume to publish any information which they may have obtained by being officially employed at St Helena, they will suffer their lordships' heavy displeasure.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient, humble Servant,

JOHN BARROW.

To Rear Admiral Plampin,

St. Helena.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xvi

PREFACE.

Such were the attempts, certainly not unaccountable, to cancel all recollection of Napoleon, at least in his captivity—those who issued these orders forgot that the *power* did not accompany the *will* to subject the publications of Englishmen to an *imprimatur*. Despising the denunciation as I did, and from my heart do, I have, however, thought it only my duty not to publish these conversations till after Napoleon's death; nor have I done so even now, without the knowledge of his executors. All danger from them is past: the tongue which uttered them is silent for ever, and history has a right to them.

If I was disposed to comment on these letters, I should say that they proceed altogether upon a wrong assumption, namely, that an official footing at Longwood gave to any one the power of obtaining the information which I collected. Nothing can be more absurd. If I had acted a different part from what I did—if, in place of reconciling the allegiance of a subject with the compassion of a Christian, and preserving the rights of my country, while I took care not to compromise the feelings of my nature, I tried to make my office the avenue to fortune—if I sunk the man in

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE.

xvii

the menial—if I became an official slave instead of an honest servant—if I courted power, by straining my loyalty to suit the purposes of mean vexation and unmanly vengeance—if I lifted up my hoof against the dead lion, or displayed my pigmy prowess by a dastard warfare upon the helpless infirmities of a fallen enemy; I should not only have had no opportunities of access, but I should have been proscribed Napoleon's, and man's society. But I acted altogether upon different principles; after having devoted the best fifteen years of my life to combating his soldiers in the field, and on the wave, I forgot, when he was my country's prisoner, that he had ever been my country's foe. I thought the conquest of clemency, superior even to that of valour, and that a proud country should make her enemies confess, not only that she conquered, but that she deserved to conquer. In such a place as St. Helena, there could have been no danger from the worst man's deviating into feelings of humanity; fenced round, as it is, with the most frightful precipices, with only one practicable place of egress, and that one not only bristling with cannon, and crowded with guards, but effectually barri-

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xviii

PREFACE.

cadoed by our squadron, escape could scarcely have been effected by a miracle. The simple precaution which Napoleon himself suggested, of never suffering any ship to sail, until his actual safety should be ascertained, might have obviated the necessity of almost any other. Having said thus much upon the motives by which my conduct has been actuated, I have only to add; that although I shall contemptuously pass by any anonymous insinuations, I am ready to meet any charge before any tribunal whatsoever, *where the truth can be investigated*. Let me only have an opportunity of proof, and a responsible accuser. In the face of the world, I challenge investigation. With respect to the mandate issued by the Admiralty against publication, it is suited to the meridian rather of Algiers, than of England—the very attempt in a free country, need only be mentioned to be reprobated; it must have proved as abortive as it was despotic, for even were any Englishman base enough to obey it, the Frenchman need not; so that it was at best but a bungling refinement on the revolutionary device said to have been proposed, of burning the books in Paris, to annihilate learning, as if no other

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE.

xix

copies existed in the world. With this remark, however, I shall dismiss the subject, as it is difficult to say, whether the credit of the measure is due to the present literary board, or to those lay philosophers, whose future censorship has been since cruelly dispensed with by the House of Commons.

With respect to the views of men and things taken by Napoleon in his remarks, I beg to guard myself against any adoption of them as my own. I am merely the narrator. I give them as the substance of his interesting and unreserved conversations, neither vouching for the critical exactness of his dates, nor the justness of his opinions, nor indeed for any thing but the accuracy of my report. I only engage to the reader to lay before him Napoleon's sentiments as that extraordinary man uttered them.

“ Warm from the heart, and faithful to its fires.”

In making this remark, however, I am bound to add, that I neither avoid nor evade inquiry; in any investigation in which *the truth can be told* I am perfectly willing to take my share, ready to abide the event, whether it bring reward or responsibility.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

XX

PREFACE.

August 21st, 1822.

P. S.—It has just been communicated to me, that I am in error in having stated (vol. i. p. 127), that it was *Sir G. Cockburn's brother* that was seized in Hamburg by order of Napoleon; the person, according to the information of the gentlemen who write to me, was *Sir George Rumbold*. Although I can scarcely believe that I was mi-taken, yet I think it my duty to mention this friendly correction.

October 24th, 1822.

On the subject of the foregoing postscript, the following Letter appeared in *The Morning Herald* of the 23d September, 1822:—

To the Editor of the Morning Herald.

