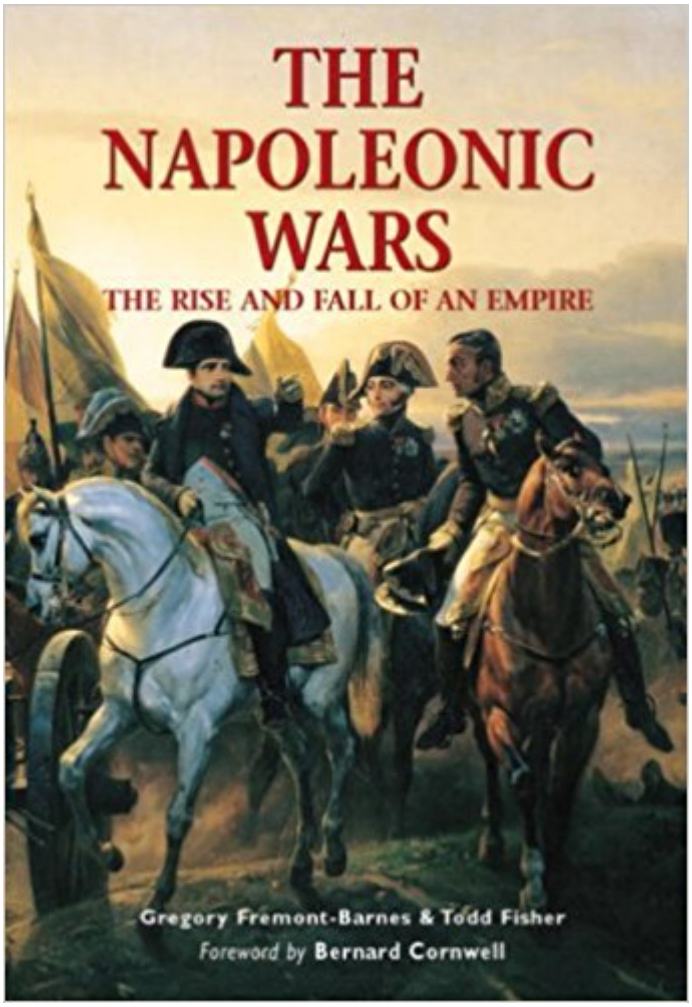
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The Napoleonic Wars: The Rise And Fall Of An Empire (Essential Histories Specials)



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Synopsis

The Napoleonic Wars saw fighting on an unprecedented scale in Europe and the Americas. It took the wealth of the British Empire, combined with the might of the continental armies, almost two decades to bring down one of the worldÃ¢â ¬â„¢s greatest military leaders and the empire that he had created. Napoleon's ultimate defeat was to determine the history of Europe for almost 100 years. From the frozen wastelands of Russia, through the brutal fighting in the Peninsula to the blood-soaked battlefield of Waterloo, this book tells the story of the dramatic rise and fall of the Napoleonic Empire. This book contains material previously published as Essential Histories volumes 3, 9, 17 and 39.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Foreword by Bernard Cornwell, author of the bestselling Ã¢â ¬ËœSharpeÃ¢â ¬â„¢ novels. Authors Todd Fisher and Dr Gregory Fremont-Barnes are amongst the worldÃ¢â ¬â„¢s leading Napoleonic scholars. Todd Fisher is the Executive Director of the Napoleonic Alliance, a founding member of the International Napoleonic Society, and Chief Executive Officer of Emperor's Press and Napoleon Journal.Gregory Fremont-Barnes holds degrees in history from the University of California, Berkeley; the University of Chicago, and the University of Oxford. He is the author of Ã¢â ¬ËœThe French Revolutionary Wars Ã¢â ¬Ëœ (2001), and is currently co-editing the four-volume Ã¢â ¬ËœEncyclopedia of the American Revolutionary WarÃ¢â ¬â„¢.

