

# Napoleon's Commanders (2)

c1809–15



Philip Haythornthwaite • Illustrated by Patrice Courcelle

# CONTENTS

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## STAFF ORGANISATION 3

- *Adjutants-commandants* and *adjoints*
- Napoleon's general and battlefield headquarters: the *maison*, *cabinet* and *bureau topographique* – bodyguards – *aides-de-camp* and *officiers d'ordonnance* – the *Intendance*
- formation headquarters
- garrison headquarters

## BIOGRAPHIES 10

- Eugène-Rose de BEAUHARNAIS
- Jérôme BONAPARTE
- Joseph BONAPARTE
- Armand-Augustin-Louis CAULAINCOURT
- Edouard de COLBERT
- Antoine DROUOT
- Maximilien-Sébastien FOY
- Maurice-Etienne GÉRARD
- Laurent GOUVION SAINT-CYR
- Emmanuel GROUCHY
- Jean-Baptiste JOURDAN
- François-Etienne KELLERMANN
- Dominique-Jean LARREY
- Louis-Michel LETORT
- Jacques-Etienne-Joseph-Alexandre MACDONALD
- Auguste-Frédéric-Louis Vieße de MARMONT
- Joachim MURAT
- Michel NEY
- Nicolas-Charles OUDINOT
- Josef Anton PONIATOWSKI
- Jean RAPP
- Jean-de-Dieu SOULT
- Louis-Gabriel SUCHET

## BIBLIOGRAPHY 54

## SOURCE NOTES 56

## THE PLATES 57

## INDEX 64



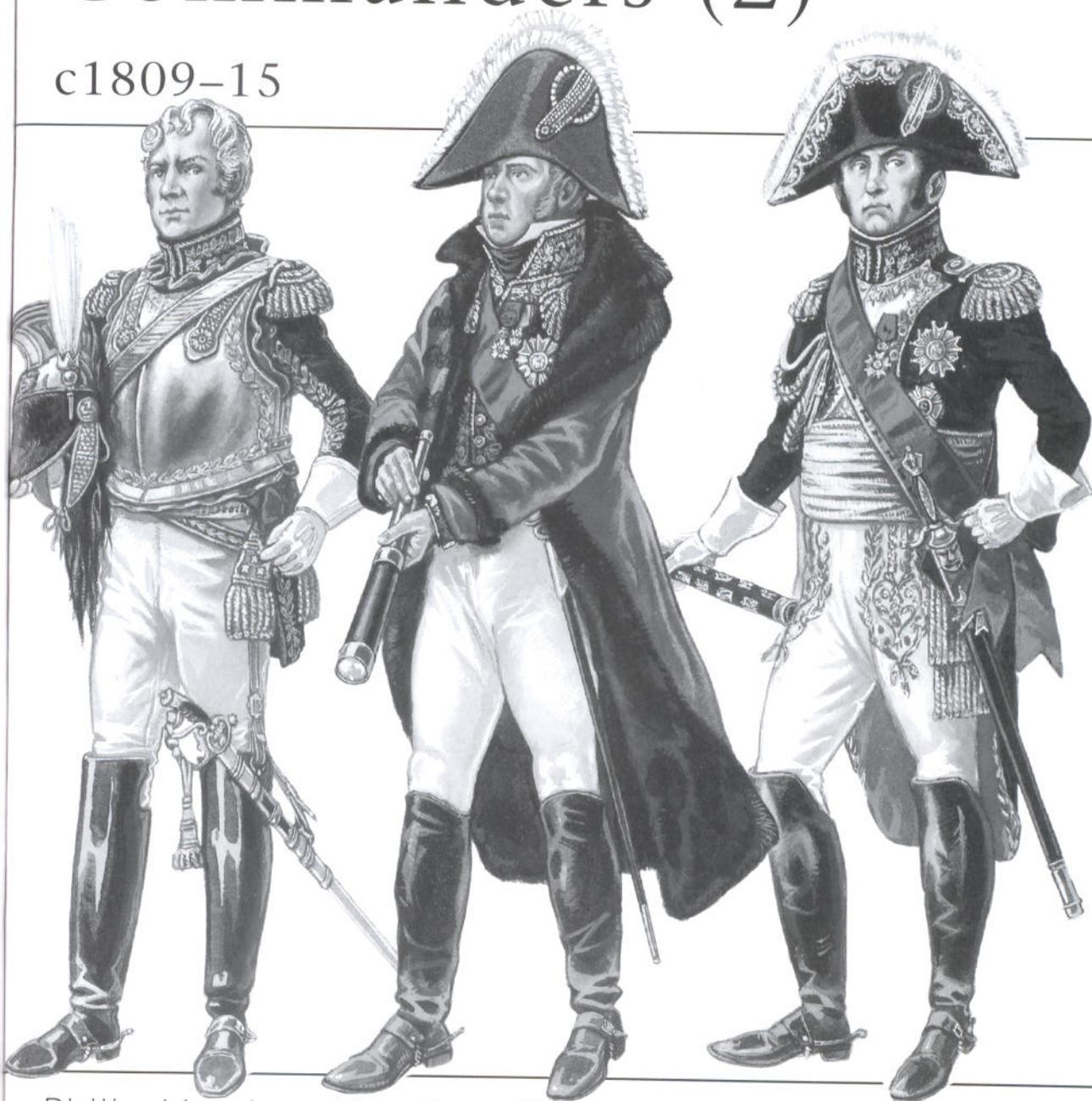
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c1809–15



Philip Haythornthwaite • Illustrated by Patrice Courcelle

Series editor Martin Windrow

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## Author's Note

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This is the second of two Elite Series titles offering brief biographies of some of Napoleon's significant subordinates, and illustrating the uniforms of general officers and their staffs. The first title – Elite 72 – concentrates upon the period up to 1809, the present volume on subsequent years. Obviously the division must be to some extent artificial, given the long careers of some French commanders: Jean-Baptiste Jourdan, for example, first commanded an army in September 1793 and was effectively in command of another when he was defeated at Vittoria almost twenty years later. Readers are therefore invited to approach the two books as a single work of reference.

## Artist's Note

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Readers may care to note that the original paintings from which the colour plates in this book were prepared are available for private sale. All reproduction copyright whatsoever is retained by the Publishers. All enquiries should be addressed to:

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The Publishers regret that they can enter into no correspondence upon this matter.

## Editor's Note

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In order to avoid an unmanageable number of italicised phrases in this text, for the sake of clarity we have instead adopted English capitalisation of titles and designations – e.g. Duc d'Albufera, 2e Cheval-Légers, etc.

# NAPOLEON'S COMMANDERS (2)

## c1809-15

### STAFF ORGANISATION

THE INTRODUCTION to the first part of this study – Elite 72 – offered some general remarks on the rank structure and career paths of French general officers of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic periods. This therefore seems the place to make some mention of the staff organisation which formed a vital component in the Napoleonic system of command and control.

The staff system of the French Army had evolved prior to the French Revolution and was acknowledged to be considerably more efficient than those of some other armies; it developed further during the Revolutionary Wars, and was refined by Napoleon. In addition to the general officers in command of formations (from army down to brigade), although there was no permanent staff corps *per se*, there was a small body of professional staff officers, originally styled *adjutants-généraux*, re-named by Napoleon as *adjutants-commandants*. Versed in all staff and administrative duties, they were able to act as chief-of-staff to a divisional commander, and as assistants to the chief-of-staff of a *corps d'armée*, who was himself often a general. The *adjutants-commandants* were assisted by lower-ranking staff officers styled *adjoints*, who were usually detached from regimental duties. These officers were usually drawn from the cavalry and infantry; the technical services, artillery and engineers, normally provided their staff officers from their own personnel.



Henri-Gratien Bertrand (1773-1844), one of Napoleon's most loyal servants. A general of engineers, he commanded IV Corps in 1813, and in November of that year was appointed Grand Marshal of the Palace in succession to Duroc, killed at Bautzen. He is best known for having accompanied Napoleon to St Helena, where he and his half-English wife Fanny shared the exile of the former emperor. Bertrand was one of the delegation which accompanied Napoleon's body back to France in 1840.

#### Napoleon's general and battlefield headquarters

The largest and most important staff organisation was Napoleon's *grand quartier-général* (general headquarters), which increased with the size of the field army until it numbered several thousand individuals. It included the army general staff and its associated administrative and commissariat departments, but at its head was Napoleon's own 'household' (*maison*) of his personal staff. Included within the *maison* was the *cabinet* or secretarial department, which was largely responsible for the transmission of orders and for liaison with the military and civilian departments of the Empire; and the *bureau topographique*. From 1804 this latter was superintended by one of Napoleon's most valuable assistants, Louis-Albert-Ghislain Bacler d'Albe (1761-1824), who despite his crucial role only became a *général de brigade* in 1813; he was also considerably distinguished as an artist. The Topographical Bureau was

the planning centre of the army, responsible for the maps and the *carnets* (notebooks) – the invaluable references in which were recorded up-to-date details of the strength of Napoleon's own forces and the latest intelligence on those of the enemy.

The 'little headquarters' (*petit quartier-général*) which accompanied Napoleon on the battlefield consisted of his picked assistants: the chief-of-staff (usually Marshal Berthier) and a duty officer (usually a marshal); the Grand Marshal of the Palace (Napoleon's friend Géraud-Christophe-Michel Duroc until his death at Bautzen); the Master of the Horse (*Grand Ecuyer*, most notably Armand de Caulaincourt); Napoleon's ADCs and orderly officers; an equerry; his personal servant (usually the Mameluke Roustam); a page bearing his telescope; a trooper carrying a folio of maps; and an immediate bodyguard, sometimes styled the *picquet*, usually drawn from the Chasseurs à Cheval of the Imperial Guard



An *adjoint* as depicted in a print by Martinet; the single-breasted *surtout* is dark blue throughout, with epaulettes, and two gold loops on each side of the collar – cf Plate G3. According to regulations the breeches should have been blue, and no plume was specified (both are shown here as white), but such variations are recorded. The horse-furniture is dark blue with gold lace.

Napoleon and his staff visit the wounded on Lobau, the island in the Danube where the casualties of Aspern-Essling were taken. Napoleon is accompanied by a marshal and one of his *officiers d'ordonnance* (right). (Print after F.de Myrbach)

and generally composed of a lieutenant, a sergeant, two corporals, 22 troopers and a trumpeter. Further protection was provided by a 'service squadron' drawn in rotation from the Guard cavalry, which was always nearby.

Napoleon's aides-de-camp were different from all other holders of such a position in that all were general officers, hand-picked not only to carry messages but to perform diplomatic tasks in Napoleon's name and to command formations on the battlefield. It was, for example, two of Napoleon's aides, George Mouton (1770–1838) and Jean Rapp, who led the counter-attack which stabilised the position at Essling. Imperial ADCs might be sent on missions far from headquarters, in the way that Rapp defended Danzig in 1813. Each of the imperial aides maintained their own staff of ordinary ADCs.

Staff officers unique to imperial headquarters (and the HQs of satellite kingdoms, like that of Murat in Naples) were the orderly officers, or *officiers d'ordonnance*. Generally about 12 in number, these were lower-ranking officers, but with greater responsibilities than simply couriers like the ordinary ADCs. Although their duties were military, they were assigned originally to the civil department of HQ, their original green uniform (the colour of the livery worn by Napoleon's pages and grooms) being changed to the light blue of the staff of the Master of the Horse in 1809.

The *grand-quartier-général* was superintended by Marshal Berthier, Napoleon's invaluable chief-of-staff, and performed all the tasks not done by the 'little headquarters' (although there was some duplication of effort). It extended as armies became larger, and attached to it were the

**The retreat from Moscow, 1812: Napoleon (centre) and his staff (including Murat, second from right) in furred winter coats, cloaks, and a variety of headdress, receiving intelligence from Russian prisoners under an escort of hussars. (Print after V.Verestchagin)**





commandants and headquarters of the specialist services (artillery and engineers) and such departments as the military treasury. All these officials required the appropriate transportation, involving many vehicles (of which the most important was Napoleon's own coach, almost a mobile HQ), a cavalry escort and gendarmerie detachment to act as the HQ provost unit.