SIR—Dr. O'Meara is *correct* in his statement of Mr. Cockburn, the consul at Hamburg, being seized and made a prisoner in the manner related. The writer of this was a *co-détenu* with him at Verdun. He owed his liberation to a most singular circumstance. His wife was a French lady, and had been a school-fellow with Madame Beauharnois. Mr. C. was advised to send her to Paris, to obtain an interview with Madame Beauharnois, and solicit her husband's release. She went to Paris: Madame B. recognised her, and shewed her great kindness and attention, promised to exert all her interest with the emperor on the first favourable opportunity; but added, that she could not promise all the success she wished, as at that moment the emperor had, to use her own words, "*grand rancune contre les Anglois.*" In about a month after, Mr. Cockburn received a passport for England, and his name ordered to be struck off the list of the *détenus* at the dépôt.

(Signed) A CI-DEVANT DETENU AT VERDUN.

Sept. 15.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

P R E F A C E

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

THE rapidity with which a Second Edition of this Work has been called for, is an unequivocal proof of the favourable opinion of the Public. Its reception has been highly flattering to my feelings, and is the best answer that can be given to the calumnies by which it has been assailed by some of the hirelings of the corrupt journals of the present day.

This Edition has been carefully revised, a few verbal inaccuracies corrected, and a new Engraving added of a drawing from the statue presented to me by Napoleon on my leaving St. Helena.

It is with feelings of deep regret that I find it necessary to allude to a transaction, the remembrance of which will always be considered by me as one of the most unfortunate events

VOL. I.

C

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xxii

PREFACE TO

of my life, inasmuch as, to an upright mind, it will ever be a source of sorrow to have given, however unintentionally, unmerited pain to those from whom it had never received any injury: nor can this sentiment find any parallel in my breast, unless it be in the regret, which will never cease to accompany the recollection of this affair, that, by a fatal error, the offender, for whom the chastisement was intended, escaped the actual punishment due to his crime. The Public will however feel, that the person to whom I allude, must be considered as having *virtually* received what was due to his brutal attack upon my character; an attack which he failed to support in the only manner that could prove him to be in some degree worthy of the character of a gentleman. His slanders have a prolific birth, but as to himself, he seems to be *impalpable*. As far as respects myself, therefore, I hope the public will perceive that I have not been inattentive to my honour, the protection of which has ever been the sentiment nearest to my heart; and under which impression, all resentment against those who attempted to degrade me ceases, and is sup-

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

THE SECOND EDITION.

xxiii

planted by pity for the situation in which such persons must stand before the bar of public opinion.

To the strictest critical scrutiny, or review of these volumes, I can feel no reluctance to their being subjected; if they cannot bear gentlemanly investigation, they are undeserving to remain before the public; and I should consider myself as unworthy of any attention from my countrymen, were I to flinch from their inquiries, or to take offence at their scepticism, if they found, after a fair examination, whereon to rest their doubts. But to the personal attack which I have sustained from *The Times Newspaper*, I was not disposed to submit with *passive obedience*; an attack, which was as distant from the duty of an impartial Reviewer, holding the balance even between the public and the writer, as it was from the courtesy, in all matters of controversy, which one gentleman owes to another.

A friend has transmitted to me the following communication :—Napoleon was removed from the Bellerophon on board of the Northumberland on the 7th of August; and the words used by Captain Maitland to Count Las Cases, were as follows :—“ That with the

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08131-3 - Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena: The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events of his Life and Government in his Own Words: Volume 1

Barry E. O'Meara

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xxiv

PREFACE TO

orders which he (Captain Maitland,) was acting upon, he conceived that he might receive him on board the Bellerophon, and carry him to England; but that in doing so, he was acting upon his own responsibility, and that he must consider himself entirely at the disposal of the Prince Regent, as Captain M. could not enter into any promise as to the reception Napoleon was to meet with."

The following document, omitted in the first edition, is of too important a nature not to be annexed to the present. It completely refutes the assertions of the ministerialists, touching the alleged refusal of England to recognize the imperial dynasty.

Protocole des Conférences de Chatillon sur Seine.

Fevrier 4.

S. E. M. le Duc de Vicence, ministre des relations extérieures, et plénipotentiaire de France, d'une part, et les plénipotentiaires des cours alliées, savoir: M. le Comte de Stadion, &c. pour l'Autriche; S. E. M. le Comte de Razoumowski, &c. pour la Russie; LL. EE. Lord Aberdeen, &c., Lord Cathcart, &c., et Sir Charles Stewart, &c. pour la Grande Bretagne;