This book contains a compilation of four previously published books (each of approximately 94

pages of length) published by Osprey in its "Essential History" series. The four were: The rise of the Emperor (covering 1805-1807), The Empires Fight Back (1808-1813), The Peninsular War (1807-1814) and The Fall of the French Empire (1813-1815).In general and in aggregate, this collection does a pretty good job at providing a basic overview of the wars progression over each period. Each book, on a stand along basis for the period it covers, provides a good overview of the makeup of the armies involved (from lower level troops through mid and upper officer levels), tactics, weapons and strengths and weaknesses, the geopolitical situation at the beginning of the periods, how the war progressed over time and what the after effects were at the end of the covered periods. In addition, the chapters provide short 2-3 page chapters on some particular little or unknown low level individual involved in the war that gives a very good idea, from a personal viewpoint, what the war was like. The book is also very richly illustrated in contemporaneous paintings, etchings, maps and other illustrations.With respect to weaknesses, the book has quite a few. The most important, by far, is the due to its limited length and its topic it is unable to provide a very decent overview of the war outside of major campaigns and battles. For example, the war at sea is barely touched upon outside of Trafalgar. In addition, diplomatic, military, economic and political issues are barely touched upon. This book is definitely not as definitive as, say, the great Napoleonic expert Professor Alfred Chandler’s "The Campaigns of Napoleon" (an approximately 1,200 page book) or Charles Esdaile’s "Napoleon’s Wars: An International History" (approximately 700 pages in length). However, for what it is, a short succinct introduction to the Napoleonic Wars intended for the novice, the book does an excellent job.

This book picks up whereÃ Â The Napoleonic Wars: The Rise of the Emperor 1805-1807Ã Â leaves off. As Napoleon defeats Austria with his customary ease he learns of betrayal by Russia. The single biggest mistake Napoleon ever made was his decision to invade Russia and march all the way to Moscow with an army that wasn’t up to the Grand Armee of old. Even as Napoleon’s army recorded success after success against the armies of Russia, Napoleon was stretching himself too thin and would eventually be brought low by disease and the elements.Most of this book is taken up by the advance on Moscow, where brilliantly fought battles had the Russians back on their heels all the way past their capitol. Battle descriptions and artwork depicting the events of the time are excellent, similar to most others in the Essential Histories collection. The book also contains very interesting and concise descriptions of the political thinking of the time and of the cultural changes taking place. Overall, a great description of the start of Napoleon’s fall.I look forward to continuing the Napoleonic Wars set from Essential Histories.

An excellent, compelling account of this important and influential period in European history. Well researched, illustrated and written. Highly recommended !.

good book

Very good overall perspective of this truly amazing time in the history of Europe and the world

Books in the Osprey "Essential History" series do a fairly good job at covering their topic assuming that that the conflict covered is rather short or of limited dimensions. A good example is the book in this series that covers the Russo-Japanese war. However, when the topic covers a prolonged period of time such as this one (five years of continuous conflict and diplomatic rangling among about half a dozen powers) the structure of the volumes, about 90 pages in length (about half of which are illustration), serious short falls inevitably result.The main one is that the history of the major battles is very short. Too short to obtain an idea of what transpired and, more importantly, why. Another important problem involves the fact that there is no analysis as to how and why each battle led to the other. Other weak points are an inadequate overview of the major power's armies. This is in every respect including quality of troops, quality of middle and low ranking officer corps, training, weapons and morale (though the higher level commanders are covered adequately). There is also little discussion as to root causes of the actual conflict (i.e., France's invasion of Russia being prompted by Russia's disregard for the continental blockade of England). Other important issues and facts such as the Iberian drain on French military resources and English financial support of Russia are barely even mentioned. All and all too many gaps.Why, then, would one ask that this book receive a three star rating as opposed to less? The reason is that, for extremely lenghty and complex subject, given its short 90 page length (i.e., an hour or two of reading), a reader can obtain a picture, albeit very short and with some gaps, into this subject.

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