The Intendance – the administrative and logistics service – was headed by the *intendant-général*, most notably Pierre Daru (who became Secretary of State in 1811 and was one of Napoleon's most trusted assistants). This service consisted of a number of grades of official, *commissaires des guerres*, of whom the senior were *commissaires-ordonnateurs*; although uniformed, they were civilians, and personnel of this branch were assigned to formations down to divisional level. Associated with them were the *inspecteurs aux revues*, inspectors of accounts and records, who held military rank and who might be assigned to army or corps headquarters.

#### **Formation headquarters**

The staff of smaller formations resembled those of the general headquarters. A *corps d'armée*, usually commanded by a marshal, had a chief-of-staff (usually a general), often four *adjutants-*



OPPOSITE Napoleon and his staff at Leipzig, 1813, in conversation with engineer officers (right); the variety of uniforms in Napoleon's entourage is probably typical. (Print by Molte after Grenier)

RIGHT Detail from a painting by Eugène Lami of an *officier d'ordonnance* to the emperor, shown in a blue uniform with silver lace and embroidery and a black plume to the hat. Like most of Lami's work, this image dates from slightly later than the subject portrayed: this example is dated 1817. (The Royal Collection © 2001, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II)

OPPOSITE An *officier d'ordonnance* to the emperor (right) greets one of Berthier's ADCs, c1809, the latter wearing the distinctive white dolman, black pelisse and scarlet shako and overalls used by the staff of that marshal – see Elite 72, *Napoleon's Commanders (1): c1792-1809*. The *officier d'ordonnance* wears a light blue uniform, with scarlet waistcoat and silver lace and epaulettes, as introduced in 1809 to replace the original uniform of green with gold lace and aiguillette, and buff waistcoat and breeches – the livery of Napoleon's civil household. Each of these orderly officers was expected to maintain eight horses so as to be able to gallop anywhere at a moment's notice; their horse-furniture is shown alternatively as consisting of a cornflower-blue shabraque with double silver lace edging and an elaborate knot in the rear corners, or a black or leopardskin saddle cover. (Print after Rozat de Madres)



*commandants* (one acting as deputy chief-of-staff), and a number of *adjoints*, ADCs to the commander and chief-of-staff, administrative staff, and the heads of artillery and engineers and their staffs. Divisional staffs were smaller: usually commanded by a *général de division*, they had an *adjutant-commandant* as chief of staff, generally three ADCs and *adjoints*, the divisional artillery commander and administrative staff. A brigade was usually led by a *général de brigade* with one ADC, plus one or more officers detached from their units to serve temporarily as ADCs, who wore regimental uniform with the distinctive ADC brassard to denote their function. (The number of such officers might increase on campaign as casualties reduced the number of official ADCs available for duty.)

Since it involved the transmission of orders and documents, the position of ADC carried considerable responsibility. The British officer Harry Smith joked that because he could both ride and eat he was perfectly qualified to serve as an ADC; but in reality much more than bravery was required. Napoleon commented on this to his brother Joseph: 'the officer whom you sent to me... has neither the education nor the talents which ought to belong to your aide-de-camp... You should choose men of more acuteness, information and cleverness... This man, who was a very good captain of grenadiers, would perhaps be useful at the head of a battalion.'<sup>1</sup> Concerning an ADC's duty, when writing to Eugène in 1807 to order the temporary arrest of the latter's ADC Auguste Bataille de Tancarville for losing a despatch, Napoleon remarked that it was quite permissible for an ADC to lose his breeches, but never his despatches or his sword.

Marbot testified to the hazardous nature of ADCs' duty. He described how they would line up behind their general, carrying out orders in rotation, and having completed their task would rejoin the end of the queue; this was to ensure that none were favoured and that the dangers would be shared equally. He recalled that when he was serving as ADC to

<sup>1</sup> Superior numbers refer to the Source Notes on page 56.



Detail of a painting by Denis Dighton of *Général Pierre Thouvenot* (1757–1817) when governor of Bayonne, 1814, with staff officers. An officer who had held a number of staff appointments and was *général de division* from November 1813, Thouvenot was responsible for the last major action of the Peninsular War, 'the sortie from Bayonne' on 14 April 1814, made when it was known that the war was already over. A pointless action which cost hundreds of lives to no purpose, it was condemned by Wellington as the act of a blackguard; to others it probably appeared to be a last act of defiance in the face of defeat. (The Royal Collection, © 2001, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II)

Augereau at Eylau, the first two officers in the queue were killed attempting to carry a message, so that when it came to Marbot's turn 'the kind marshal's face changed, and his eyes filled with tears, for he could not hide from himself that he was sending me to almost certain death'<sup>2</sup>. The devotion of such officers is demonstrated by Marbot himself at Aspern-Essling; although suffering from a large shot-hole in the thigh, he realised that Marshal Lannes had only one, very inexperienced aide left standing. Marbot had

some coarse tow gun-wadding packed into the hole in his leg and rode off to rejoin his marshal, and was thus on hand to care for Lannes when he received his mortal wound.

### Garrison headquarters

A separate organisation existed for officers stationed in fortresses or fortified cities. The senior officer – generally styled the *gouverneur*, sometimes *commandant de place*, though this was also used for a subordinate officer under the *gouverneur* – might hold any rank from *chef de bataillon* upwards, depending upon the importance of the place. They were assisted by *adjutants de place*, generally officers of company grade (i.e. up to captain), and the usual administrative personnel together with the fortress's heads of artillery and engineers. At Badajoz during the siege of 1812, for example, the *gouverneur* Armand Philippon (*général de division*) was assisted by his second-in-command *général de brigade* Michel Veiland (1767–1845), with a Major Charpentier as *commandant de place*; the two generals each had two ADCs. There were four officers of the general staff, the artillery and engineers each had a colonel in command, and the administration included a *commissaire des guerres* and a *sous-inspecteur aux revues*.

Those members of staff assigned exclusively as garrison officers (*officiers de place*) were distinguished by the use of red waistcoat and breeches with the ordinary uniform, and were often individuals whose health precluded them from field service, either by disability or temporary convalescence. As such they were sometimes the butt of jokes from the more active soldiers, and it is true that some commandants of fortifications were unimpressive – for example Général Jean-Claude Moreau (1755–1828), who surrendered Soissons in 1814, and who would have been shot had the Empire not collapsed before Napoleon could carry out his threat. Many others were stalwart, like Philippon, or the valiant Général Pierre Daumesnil (1777–1832), who demonstrated that physical disability did not imply lack of courage. He lost his left leg at Wagram, but a more determined officer could not have been found. In 1814 and 1815 he defended Vincennes with great resolution, remarking on the former occasion, when called upon to surrender, that the Austrians had taken one leg, and that they should either give it back or come on and try to take the other.



Detail from a painting by N.D.Finart, c1813, of an ADC to a *général de brigade*, wearing a blue uniform with light blue facings and gold lace; the brassard is a mixture of blue and gold, and the plume light blue. (The Royal Collection © 2001, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II)

## BIOGRAPHIES

### **BEAUHARNAIS, Général Eugène-Rose de, Viceroy of Italy (1781-1824)**

Napoleon possessed no more loyal subordinate than his stepson Eugène de Beauharnais (see Plate G), of whom he observed that whenever a cannon fired, it was Eugène who ran to see what was happening, and if he (Napoleon) ever had to cross a ditch, it was Eugène's hand which was first stretched out to help him. Eugène's affection for his stepfather was entirely reciprocated.

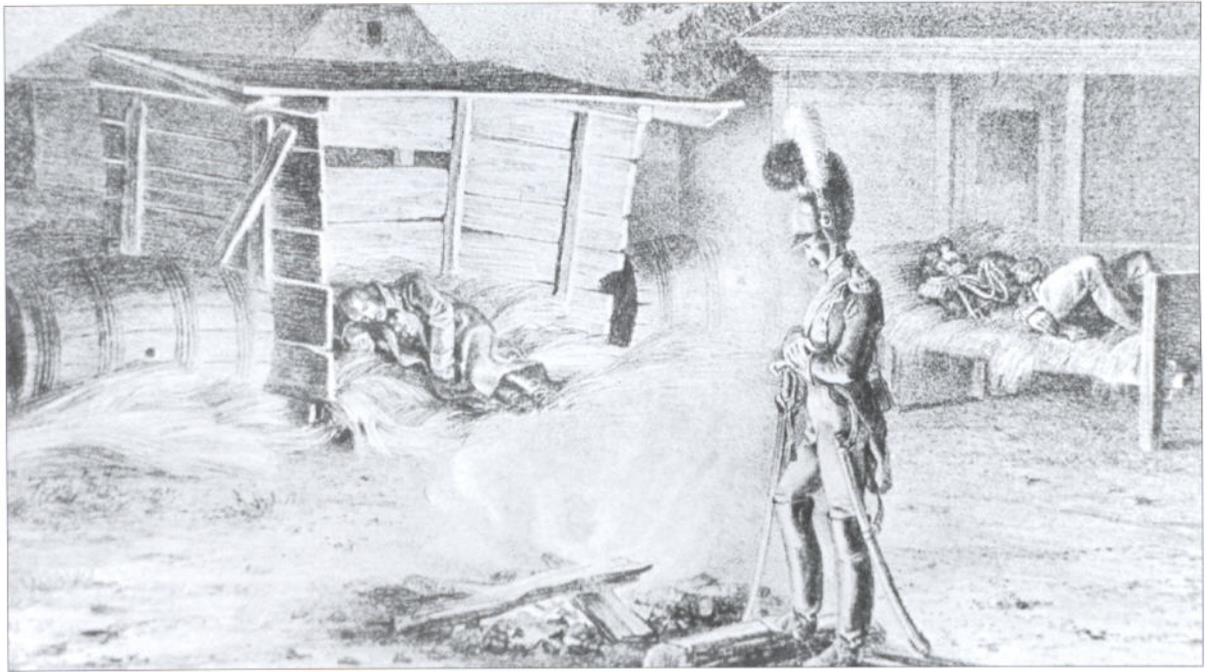
Eugène was the only son of Alexandre, Vicomte de Beauharnais (1760-94) and his wife, the future Empress Josephine. In 1793 Alexandre was appointed to command the Army of the Rhine, but his lack of success aroused unwarranted accusations of treason, and he was guillotined in June 1794. At this low point in his family's fortunes Eugène was apprenticed to a carpenter, in accordance with the order that all children of aristocrats had to learn a trade; and he first encountered Napoleon when, as a 14-year-old boy, he requested the return of his father's confiscated

sword. Initially he resented his mother's marriage to Napoleon, but he became a devoted follower after he was appointed Napoleon's ADC in June 1797, when it was observed that he possessed 'an excellent heart, a fine courage, strict honour, great generosity and frankness, with an obliging and amiable temper'<sup>3</sup>. He served in Egypt (wounded in the head by a shell at Acre) and at Marengo, and in October 1804 was promoted to general and appointed commandant of the Chasseurs à Cheval of the Imperial Guard.

Napoleon was so impressed by him that on 7 June 1805 Eugène was appointed Viceroy of Italy, a large task for a man of 23 even though he ruled under Napoleon's instructions; but his qualities were obvious, and Napoleon remarked that people would regard him more for what he would become than for what they perceived him to be. His rule was beneficial to his subjects, and he worked so hard that in 1806 Napoleon had to chide him for not paying sufficient attention to his young wife, Princess Auguste-Amélie of Bavaria. Although the marriage had been arranged by Napoleon it was a genuine love-match, Eugène proving to be a devoted husband and father. In 1809 he led the Army of Italy, was checked at Sacile but won a victory at Raab (Macdonald serving as his assistant); and he was distinguished at Wagram. In 1812 he again led the Army of Italy (IV Corps of the Grande Armée), notably at Borodino and Maloyaroslavets; and took command of the remnant of the army after Murat went home. He served well at Lützen and then took command of the Army of Observation of Italy, defending Italy with some skill until the collapse of Napoleon's empire. His unwavering loyalty was exemplified by his refusal of the Allies' offer to make him King of Italy if he abandoned Napoleon; Eugène dismissed it as a dishonourable way of obtaining a crown.



**Eugène de Beauharnais (1781-1824), Napoleon's stepson and adopted son, a French general officer from 1804 and Viceroy of Italy from 5 June 1805. This print depicts what was evidently Eugène's favoured campaign uniform; the artist, Albrecht Adam (1786-1862), accompanied Eugène's corps in the Russian campaign of 1812 and observed him at first hand.**



Eugène on campaign, when commanding the Army of Italy (IV Corps of the Grande Armée) in Russia; his bivouac on the night of 8/9 July 1812 was drawn by Albrecht Adam. Eugène is asleep on the straw (left); his old ADC, General Joseph Triare (1764–1850), lies on the crude bedstead, while a member of the Gardes d'Honneur of the Kingdom of Italy watches the fire. (Print after Adam)

He promised his father-in-law (King Maximilian I Joseph of Bavaria) not to become involved in any more of Napoleon's schemes, and had no opportunity to participate in the Hundred Days campaign. Eugène retired to Munich with the titles of Duke of Leuchtenberg and Prince of Eichstädt (1817), where he spent much time on the welfare of old soldiers and comrades, until his death from cerebral haemorrhage at the tragically early age of 42 on 21 February 1824. He was not a commander of the first rank; in 1809 Napoleon remarked that he should have given Massena the overall command in Italy, with the Viceroy acting as his cavalry commander, simply because Eugène had so little experience of command. Nevertheless, his entire career fulfilled his motto, 'Honour and Fidelity'.

#### **BONAPARTE, Jérôme, King of Westphalia (1784–1860)**

Napoleon's youngest brother (see Plate E) was also the most ineffective and least talented, his career marked by serious disagreements with Napoleon. Jérôme left the Consular Guard after Davout's brother wounded him in a duel, and in 1800 he entered the navy. Although he rose to the rank of *lieutenant de vaisseau* in 1802 his career was undistinguished; he left his ship in the Caribbean, travelled to America and in December 1803 married Elizabeth Patterson of Baltimore. Napoleon was furious, stating that unless Jérôme 'is disposed to wipe out the dishonour he has attached to my name in abandoning his flag and his nationality for an unworthy woman, I shall wash my hands of him'; and he forbade Elizabeth entry into any of his territories. Temporarily she took refuge in England, giving birth to Jérôme's son in Camberwell; but Napoleon had the marriage annulled and Jérôme returned to the navy, rising to the rank of *contre-amiral* in September 1806. In that year he commanded Bavarian troops and in 1807 led IX Corps of the Grande Armée, even before his official appointment as *général de division*.



Jérôme Bonaparte, King of Westphalia (1784–1860), wearing his extremely elaborate court dress, which for princes of the imperial family consisted of a white frock-coat, breeches and cape, all with gold embroidery. The gold-trimmed crimson horse-furniture bears 'JN' – 'Jérôme Napoléon' – on the holster caps. Napoleon's youngest and least impressive brother did not long enjoy the Westphalian throne on which he was placed; but Jérôme's son Napoleon-Joseph-Charles-Paul, alias 'Plon-Plon' (1822–91), became heir to the Napoleonic succession. (Engraving by M. Haider after Gros)

In July 1807 Napoleon installed him as King of Westphalia and married him to Princess Frederica Catherina of Württemberg. Jérôme was not a successful monarch; even the loyal Marbot commented that all Napoleon's brothers were 'utter nullities, whose only merit was being Napoleon's brothers. The hatred and contempt that these new kings brought on themselves contributed very largely to the fall of the Emperor. The King of Westphalia was especially that one whose goings on made most enemies for Napoleon'<sup>5</sup>. Jérôme's subjects called him 'Heliogabalus in miniature' (referring to the notoriously profligate Roman emperor, killed in AD 222 in a revolt by the Praetorians); and Napoleon remarked on his 'boundless extravagance, and the most odious libertinism'<sup>6</sup> which, together with involvement in Napoleon's campaigns, almost reduced Westphalia to penury. In 1809 there was an abortive revolt by army officers against Jérôme, who in that year commanded X Corps of the Grande Armée.

Napoleon's opinion of Jérôme's military abilities is demonstrated by a message he sent in July 1809: 'You must be a soldier... bivouac with your outposts... march with your advance guard... or else remain in your seraglio. You wage war like a satrap... [your] good qualities [are] spoiled by silliness, by great presumption, and [you] have no real knowledge. In God's name keep enough wits about you to write and speak with propriety'<sup>7</sup>.

In the 1812 campaign Jérôme commanded VIII Corps, but went home early after a quarrel with Napoleon over his lethargy and his unwillingness to take orders from the experienced Davout (Marbot criticised his bungling, but also commented that such a person should never have been given such a command). In 1813 Westphalia rose against him, and Jérôme fled to France; Napoleon reportedly told him, 'you shall not be near me. You are hateful to me. Your conduct disgusts me. I know no one so base, so stupid, so cowardly: you are destitute of virtue, talents and resources. I hate you as much as I hate Lucien'<sup>8</sup> (another of their brothers).

Jérôme then went abroad; but he rallied to Napoleon in 1815 and at Waterloo commanded a division of Reille's Corps, expending resources to little effect in his attempts to capture Hougomont. Criticism of his handling of this command may be exaggerated, however, as it is possible that he believed Napoleon had ordered its capture at all costs; and in any case Reille was nominally his superior and should share the responsibility. After Napoleon's fall Jérôme was kept under semi-house arrest by his father-in-law but, having been given the title of Count of Montfort, was permitted to go abroad. He lived in Trieste, Italy and Switzerland until his return to France in 1847. In 1850 he was appointed a Marshal of France, and in 1852 became president of the Senate.

### **BONAPARTE, Joseph, King of Naples and of Spain (1768-1844)**

A decent man with liberal inclinations and a taste for literature, the eldest of the Bonaparte brothers (see Plate K) was pressed into Napoleon's service only with reluctance, and into roles for which he was entirely unsuited. Trained in law, his services to Napoleon were originally in the diplomatic rather than the military field: he served as French minister to Parma and Rome, represented Corsica in the Council of Five Hundred, and assisted in the negotiations of the Convention of Montfontaine (his own country house) with the USA, and with the treaties of Lunéville and Amiens. When Napoleon was campaigning in 1805 Joseph acted as his deputy, and in January 1806 was appointed *général de division* and sent to Naples with a French army.

Following the expulsion of the Bourbon monarchy (which took refuge in Sicily), on 31 March 1806 Joseph was appointed King of Naples in their stead. He was a benevolent ruler who introduced beneficial reforms despite shortage of funds, and only with reluctance did he substitute the crown of Spain for that of Naples, on Napoleon's instruction. He was proclaimed King of Spain on 6 June 1808, Napoleon telling him that 'at Madrid you are in France; Naples is the end of the world'; but he was never accepted by the majority of the Spanish population, and the Peninsular War was a consequence of his imposition in place of the legitimate monarchy. Unfitted for his role and militarily unskilled, Joseph was under Napoleon's domination and relied heavily upon the commanders appointed to assist him. He was despondent from the beginning; in July 1808 he told Napoleon that 'The honest people are as little on my side as the rogues are... your glory will be shipwrecked in Spain. My tomb will be a monument to your lack of power to support me'. His complaints became more desperate: 'I have not your entire confidence, and yet without it my position is not tenable... I have no real



**Guillaume-Marie-Anne Brune (1763-1815), whose military career enjoyed most success during the Revolutionary Wars. Among the first creation of the marshalate, he fell from Napoleon's favour in 1807 for continuing to express his Republican ideals, and was unemployed until 1815. He was thrown back into prominence during the Hundred Days when Napoleon appointed him to command at Toulon; but while travelling to Paris on 2 August 1815 he was set upon and murdered by a Royalist mob at Avignon, and his body thrown into the Rhône. (Engraving by E.Heinemann after Benoist)**

Joseph Bonaparte, King of Spain; note the badge of the Order of the Golden Fleece (which he had received in 1805) just visible at the lower opening of his lapels. This print exemplifies Lejeune's remark that Joseph's 'fine face reflected all his amiable qualities'. Napoleon said of his eldest brother: 'I doubt not that [Joseph] would do everything in the world to serve me. But his qualities are only suited to private life. His is a gentle and kind disposition' (Las Cases Vol.II p.192). Ironically, the régime which he attempted to establish in Spain was based on more liberal principals than any displayed by the restored monarchy after his defeat. (Engraving by L. Rados after J.B. Bosio)



power beyond Madrid, and even at Madrid I am every day counteracted... without any capital, without any revenue, without any money, what can I do?... my misery is as much as I can bear... if there is on earth a man whom you esteem or love more than you do me, I ought not to be King of Spain, and my happiness requires me to cease to be so<sup>9</sup>.

Despite Napoleon's reassurances the situation in the Iberian peninsula deteriorated, and Joseph was unable to overcome the mutual lack of co-operation between the French marshals. His defeat at Vittoria effectively decided the war, and Joseph quit his kingdom. Napoleon blamed him, somewhat unfairly, for many of the reasons for defeat in Spain; yet Joseph again acted as Napoleon's deputy, and in 1814 gave Marmont the authority to negotiate a truce which led to the surrender of Paris, arousing Napoleon's anger even further. During the Hundred

Days Joseph headed the council of ministers during Napoleon's absence. He went abroad after the final defeat, visiting England and America under the title of Comte de Survilliers, until he settled in Florence in 1839, where he died. Although Napoleon once remarked (before Joseph became king) that unlike himself, he had never risen above the surroundings of his birth, he never really doubted that Joseph had honestly done his best, so that 'the principal fault rested not so much with him as with me, who raised him above his proper sphere'<sup>10</sup>.

**CAULAINCOURT, Général Armand-Augustin-Louis, Marquis de, Duc de Vincence (1773-1827)**

One of the most valuable of Napoleon's subordinates, Caulaincourt was one of those general officers whose principal service was in the diplomatic sphere. The son of Général Gabriel-Louis, Marquis de Caulaincourt (1741-1808), he joined the French cavalry in 1788, was commissioned in the following year, and served as his father's ADC in the Army of the North in 1792. Deprived of his commission as an aristocrat, he enlisted as a private soldier and worked his way up through the ranks, surviving much hard service and many wounds. After a diplomatic mission to St Petersburg in 1800 he was appointed Napoleon's ADC in 1802 and a *général de brigade* in the following year. Napoleon recognised the breadth of his talents, for he appointed him his Master of the Horse in 1804 and *général de division* in 1805; ennobled as the Duc de Vincence (Vicenza) in 1808, after service with the general staff he was sent as ambassador to Russia in 1807-11. Caulaincourt was at Napoleon's side during the campaigns of 1812 and 1813, succeeding Duroc as Grand Marshal of the Palace; he negotiated the armistice of 1813, and from that November served as Foreign Minister, and again during the Hundred Days. He was proscribed after the Second Restoration, but was allowed to return to France following the intervention of the Tsar; he had no further official employment, but wrote a notable account of the 1812-14 period in his memoirs.

His younger brother was **Général Auguste-Jean-Gabriel, Comte de Caulaincourt (1777-1812)**, who entered the French cavalry in 1792 and after extensive service (including Marengo, where he was wounded), served as Louis Bonaparte's Master of the Horse and ADC. *Général de division* from 1809, he served in the Peninsula, and in 1812

Armand-Augustin-Louis de Caulaincourt, Duc de Vincence (1773-1827). Although perhaps best known as one of Napoleon's most important diplomats, he saw much active service in the cavalry before becoming Napoleon's ADC. (Engraving by Hopwood after Gérard)





FAR LEFT Henri-Jacques-Guillaume Clarke, Duc de Feltre (1765–1818). Commissioned in the French Army in 1782, this officer of English descent became a *général de division* in 1795; as War Minister from 1807 to 1814 he was one of Napoleon's closest associates. He joined the Bourbons in 1814 and remained loyal to them in 1815, becoming a marshal in 1816 (as shown here: his baton bears fleurs-de-lys in place of eagles). (Engraving by C.State after G.D.J.Descamps)

LEFT Général Philibert-Guillaume Duhesme (1766–1815), an officer of long service whose record was marred by reports of plundering and cruelty. Perhaps the two most memorable incidents in his career were separated by almost 18 years. At Dirshheim on 20 August 1797 he rallied his men and led the charge by beating upon a drum with the pommel of his sword – the incident illustrated; and while commanding the Young Guard at Waterloo, he earned great distinction by his defence of Plancenoit against the Prussians, until mortally wounded by a musket ball in the head. (Print after Perrigeon)

commanded Napoleon's HQ. At Borodino he was sent to lead II Cavalry Corps after Montbrun's death, and was ordered by Murat to take the Great Redoubt. 'You shall see me there presently, dead or alive'<sup>11</sup> was his reply; the position was taken, but he was shot dead leading the charge. He was a great loss; but as Rapp commented, 'He slept the sleep of the brave; he was not a witness of our disasters'<sup>12</sup>.

### **COLBERT, Général Edouard de, Comte de Colbert-Chabanais (1774–1853)**

Edouard de Colbert (whose real first names were Pierre-David) was the eldest of three brothers who all became generals of cavalry in Napoleon's army. The best known was probably Auguste-François-Marie (1777–1809) – see Elite 72 – who was killed at Cacabellos; the third was Louis-Pierre-Alphonse (1776–1843), who served as Murat's ADC, became *général de brigade* in 1814, and led the 1st Brigade of Subervie's 5th Cavalry Division in the 1815 campaign.

Edouard (see Plate L) began his military career in 1793 and was commissioned in 1795, but was suspended on account of his aristocratic background. He went on the Egyptian campaign in the commissariat, but despite reservations about his background was there provisionally appointed a captain of dragoons. In 1802 he served in the Mamelukes of the Imperial Guard; was then ADC to Junot and Berthier (1803–06); and in December 1806 was appointed colonel of the 7e Hussards. He served at Eylau, Heilsberg and Friedland (where he sustained three lance wounds); he became *général de brigade* in March 1809, and in the campaign of that year led the light cavalry of II Corps at Wagram. In March 1811 he took command of the 2e Cheveau-Légiers of the Imperial

Guard (the 'Red Lancers'), and from somewhat unpromising beginnings – originally as part of the army of the Kingdom of Holland – he turned them into one of the best regiments in the army. He led them in Russia in 1812 and Germany in 1813; he became *général de division* in November 1813, helping to organise a dragoon division, but returned to his regiment for the 1814 campaign.

Colbert retained his command at the First Restoration (the regiment being re-titled as the Cheval-Légers-Lanciers de France), and rejoined Napoleon in 1815 when he led the combined Guard lancer regiment. Wounded in the left arm near Quatre Bras, he famously led his men in the charges at Waterloo with the arm in a sling. Imprisoned briefly and retired upon the Second Restoration, he was later reinstated and held a number of administrative commands from 1828. Wounded by the explosion of Fieschi's 'device' when it killed Mortier in 1835, he recovered to serve in Algeria (1836).

### **DROUOT, Général Antoine, Comte (1774–1847)**

Perhaps influenced by the loyalty displayed by this general in following him to Elba, Napoleon remarked that there was no such artillery commander in the world as Antoine Drouot. Commissioned in the artillery at the age of 19, this son of a baker from Nancy served in the Netherlands and Germany (including Fleurus and Hohenlinden), and was one of the very few men present at arguably the era's greatest battles both on land and sea – Trafalgar and Waterloo; at the former he was one of a small number of artillery officers serving with the fleet (aboard the *Indomptable*). In August 1808 he transferred from the Line to the Guard artillery, with which he served in Spain and in the Danube campaign of 1809, being hit by a grapeshot on the right foot at Wagram, which left him with a limp.

A colonel in the 1812 campaign, although one of the most respected of officers (Napoleon called him 'the sage of the army' from his learned manner), he attracted some criticism from subordinates for seeming to care most for his own welfare and declining to share his food. Nevertheless, he served well at Borodino, and Macdonald found him 'the most upright and modest man I have ever known – well educated, brave, devoted, simple in manners. His character was lofty and of rare probity'<sup>13</sup>. In January 1813 Drouot was appointed *général de brigade* and aide to Napoleon; he led the Guard with distinction in the 1813 campaign, became *général de division* in September 1813 and a *comte* in the following month, and served through the 1814 campaign. In action (when for reasons of superstition he often wore an old artillery uniform, in which he had never been wounded) he always dismounted and stood among his gunners, to share their risks. He always carried a Bible and made no attempt to disguise his piety. Loyal following Napoleon, he became governor of Elba, and commanded the

The striking features of the artilleryman Antoine Drouot (1774–1847), an officer distinguished for both professional competence and personal decency. Macdonald recalled an incident which exemplified Napoleon's esteem for him: in 1813, having scolded Drouot over the time he was taking to build a bridge, when Drouot had gone Napoleon said to those present, 'That is a good man; he is very distinguished, full of merit, modest, and a first-rate mathematician' (Macdonald, Vol. II p.355). Although promoted *général de brigade* only in 1813, Drouot's leadership of the Guard brought him the rank of divisional general and ennoblement as a count before the end of that year. His behaviour during the events of 1814–15 confirmed his character. (Lithograph after Maurier)



Imperial Guard in the Waterloo campaign. The Bourbons charged him with treason, and far from attempting to escape he voluntarily surrendered himself. Although acquitted, he declined to serve the monarchy and retired.

### **FOY, Général Maximilien-Sébastien (1775–1825)**

Marked by Napoleon as among the next generation of marshals, Foy was one of his most able and gallant lower-ranking commanders. Half English on his mother's side, he followed his father into the French Army and was commissioned in the artillery in 1792. He saw extensive service, and survived imprisonment in 1794 for criticising the extremism of the government. Indeed, his liberal principles led him to oppose both Napoleon's consulcy for life and the establishment of the Empire, which probably hindered his advancement. He gained his reputation in the Peninsula: wounded at Vimeiro commanding the artillery reserve, he became a *général de brigade* in November 1808, led a brigade at Corunna in 1809, was wounded at Busaco in 1810, and was sent by Massena to inform Napoleon of the French position stalled in front of the Lines of Torres Vedras. Promoted to *général de division* by Napoleon in person, he returned to the Peninsula, where he led the 1st Division of the Army of Portugal at Salamanca, and was defeated at Garcia Hernandez while covering the retreat. In the Pyrenees he was hit in the shoulder by a shrapnel ball at Orthez.

Although employed by the Bourbons, he joined Napoleon in 1815, being ennobled as a *comte* in May. While leading the 9th Division against Hougoumont at Waterloo he was hit in the shoulder. Although employed again as early as 1819, he became more prominent in politics as a liberal deputy, and Wellington remarked that 'Foy was a greater man in their Parliament than in war'<sup>14</sup>. He enjoyed a high reputation and great popularity, but his career (and the writing of a history of the Peninsular War) was curtailed by his early death from a heart complaint, aged only 50.

More than once Wellington recalled a curious fact: that in the Peninsula Foy used to borrow English newspapers from the opposing British troops. Afraid that this was a way of him gaining intelligence, Wellington asked Foy the reason: he replied that he needed to see the papers to check the state of his investments in British government stock! A compromise was reached whereby Foy was told the state of the market whenever he pleased, but was not allowed to see the remainder of the news...

### **GÉRARD, Général Maurice-Etienne, Comte (1773–1852)**

As Marbot remarked, Gérard (see Plate L) 'had plenty of talent and courage, and a great instinct for war'<sup>15</sup>, which made him one of the most capable of Napoleon's generals. The son of a royal servant, he volunteered for the army in 1791 and was commissioned in 1792. In April 1795 he was appointed as ADC to Bernadotte, the beginning of a long association with that marshal. *Général de brigade* from November 1806, he served as Bernadotte's chief of staff and survived his chief's dismissal in 1809. After serving in the Peninsula, where he led a brigade at Fuentes de Oñoro, he went home to recover his health. In Russia in 1812 he led a brigade in Gudin's division of I Corps, succeeding to command of the

Maximilien-Sébastien Foy (1775–1825), who became well known and respected among his British contemporaries. The career of this capable general was almost cut short in March 1809 when he was captured by the Portuguese at Oporto, and was mistaken for the hated (and one-armed) Gen. Louis-Henri Loison, whose brutality as French governor had been notorious. Foy only saved himself from being murdered on the spot by holding up both hands to prove that he had two. (Engraving by G.Kruell after Gérard)



division after Gudin was killed at Valutina. Promoted to *général de division*, he was distinguished during the retreat from Russia, serving with the rearguard. In 1813 he held divisional commands before stepping up to lead XI Corps, and was several times wounded – severely at Leipzig. Further distinguished in 1814, he took over II Corps from Victor; but, never the most ardent Bonapartist, he supported Napoleon's deposition, and was sent to relieve Davout in command of the beleaguered XIII Corps at Hamburg.

Employed by the Bourbons, he seems to have been ambivalent about Napoleon's return in 1815, but did rally to him and was given command of IV Corps for the Waterloo campaign. He recommended the untrustworthy Royalist Général Louis-Auguste-Victor Bourmont

(1773–1846), assuring Napoleon that he would answer for Bourmont's loyalty with his head; when Bourmont duly deserted, Napoleon demonstrated his regard for Gérard by tapping him on the cheek and saying, 'This head's mine, isn't it? But I need it too much!'. Gérard served at Ligny, and on the day of Waterloo urged Grouchy to march towards the sound of gunfire; had his advice been followed, the closing stages of the battle might have been different. A wound in the chest at Wavre ended Gérard's participation in the campaign, and he fled to Belgium at the Second Restoration. He returned to France in 1817 and entered politics as a liberal, assisting in the 1830 Revolution and receiving his marshal's baton in October 1830 – arguably, much later than warranted by his talents. Subsequently he held important posts, including (twice) Minister of War, and in 1832 he led the army which broke the siege of Antwerp; but his loyalty to Louis-Philippe led him to decline further employment after 1848. Principled if quick-tempered, Gérard retained his deserved military reputation.

### **GOUVION SAINT-CYR, Maréchal Laurent, Marquis de (1764–1830)**

Born Laurent Gouvion, this officer (see Plate B) adopted the name Saint-Cyr after the mother who had abandoned him as a child. Having no enthusiasm for the family business (tanning and butchery), he studied as an artist and actor before enlisting in the army in September 1792. By November he had been elected as a captain (perhaps because of his violently Republican sentiments); by June 1794 he was *général de division*, and enjoyed a distinguished career in the Revolutionary Wars. Never an affable companion, he had a reputation for being difficult to collaborate with, appeared cold and morose (hence his nickname *le hibou*, 'the owl') and, personally incorruptible, despised those of his colleagues who (like Massena) had a penchant for looting. He declined to support Napoleon's elevation to emperor, and so despite his military abilities was not among the first creation of the marshalate. His career stalled in 1805 when he refused to serve under Massena, and he was only recalled to duty in 1808, to command in Catalonia, from where he was withdrawn for having failed to capture Gerona. In Spain it was noted that he was 'accounted... an honourable and upright man, who scorned to violate the humanities of civilised warfare'<sup>16</sup>. Nevertheless he fell into further disfavour, and was even accused of desertion, for leaving before the arrival of his successor Augereau.

Marbot claimed that Saint-Cyr was employed only out of necessity and that those with whom he was supposed to co-operate dreaded his presence; but even so judged him to be 'one of the most able soldiers in Europe... I never knew anyone handle troops in battle better... It was impossible to find a calmer man; the greatest danger, disappointments, defeats, were alike unable to move him... he was like ice. It may be easily understood of what advantage such a character, backed by a taste for study and meditation, was to a general officer'.

These talents caused Napoleon to recall him to command VI Corps for the 1812 campaign, when he showed both sides of his nature. Resenting being placed under Oudinot's command, he declined to co-operate or offer advice when that marshal was in difficulty; but when he assumed command upon Oudinot being wounded Saint-Cyr 'seized the reins of



**Laurent Gouvion Saint-Cyr (1764–1830).** For all his considerable military talents, Marbot stated that he looked more like a professor than a general: tall and of distinguished, almost academic appearance, he preferred to wear a plain blue coat instead of uniform and epaulettes. (Lithograph by Delpech)

introduced reforms which transformed the French Army; but he retired in 1819 to spend his time with his family, to whom he was devoted, and in writing and agriculture.

**GROUCHY, Maréchal Emmanuel, Marquis de (1766–1847)**

Unusually for a member of the higher ranks of Napoleon's army, Grouchy (see Plate B) was a genuine aristocrat of the Ancien Régime who had served in the Scottish Company of the Garde du Corps, one of the most exclusive units in the army. Although he supported the Revolution, in 1793 he was suspended from duty on account of his noble background, but was permitted to return and in April 1795 was *général de division*. He was Hoche's deputy in the abortive expedition to Bantry Bay, in which Wolfe Tone commented that Grouchy 'took his part decidedly, like a man of spirit' despite the ill-preparedness of the venture ('we have nothing but the arms in our hands, the clothes on our backs, and a good courage.'<sup>18</sup>) Subsequently he served as Moreau's chief of staff, suffered 14 wounds at Novi, and led a division at Hohenlinden; but perhaps because of his family connections, his protests against the establishment of the Consulate, and his association with Moreau, he was excluded from Napoleon's special favour. He won distinction commanding cavalry at

command with a firm and capable hand, and in a few hours the aspect of things changed entirely – so great is the influence of an able man who knows how to inspire confidence'<sup>17</sup>. The result was Saint-Cyr's greatest success, at Polotsk, for which he finally received his promotion to marshal. In October 1812 he had to leave the army after suffering a severe wound in the left foot, and caught typhus when he returned to duty. In 1813 he led XIV Corps with distinction, but was captured upon the surrender of Dresden in November.

Serving neither king nor Napoleon during the Hundred Days, he became War Minister after Waterloo, but was forced from office by the ultra-Royalists. Back in favour in 1817, he was ennobled as a marquis, and as War Minister once again he

Emmanuel, Marquis de Grouchy (1766–1847) was an able and much-wounded cavalry commander whose progress to high rank in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic army was hampered by his aristocratic background and disadvantageous family connections. His elder sister Sophie (1764–1822) was married to the philosopher, mathematician and politician Marie-Jean, Marquis de Condorcet (1743–94), a moderate Republican who fell from favour for supporting the Girondins; she shared his ideals and her salon attracted those opposed to the existence of monarchy and empire. Another sister, Charlotte-Félicité, was married to the distinguished physiologist and sometime politician Pierre-Jean Cabanis (1757–1808), who was notably hostile to Napoleon. (Engraving after J.S.Rouillard)



Eylau and Friedland, and in 1808 was largely responsible for suppressing the insurrection at Madrid; but after having served under Eugène in Italy, and at Wagram, without having received advancement, he went into semi-retirement. In 1812 he was recalled to lead III Cavalry Corps; he was hit in the breast by a grapeshot at Borodino, but on the retreat from Moscow he led the 'sacred battalion' of officers who had lost their commands. Not having received the position he wanted, Grouchy retired in 1813 on health grounds, but was back as a cavalry commander in December of that year, and was wounded in the thigh at Craonne.

He accepted service under the Bourbons but rallied to Napoleon in 1815, when he was finally appointed as a marshal (15 April 1815) – the last made by Napoleon. After fighting at Ligny in command of

Napoleon's right wing, he was charged with pursuing the Prussians as they fell back on Wavre, and suffered much criticism for following these orders rather than marching towards the sound of gunfire at Waterloo, as urged by his subordinates. Perhaps there was an element of lethargy in his conduct, but the violence of the criticism was surely unjustified. Withdrawing in good order, he very briefly took command of what remained of the whole Army of the North (26–28 June). Proscribed by the Bourbons, he fled to Guernsey and thence to Philadelphia. He was permitted to return to France in June 1820, but only after the accession of Louis-Philippe was he restored to his rank as marshal (November 1831), and in the following October to the Chamber of Peers. For all his long service, it was for his conduct on 18 June 1815 that he remained best known, and he devoted considerable efforts to vindicating his behaviour on that day.

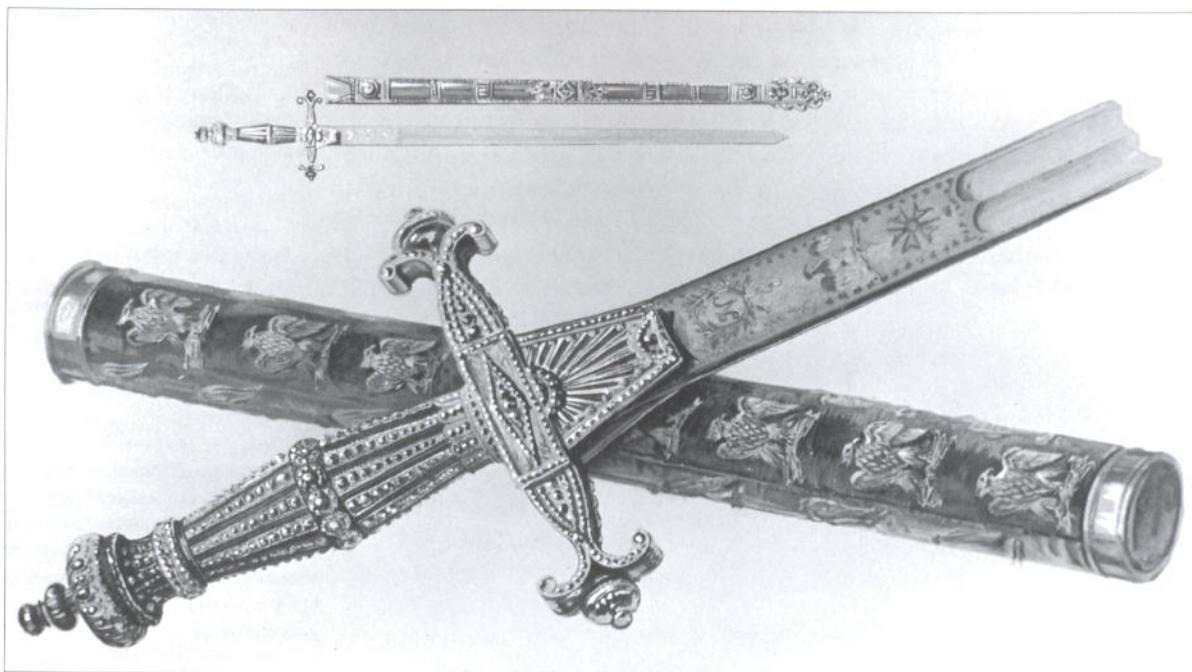
### **JOURDAN, Maréchal Jean-Baptiste, Comte (1762–1833)**

A commander whose active career extended throughout the Revolutionary and Empire period, Jourdan (see Plate K) was the son of a surgeon, born at Limoges. He enlisted in the French army at an early age (1778), served in the American War of Independence, and left the army in 1784 to become a cloth merchant in the town of his birth. The Revolution resurrected his military career: from a captaincy in the Limoges National Guard in 1789 he rose to *général de division* by July 1793. Commanding the Army of the North, he won the victory of Wattignies, but was temporarily relieved of duty for political reasons; reinstated, he led the Armies of the Moselle and Sambre-et-Meuse, but resigned after defeats at Amberg and Würzburg. As a member of the Council of Five Hundred his next most distinguished service was political, in supervising the conscription law of September 1798 which was sometimes known by his name. Subsequently he was named to lead the Armies of Mayence, Switzerland and Observation, but he was succeeded by Massena after his defeat at Stockach (March 1799). Administrative duties followed; but although, as an ardent Republican, he declined to support the *coup* of Brumaire, he was among the first creation of the marshalate in 1804.

Appointed governor of Naples in 1806, he served as Joseph Bonaparte's chief of staff, and from August 1808 he filled the same position in Spain. After taking unfair blame for the defeat of Talavera he went home on the grounds of ill-health, but, being trusted and liked by Joseph, he returned to the Peninsula in 1811. His task was difficult: other marshals were reluctant to obey his orders and appealed directly to Napoleon over his head, and Joseph had little military aptitude. Marbot thought that Joseph was 'highly estimable but very unmilitary', and that Jourdan 'was prematurely old... he was worn out morally and physically, and inspired no confidence in the troops'<sup>20</sup>. From March 1812 Jourdan was chief of

Jean-Baptiste, Comte Jourdan (1762–1833). Although Jourdan suffered a number of setbacks in his career, Napoleon admitted that he had been badly treated, remarking that this Limousin veteran of the American War of Independence had been throughout 'a true patriot', which fact, he said, explained much about his career. The task of acting as King Joseph's chief of general staff in the Peninsula, with theoretical authority but no real control over the army commanders, was probably beyond any of the marshals. (Print after A.Tardieu)





The symbol of the rank of marshal: the baton of Marshal Jourdan, 'captured' at Vittoria by the British (apparently it was found by Corporal Fox of the 18th Hussars), together with a ceremonial sword belonging to Joseph Bonaparte, taken from his carriage at Vittoria when it was captured by the 14th Light Dragoons. The baton is covered with velvet, with gilded caps and imperial eagle motifs; the sword hilt is cut steel. (Print after William Gibb)

general staff of the whole army in Spain; with Joseph, he was defeated catastrophically at Vittoria in 1813 and was made the scapegoat for the disaster, almost immediately relinquishing his position.

Jourdan accepted the Bourbon Restoration, and although he returned to imperial duty in 1815 it was only as governor of Besançon, and he succeeded Rapp as commander of the Army of the Rhine after Waterloo. Returning to royal service, he was ennobled as a *comte* in 1816, and became governor of the Invalides in 1830. Although not a general of the first rank, he was honest and quite capable, so that his nickname 'the anvil' (from having been beaten regularly) was unjust. Indeed, Napoleon finally recognised that Jourdan had been blamed unfairly for things which were the responsibility of others; that being the case, Napoleon was evidently surprised that instead of viewing him (Napoleon) badly, Jourdan 'had behaved with great moderation [and] has set an example of that elevation of mind which serves to distinguish men, and does honour to their character'<sup>21</sup>.

#### **KELLERMANN, Général François-Etienne, Comte (later Duc) de Valmy (1770-1835)**

Son of Maréchal François-Christophe Kellermann (see Elite 72), François-Etienne was one of the best of Napoleon's cavalry generals. Commissioned in 1785, he served as his father's ADC, and became *général de brigade* in May 1797 after good service in Italy. His reputation as a skilled and astute cavalry commander was confirmed at Marengo where, supporting Desaix's advance, Kellermann judged the correct moment to make a decisive charge which helped turn near-defeat into victory. His own account overlooks the skill required to time a charge correctly: 'The Austrians advanced to follow up their success, in all the disorder and security of victory. I see it; I am in the midst of them; they lay down their arms. The whole thing did not occupy so much time as it



François-Etienne Kellermann (1770–1835). Aymar de Gonneville described him as 'a little man, of unhealthy and insignificant appearance, with a clever look, but false'; and added that he was such a plunderer that the church he had built near his house at Senlis – Kellermann having become remarkably pious in retirement – was probably financed by such dishonest means (De Gonneville, Vol.I pp.250–1). Nevertheless, Kellermann's real qualities as a cavalry commander were undeniably demonstrated at Marengo, Alba de Tormes and Waterloo. Note the three stars of *général de division* on the epaulette in this engraving.

has taken me to write these lines"<sup>22</sup>. Promoted to *général de division* in July 1800, Kellermann led a division (and was wounded) at Austerlitz. He later commanded Junot's cavalry in Portugal; was responsible for negotiating the advantageous Convention of Cintra; and in November 1809 won a major triumph by defeating Del Parque at Alba de Tormes. In May 1811 he returned to France with impaired health, which caused him to miss the Russian campaign, but in 1813–14 he rose to lead IV and VI Cavalry Corps. In 1815 he led III Cavalry Corps with great courage, being wounded during the huge charges at Waterloo. Although reconciled with the Bourbons, and duke and peer of France after the death of his father, his only subsequent service was administrative duty in 1830–31. The younger Kellermann had a bad reputation for plundering and avarice, but whenever this was brought to Napoleon's attention he would always overlook it in recognition of the charge at Marengo – though Kellermann himself always complained that he had never received adequate reward for his part in that battle.

#### **LARREY, Dominique-Jean, Baron (1766–1842)**

Whereas the activities of most military commanders of the Napoleonic era were involved in the death and injury of thousands of their subordinates, the remarkable Larrey (see Plate J) was responsible instead for the saving of lives, as one of the greatest surgeons and humanitarians of his age.

Entering the medical profession which was almost a tradition in his family, he became an army surgeon in 1792, serving on the Rhine, in Italy from 1797, and in Egypt. Although supremely skilled as a surgeon, he was also an able administrator and, realising that rapid medical treatment was vital for the survival of many casualties, he devised 'flying ambulances' to range over the battlefield to recover the wounded. Similarly, he believed that operations of the shortest duration caused less shock, and that it was preferable to remove damaged limbs or tissue than attempt to save them, which might only increase the trauma and risk of infection. His skill and compassion made him famous throughout the army and beyond, and he was admired almost universally by friend and foe (though he did suffer from the rivalry of others in the military medical establishment).

Appointed chief surgeon to the Imperial Guard and to the Grande Armée, he served in the campaigns of Austerlitz, Jena and Eylau, and in Spain in 1808 he almost died of typhus. As a surgeon he would personally work unceasingly during and after a battle, to the point of exhaustion; after Borodino he operated without a break, by the light of tapers, performing 200 amputations within 24 hours, undertaking the most complex surgery (e.g. disarticulation of the shoulder) with a high rate of success. So successful was the system of care that he introduced that, for example, of 1,200 guardsmen wounded at Aspern-Essling only 45 died



**Dominique-Jean Larrey (1766–1842).** His fame as a surgeon spread far beyond France; indeed, his life was saved after Waterloo when he was captured and about to be shot by the Prussians, but was recognised and rescued by a Prussian surgeon who had attended some of his lectures. It is useful to be reminded that the Napoleonic Wars, for all their cruelty, were not prosecuted as 'total war' in the ideological 20th century sense; political frontiers were no bar to intellectual, social and artistic contacts, and educated people of all nations still considered themselves fellow members of the same European civilisation.

after receiving treatment. As the army's most distinguished surgeon Larrey had to treat generals who were known to him personally, such as Lannes and Duroc, whose deaths must have been especially distressing. For the 1812 campaign he was the army's senior medical officer; but in 1815 Pierre-François Percy (1754–1825) was appointed chief surgeon to the army, with Larrey effectively demoted to surgeon of the Guard and headquarters. This may have been the result of jealousy among his rivals, or he may have been thought to spend too much time on surgery at the expense of administration. At first Larrey resigned, but was persuaded to relent, and served in the Hundred Days campaign.

After the Napoleonic Wars he continued to hold a number of important posts, including surgeon to King Louis-Philippe, and most notably as chief surgeon of the Invalides; but in 1836 old animosities resurfaced and led to his dismissal. Whatever the official judgment, however, the army never ceased to revere a man whom they knew had spent his entire career concerned with their welfare. Napoleon, too, recognised it: noticing at Eylau that Larrey had lost his sword, Napoleon handed over his own to replace it – a

singular act of esteem. Later he described Larrey as 'a truly honest man... to science he united, in the highest degree, the virtue of active philanthropy: he looked upon all the wounded as belonging to his family; every consideration gave way before the care which he bestowed upon the hospitals... Larrey possesses all my esteem and gratitude'. On one occasion in 1813 the emperor took Larrey's hand and exclaimed, with great emotion, that 'a sovereign is truly fortunate to have to do with such men as you'; and he finally described him as 'the most virtuous man that I have known'<sup>23</sup>.

#### **LETORT, Général Louis-Michel, Comte (1773–1815)**

One of the great heroes of the Imperial Guard, Letort (see Plate L) entered military service as a volunteer in 1791. His steady rise through the ranks during the Revolutionary Wars was interrupted by a temporary suspension and, finding service in western France not to his liking, he voluntarily dropped in rank from captain to *sous-lieutenant* in order to serve in the Army of Italy. There he was considerably distinguished as a cavalry officer, and in 1806 was appointed colonel-major of the newly formed Dragoons of the Imperial Guard, in which he spent the remainder of his career. In September 1809 he was ennobled as a baron; he led his regiment in the 1812 campaign, and in January 1813 was promoted to *général de brigade*. In September of that year he temporarily left the Guard Dragoons to lead a cuirassier brigade, but rejoined them later in that campaign, and was especially distinguished at Leipzig and Hanau. His greatest distinction came in 1814, when at Château-Thierry he executed a charge which rolled over three squares in what one



**FAR LEFT** Général Rémy-Joseph-Isidore Exelmans (1775-1852). A noted cavalry commander, though not the most gifted, he was captured in the Peninsula but escaped from England by breaking his parole. Appointed to a divisional command after Borodino, he was beaten at the Katsbach, but led a cavalry corps in 1815. After denouncing Ney's execution as an assassination he had to emigrate, but returned to France later and, as a supporter of Louis Napoleon, was among the last of Napoleon's subordinates to become a Marshal of France, in 1851.

experienced commentator described as one of the finest cavalry feats ever witnessed. Napoleon declared that the Guard Dragoons had emulated legendary knights of the age of chivalry, and on the following day promoted 'Brave Letort' to *général de division* and to *comte* in the peerage.

Letort remained with his regiment – retitled as the Dragons de France – during the First Restoration, as major, with Napoleon's cousin Philippe-Antoine d'Ornano (1784-1863) as his commanding officer. During the Hundred Days Letort was appointed ADC to Napoleon; with D'Ornano unfit after being wounded in a duel, he again took command of the Guard Dragoons for the Waterloo campaign. On the evening of 15 June Napoleon directed him to drive away part of the Prussian rearguard near Gilly, saying that Letort was the only man capable of sweeping up such rabble. Although it was not a task that required him to risk himself, Letort typically led the charge himself, accomplishing his objective but being shot in the breast; he was taken to Charleroi for treatment but died on 17 June. His loss was felt keenly; he was adored by his men for his immense personal courage and permanently cheerful attitude, and his skill as a cavalry commander might have made a difference to the exercise of that arm at Waterloo. Such was the esteem in which Letort was held by Napoleon that not only did he bestow upon him the sobriquet 'the Brave', but at St Helena, in the third codicil to his will, he left 100,000 francs to Letort's children.

### **MACDONALD, Maréchal Jacques-Etienne-Joseph-Alexandre, Duc de Tarente (1765-1840)**

A product of the Jacobite diaspora, Napoleon's Scottish marshal was born at Sedan to a Scottish refugee named Macachaim, of a sept of clan Macdonald, whose name he adopted. After service in the Dutch army (1785), Jacques entered an Irish regiment of the French army, Dillon's, and was commissioned in 1787. During the Revolutionary Wars he saw extensive service, as Dumouriez's ADC (refusing to desert with him) before rising to *général de division* in November 1794. Subsequent duties

**LEFT** Général Jacques-Alexandre-Bernard Law, Marquis de Lauriston (1768-1828). Born in India of Scottish descent, Lauriston was an artillery general who was employed by Napoleon in a variety of diplomatic as well as military roles: he was ambassador to Russia (1811-12), an ADC to Napoleon, and was captured at Leipzig while commanding V Corps. He accepted the Bourbon restoration and became a marshal in 1823. (Engraving by T. Johnson after Gérard)



**Jacques-Etienne-Joseph-Alexandre Macdonald, Duc de Tarente (1765–1840).** Curiously, although he could not speak English, when he visited Scotland after the war he was able to converse with his relatives in Gaelic, his father's tongue. His Scottish connections were strong: one cousin, Major Robert Macdonald, served with the Royal Scots at Waterloo, and another was Lieutenant-General Sir John Macdonald, the British Army's Adjutant-General 1830–50.

included succeeding Championnet as commander of the Army of Naples, serving as Moreau's deputy and commanding in Switzerland; but he fell out of favour over his defence of Moreau, and remained unemployed from 1802 until a shortage of experienced generals led to his recall in 1809.

Sent to assist Eugène with the Army of Italy, he survived a wound at the Piave; and made the vital attack at Wagram, for which he received his promotion to marshal actually on the field of battle. Ennobled as the Duke of Tarentum in December 1809, he led the Army of Catalonia 1810–11, returning to France for the 1812 campaign. He commanded X Corps, holding the extreme left flank of the Grande Armée and thus escaping the worst horrors of the retreat. In 1813 he commanded XI Corps; fought at Lützen and Bautzen; was defeated at the Katzbach, and fought a fierce rearguard action at Leipzig, having to swim the River Elster to escape. He fought on in 1814 but, while remaining loyal, was among those who persuaded Napoleon that the war was lost, and with Caulaincourt and Ney he was appointed

to negotiate with the Allied sovereigns.

In an emotional last meeting with him Napoleon told Macdonald that 'I cannot tell you how touched I am by, and grateful for, your conduct and devotion. I did not know you well; I was prejudiced against you. I have done so much for, and loaded with favours, so many others, who had abandoned and neglected me; and you, who owed me nothing, have remained faithful to me! I appreciate your loyalty all too late...'<sup>24</sup> As he no longer had any other way to reward him, Napoleon gave Macdonald the sabre of Murad Bey which he had taken in Egypt.

Although not a great supporter of the restored Bourbon monarchy, Macdonald remained loyal to his commitments to them in 1815, and helped escort the king to safety. His last active duty was in helping to disband the Napoleonic forces after Waterloo; thereafter he sat as a moderate liberal in the Chamber of Peers, and was Grand Chancellor of the *Légion d'honneur* from 1815 to 1831. Although an honourable and upright character, Macdonald could be a difficult colleague: he sued Moreau for defamation and won his case; was on bad terms with Victor, who never forgave him for a reprimand delivered in 1799; and after walking out of Talleyrand's house following a quarrel he had nothing further to do with him, suspecting that supreme intriguer of poisoning Napoleon's mind against him.

**MARMONT, Maréchal Auguste-Frédéric-Louis Viesse de, Duc de Raguse (1774–1852)**

Of all the marshals, Marmont became the least popular among his own countrymen. Belonging to the minor nobility, he was commissioned from the Châlons artillery school in 1792; he met his fellow-gunner Napoleon at Toulon, and they became firm friends. Marmont served as Napoleon's ADC in Italy and was appointed *général de brigade* after

Auguste-Frédéric-Louis Viesse de Marmont, Duc de Raguse (1774–1852). Napoleon's great friend and fellow-gunner, Marmont enjoyed rapid advancement; but in the years after the Napoleonic Wars he was worse regarded than any of the other surviving marshals, from his perceived betrayal in permitting the Allies to enter Paris in 1814. Indeed, the slang term *raguser*, 'to betray', was invented from his title as duke of Ragusa. Meeting Ney and Macdonald bearing Napoleon's document of abdication to the Tsar, the embarrassed Marmont said that he would 'give an arm for this not to have happened' – to which Macdonald retorted, 'An arm? Say rather your head, sir'. When Ney was sentenced to death for treason by the Chamber of Peers in December 1815, Marmont was among those who voted for the firing-squad – as were Kellermann and Victor. (Engraving by T.Johnson after J.B.P.Guérin).



capturing the banner of the Knights of St John at Malta. He returned from Egypt with Napoleon; assisted in the *coup* of Brumaire; and commanded the artillery at Marengo with very conspicuous success, contributing notably to that victory. *Général de division* from September 1800, as Inspector-General of Artillery he introduced important reforms (including the An XIII system of ordnance), and in 1805 led II, later I Corps. From July 1806 he was governor-general and military commander of Dalmatia, where he had considerable success both in consolidating Napoleon's hold on the territory and in improving conditions for the inhabitants; it was from Ragusa, now Dubrovnik, that he took his title of Duc de Raguse. In 1809 he commanded XI Corps, but although he received his marshal's baton that July, Napoleon confessed that it had been awarded more from friendship than for outstanding military merit.

In 1811 Marmont went to the Peninsula and took command of the Army of Portugal; but although he manoeuvred competently against Wellington, he was massively defeated at Salamanca (though he claimed that things only began to go wrong after he was wounded by a shell). In



**Bon-Adrien-Jeannot de Moncey, Duc de Conegliano (1754–1842), commanding the defence of the Clichy Gate at Paris, 30 March 1814. One of the more ‘honorific’ appointments to the marshalate in 1804, Moncey was an officer of long service who had all but retired in 1801, though he commanded III Corps in the Peninsula in 1808–09, including service at Tudela and Saragossa. As commandant of the Paris National Guard he served with gallantry in 1814. The odium heaped on Marmont did not attach to Moncey and Mortier, both of whom resisted the Allied advance stoutly before opening negotiations, and whose position was undermined by Marmont’s unilateral surrender of his corps. At nearly 70 years of age Moncey was back on active service in Spain in 1823, where he defeated the former guerrilla leader Mina and conquered Catalonia. Recognised universally as an honourable and humane soldier, Moncey was the *doyen* of the Marshals of France from 1815 until his death at the age of 88. (Engraving by P.Aitken after Horace Vernet)**

1813 he returned to service and led VI Corps at Lützen, Bautzen, Dresden and Leipzig, but he aroused Napoleon’s anger in 1814 when he was beaten at Laon. Much worse was to follow when he negotiated a truce which permitted the Allies to enter Paris, arousing the absolute hatred of most of his countrymen. (His old enemy Wellington was more pragmatic, stating that ‘the French marshals and troops... all began to treat, and Marmont being the nearest to Paris, treated first. That was all.’<sup>25</sup>)

Although Marmont was honoured by the Bourbons, even they declined to trust him, and he held no further field command; he was forced into exile with Charles X in 1830, and never returned to France. He settled in Vienna, wrote widely on travel, military and historical matters, and – somewhat ironically – became tutor to the Duke of Reichstadt, Napoleon’s only legitimate son, who was being raised by his mother’s Austrian kinfolk. Although he was not untalented militarily, Marmont’s genuine merits have tended to be obscured by his reputation for betrayal.

### **MURAT, Maréchal Joachim, King of Naples, Grand Duke of Berg (1767–1815)**

The most flamboyant and dashing military commander of the period, Joachim Murat (see **Plate F**) rose from humble beginnings as the son of an innkeeper at La Bastide in the south of France. He was intended for the church, but his character was entirely inappropriate for a religious calling, and he enlisted in the cavalry in 1787. Commissioned in 1792, he secured the artillery with which Napoleon delivered his ‘whiff of grapeshot’ on the 13 Vendémiaire, and so began their long association. Murat served as Napoleon’s aide, was distinguished in action, and was appointed *général de division* on the battlefield of Aboukir. He assisted in the *coup* of Brumaire, and confirmed his place in the highest echelon of

Joachim Murat, King of Naples (1767–1815). Of this most handsome and flamboyant of all his marshals, Napoleon himself remarked that 'with respect to physical courage, it was impossible for Murat and Ney not to be brave; but no men ever possessed less judgment – the former in particular' (Las Cases Vol.I p.251). (Engraving by Bosselman)



Général Louis-Pierre Montbrun (1770–1812). One of the best of Napoleon's cavalry generals, Montbrun was much admired; Marbot wrote that he was the same style of leader as was Murat. After considerable service in the Peninsula he led II Cavalry Corps in the Russian campaign of 1812; at Borodino he was dreadfully wounded in the abdomen by a cannon shot, and died that evening.



the new regime by his marriage to Napoleon's sister Caroline in January 1800. He commanded the cavalry at Marengo, and became its most charismatic, inspirational leader.

Though not especially astute tactically, Murat was a leader by example who never shrank from hand-to-hand combat; as Lejeune remarked, 'accustomed to overcome every obstacle, he cared but little for the fate of those he came across'<sup>26</sup>. Wolfe Tone's son described how 'his eyes would sparkle at the random discharge of a tirailleur's carbine. Without counting the enemy, he would cry, '*Chassez-moi ces canailles là!*' ('Drive away that rabble!')<sup>27</sup>. Napoleon recognised both Murat's qualities and his failings: 'extraordinary courage and little intelligence. The too great disproportion between those two qualities explains the man entirely'<sup>28</sup>. He once remarked to Caroline, 'Your husband is a very brave man in the field of battle, but he is more cowardly than a woman or a monk when not in the presence of the enemy. He has no moral courage.'<sup>29</sup>

Among the first creation of the marshalate in 1804, Murat was appointed Grand Duke of Berg on 15 March 1806; he served at Jena, led the great charges which saved the army at Eylau, in 1808 briefly commanded French forces in Spain, and in August of that year replaced Joseph Bonaparte as King of Naples. This was both his zenith and the



**Murat in the role for which he was best-suited: as an inspirational cavalry commander, leading the charge, as portrayed here at Jena on 14 October 1806. (He is depicted wearing a fur-trimmed frock coat which, like the hussar over-jacket, was also often referred to as a *pelisse*.) At the moment of crisis at Eylau on 8 February 1807 Murat led a charge of nearly 11,000 men in 80 squadrons, covering a mile and a half to smash through the Russian centre; he lost about ten per cent of his troopers, but won vital time for Davout to come up and save the day. (Print after H.Chartier)**

origin of his downfall, for he took his puppet kingdom more seriously than Napoleon had intended. Both he and Caroline put their regal status before their loyalty to Napoleon (for example, he was not eager to implement the Continental System, as trade with Britain was beneficial to the Neapolitan economy); and this inevitably caused friction. Nevertheless, in the 1812 campaign he led the cavalry of the Grande Armée with his usual dash, his extravagant demeanour and costumes making him very popular with the Cossacks (who, it was said, asked him to change sides and become one of their own chieftains). But though the ideal *sabreur*, Murat was probably unsuited to higher command; shortly after he inherited the leadership of what remained of the Grande Armée after the retreat from Moscow, he abandoned it and went home to Naples, fearing that Napoleon might depose him.

To retain his throne he negotiated with Austria and Britain, but returned to Napoleon for the 1813 campaign until after Leipzig. To secure his throne he then changed sides and joined the fight against Napoleon, who raged that 'the fault is originally mine. There were several men whom I had made too great; I had raised them above the sphere of their intelligence... Murat, my creature, the husband of my sister, the man who owed everything to me, who would have been nothing without me, who exists by me, and is known through me alone.'<sup>30</sup> His treachery did Murat little good; when it became obvious that neither Austria nor Britain were prepared to let him keep his throne, he attempted to instigate Italian national resistance against foreign occupation, but was defeated by the Austrians at Tolentino on 2 May

1: Maréchal Jean-de-Dieu Soult, c1807  
2: Général Louis Saint-Hilaire, c1809  
3: ADC to a Marshal, c1807



- 1: Général Emmanuel de Grouchy, c1809  
2: Général Laurent Gouvion Saint-Cyr, c1804  
3: Général François Fournier, c1811-12



*F. Fourcelle*

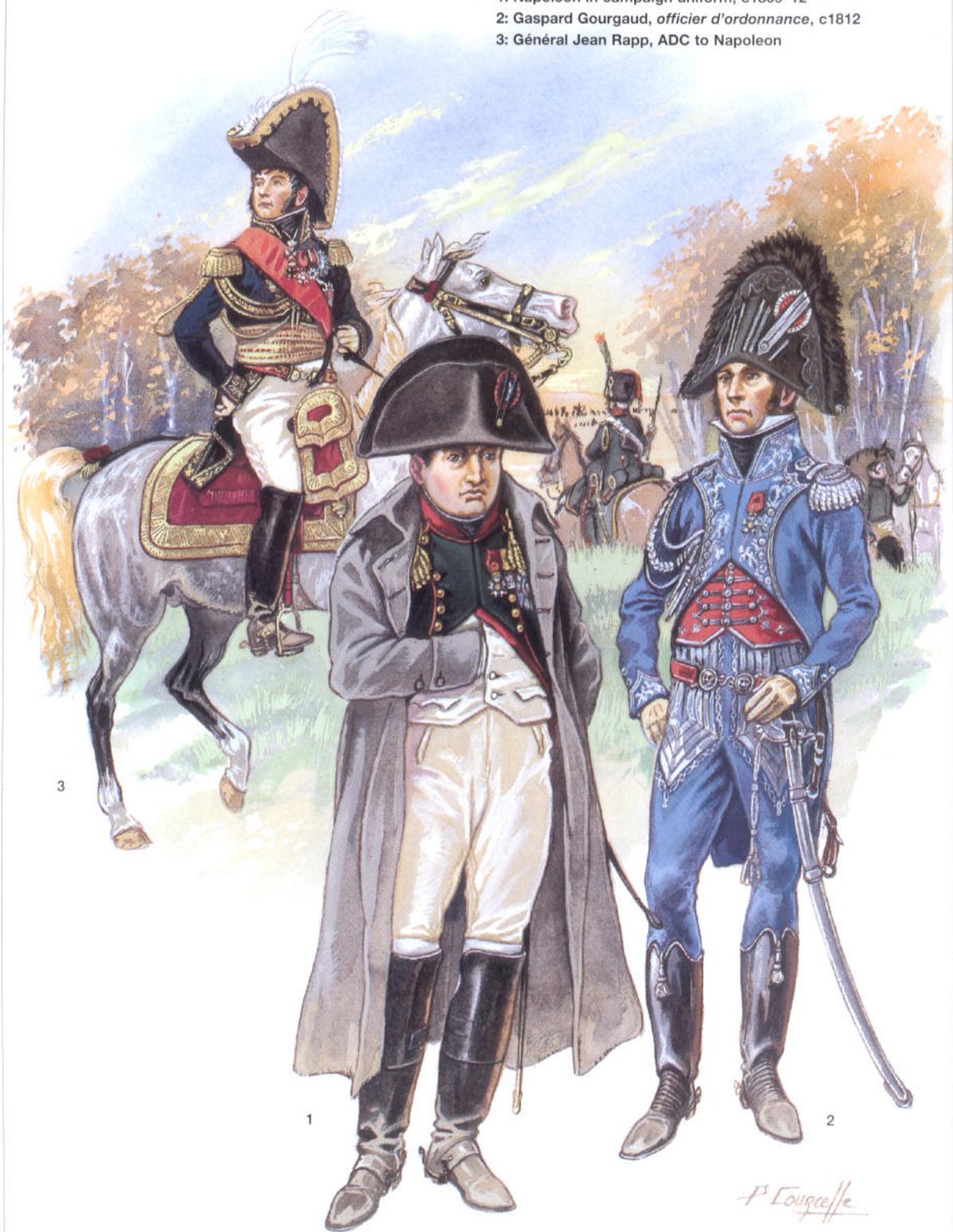


1: Maréchal Nicolas-Charles Oudinot, c1811

2: Général C.E. Gudin de la Sablonnière, c1811

3: Capitaine H.L.E. de Dreux-Nancré, ADC to Gudin

- 1: Napoleon in campaign uniform, c1809-12  
2: Gaspard Gourgaud, *officier d'ordonnance*, c1812  
3: Général Jean Rapp, ADC to Napoleon



- 1: Jérôme Bonaparte, King of Westphalia
- 2: Captain-General of the Westphalian Guard
- 3: ADC to French Général de Division



- 1: Maréchal Joachim Murat, King of Naples, c1810
- 2: Neapolitan officier d'ordonnance
- 3: Neapolitan ADC



1: Eugène de Beauharnais, Viceroy of Italy, 1812

2: Italian ADC

3: Adjoint attached to staff of Imperial Guard

2



3

1

*F. Loupette*



1: General Josef Poniatowski, 1812  
2: Général Louis Chouard, 1812  
3: Adjutant-commandant, full dress, 1812



1: Maréchal Michel Ney, 1812  
2: Général Jean Marchand, 1812  
3: Adjudant-commandant,  
service uniform, 1812



1: Général Jean Baston de La Ribosière, 1812  
2: Général Jean Desvaux de Saint-Maurice, 1813  
3: Dominique Larrey, Chirurgien-en-Chef, 1812

*P. Faugolle*



1: Joseph Bonaparte, King of Naples & Spain, c1808  
2: Maréchal Jean-Baptiste Jourdan, 1811-13  
3: Maréchal Louis-Gabriel Suchet, 1811-13

- 1: Général Edouard de Colbert, 1815  
2: Général Louis-Michel Letort, 1815  
3: Général Maurice-Etienne Gérard, 1815



1815. He fled to France, but Napoleon would not receive him. Almost a fugitive, he was arrested when he landed in Calabria with a few companions, was convicted in a trial which was probably illegal, and was shot by firing-squad on 13 October 1815.

### **NEY, Maréchal Michel, Duc d'Elchingen, Prince de la Moscowa (1769–1815)**

'Bravest of the brave' was a nickname not easily earned, but in the case of Michel Ney (see Plate I) it was surely accurate. The son of a cooper in Saarlouis, he enlisted as a hussar in 1787, was commissioned in 1792, and was recognised as an officer of courage and resolution – as perhaps suggested by the red hair which gave rise to his nickname, '*le Rougeaud*'. He saw much hard service and collected several wounds, rising to *général de division* by March 1799. Although he had not served under Napoleon and had been associated with Moreau, Ney was accepted by Napoleon as a man he could trust, and despite his original Republican idealism he became a most loyal follower. A marshal from 1804, from August 1805 he led VI Corps of the Grande Armée with considerable distinction, notably at Elchingen, the victory from which he took the title of his dukedom bestowed in 1808.

He fought at Jena (where he was perhaps fortunate to survive making a premature attack); at Eylau, where his arrival on Napoleon's far right flank helped win the action; and was distinguished at Friedland.

In 1808 he went to Spain, still in a subordinate role; best suited as a corps commander performing a given task, he lacked great tactical genius, but was not always an easy subordinate. In the Peninsula his relations with his commander, Massena, deteriorated to the point of insubordination, Marbot recalling an embarrassing dinner during which Ney only just contained his temper, but burst out immediately afterwards. So poisonous was the atmosphere within the French command that Massena relieved him of duty; it was suggested that Ney might overthrow the unpopular Massena and

Michel Ney, Duc d'Elchingen, Prince de la Moscowa (1769–1815). 'The Redhead' is shown here in the uniform of a marshal; the decorations include the medal and (right) the star of the Grand Eagle of the Légion d'Honneur and (partially obscured by the ribbon of the latter) the Order of the Iron Crown. Despite Napoleon's comments to the effect that he was sublimely brave but no great tactician, Ney's long record shows that he was in fact an extremely able corps commander. (Engraving by H.B.Hall after Gérard)





**A famous image of Ney (centre) holding the rearguard together during the retreat from Moscow. Although it was this for which Ney became most famous, he was equally inspirational earlier in the campaign. He was especially remarked upon at Borodino, standing upon the parapet of a redoubt to direct his men, apparently entirely unconcerned by the flying shot and shell. (Print by Wolff after A.Yvon)**

take command himself, but to his credit Ney would not countenance open mutiny.

It was in the 1812 campaign against Russia that Ney's reputation grew into legend. He commanded III Corps with his customary courage, and his moment came when commanding the rearguard, defying the enemy, musket in hand among his starving, ragged soldiers. Believed lost, he cut his way free – Napoleon remarked that he would have given everything not to have lost him; and by his own account he was the last Frenchman to quit Russia. In March 1813 he received the title Prince of the Moscowa (i.e. Borodino), and Napoleon also bestowed upon him the sobriquet 'bravest of the brave'. At Lützen Napoleon expressed shock at seeing him covered with blood; with his usual unconcern, Ney told him not to worry, as the blood was not his – except where a bullet had gone through his leg. After Bautzen, Dennewitz (where he was defeated) and Leipzig, Ney went home to recuperate, but returned for the 1814 campaign.

Despite everything, Ney was one of the strongest advocates for Napoleon's abdication. Decorated and employed by the Bourbons, at the beginning of the Hundred Days he vowed to arrest Napoleon and bring him to the king in an iron cage, but when it came to it he defected to his old chief. Given a command of crucial importance in the Waterloo campaign, he again demonstrated exemplary courage but no great tactical ability, being criticised for lethargy at Quatre Bras and for impetuosity at Waterloo. Perhaps the real blame was not his but Napoleon's – his emperor well knew Ney's abilities and limitations. Tattered and bleeding, at the end of the battle he invited D'Erlon to 'come and see how a Marshal of France could die'; sadly, however, his death was to come at the hands of a firing-squad in the Luxembourg

Gardens, after being convicted of treason against the Bourbons. His execution was reviled by all but the most vengeful Royalists who had engineered it, and to the end Ney justified his reputation. Scorning a blindfold, he declared that he had fought a hundred battles for France and had never yet feared bullets. Holding his hat over his heart as an aiming-mark, he gave the firing-squad their orders in person.

### **LOUDINOT, Maréchal Nicolas-Charles, Duc de Reggio (1767-1847)**

Nicolas Oudinot (see Plate C) may not have been the most brilliant star in the firmament of Napoleon's marshals – the emperor once remarked that he was not very bright – but his courage was beyond question. On first encountering Oudinot on the battlefield in 1812, Marbot remarked that the episode confirmed entirely his high opinion of the marshal's courage, but reduced even further his opinion of his military talents. Few soldiers can have survived so many wounds and injuries as Oudinot: at least 24, and perhaps as many as 36. He was so careless of his personal safety that before any action his batman would routinely lay out the medical kit, in the confident expectation that it would be needed. . .

The son of a brewer from Bar-le-Duc, Oudinot enrolled in the French Army in 1784 but, seeing no chance of promotion, left after three years. The Revolution gave him his chance: elected a captain in 1789, he was *général de brigade* by June 1794, *de division* from April 1799. He served as chief of staff to Massena, who remarked upon his organisational ability, and thought he would make an ideal second-in-command; but what made Oudinot's name was his command of the combined grenadiers as the 1st Division of Lannes' V Corps from 1805, known to history as the 'Grenadiers d'Oudinot'. He led another corps of grenadiers and voltigeurs in 1809, and although wounded himself he took over II Corps after Lannes' death. At Wagram he initiated a vital advance (having an ear almost shot off in the process), and was rewarded with both a marshalcy and the dukedom of Reggio.

In the 1812 campaign he had to retire temporarily from command of II Corps following a severe wound from a grapeshot in the shoulder at Polotsk, but returned to duty in time to play an important role in holding the Berezina crossing, which permitted the Grande Armée to escape. Here he was shot through the body and dragged by his horse; the bullet was never extracted. On being evacuated to safety, his party was ambushed by Cossacks and took refuge in a shack; though unable to rise from his litter, Oudinot showed typical resolve by helping in its defence, shooting



Nicolas-Charles Oudinot, Duc de Reggio (1767-1847), whose favourite after-dinner pastime is said to have been shooting out candles with a pistol. His physical courage brought him at least two dozen wounds; Napoleon once remarked that even the bravest of men must have felt fear once in his life – 'Sire', replied Oudinot, 'I have never had time for that' (Stiegler, p.440). A likely list is worth repeating, as a reminder of the realities of life for a general officer in the Napoleonic period:

(1) Ball in head at Hagenau, Dec.1793; (2) leg broken by ball, Trèves, Aug.1794; (3-8) five sabre cuts, one ball, Neckarau, Oct.1795; (9-13) four sabre cuts, one ball, Ingolstadt, Sept.1796; (14) ball in chest, Rosenberg, June 1799; (15) ball in shoulder blade, Schwyz, Aug.1799; (16) ball in chest, Zurich, Sept.1799; (17) ball in thigh, Hollabrunn, Nov.1805; (18) leg broken when horse fell, Danzig, spring 1807; (19) sabre cut, Essling, May 1809; (20) ear nearly shot off, Wagram, July 1809; (21) grapeshot in shoulder, Polotsk, Aug.1812; (22) ball through body, and dragged, Berezina, Nov.1812; (23) cannon ball grazes both thighs, Brienne, Jan.1814; and (24) ball in chest, Arcis-sur-Aube, March 1814 – this last supposedly slowed by hitting his Grand Eagle of the Légion d'Honneur. (Engraving by H.Wolff after R.Lefevre)

through a loophole. Even then he did not escape injury: it was said that he was hit by a lump of falling wood. Oudinot's intrepid young wife – 26 years his junior – joined him and nursed him back to health, and he served in the 1813–14 campaigns, collecting further (but relatively minor) injuries.

At the First Restoration he accepted the return of the Bourbons and remained loyal to them, remarking to Napoleon that he could not serve him, so would serve no one; thus he remained in retirement during the Hundred Days. In 1823 he led I Corps in the French invasion of Spain; he was retired in 1830, and at his death was governor of the Invalides, leaving three sons and three grandsons all of whom became generals – a fourth son was killed in Algeria in 1835. In 1815 he had remarked to Davout that 'I shall always be Grenadier Oudinot, a title which will never cease to delight me'<sup>31</sup>.

**PONIATOWSKI, Maréchal Josef Anton, Prince (1763–1813)**

Napoleon's Polish marshal (see Plate H) was his penultimate appointment to that rank, and also the briefest, lasting barely four days.



Josef Anton, Prince Poniatowski (1763–1813). Shown here wearing the uniform of a general officer of the Duchy of Warsaw, Poniatowski has two breast stars: the upper is that of the Polish Order of Virtuti Militari, with its gold-edged black cross upon a silver backing star; the lower, the silver star of Grand Eagle of the Légion d'Honneur. (Engraving by C.State)

Josef Poniatowski came from a princely Lithuanian-Italian family; his father André (1735–73) was a general in Imperial service, and brother to King Stanislaus II of Poland (1732–98), who supervised Josef's upbringing after his father's death. This imbued him with a determination to serve his country; and although his first military service was in the Austrian army (ADC to Emperor Joseph II), he returned to Poland in an hour of need, and as a major-general won an action against the invading Russians at Zielence (18 June 1792). Appalled by the peace terms which the king agreed with the Russians, Poniatowski was banished for his criticism, but returned in 1794 to serve in the rebellion led by Kosciuszko (who had been his deputy in 1792). Due to the unpopularity of his family, and a general distrust of the aristocracy, at first he fought as a volunteer; he subsequently accepted a divisional command, but relinquished it after a defeat. When the revolt collapsed Poniatowski lived in exile in Vienna. He returned to Warsaw (then under Prussian control) in 1798, but despite being courted by both the Tsar and the king of Prussia he remained out of public life.

The defeat of Prussia in 1806 led him to resume an active role as a liberal patriot, and although feeling no affection for Napoleon or his empire he judged that co-operation with France was the best hope of advancing the cause of an independent Poland – though Napoleon had no intention of fulfilling his vague promises in that regard. Poniatowski accepted the post of War Minister in the Polish provisional government (January 1807) and the rank of *général de division*, and in October 1807 took command of the army of the newly constituted Grand Duchy of Warsaw. Despite financial strictures, under his guidance this became one of the best elements of Napoleon's forces.

In the 1809 campaign Poniatowski was defeated at Raszyn and compelled to abandon Warsaw, but counter-attacked and forced the Austrians to evacuate that city, and his capture of Cracow made him a national hero. In 1812 he led the Polish V

**Poniatowski leading Polish lancers in Russia in 1812 – a suitably heroic pose for one known as 'the Polish Bayard', by implication a 'knight without fear and without reproach'. As a young officer in the Austrian service in 1784 he successfully swam his horse across the flooding Elbe River during manoeuvres; perhaps the memory of this feat encouraged him to take his fatal risk in the Elster on 19 October 1813. (Engraving by Lacoste after Verdier)**



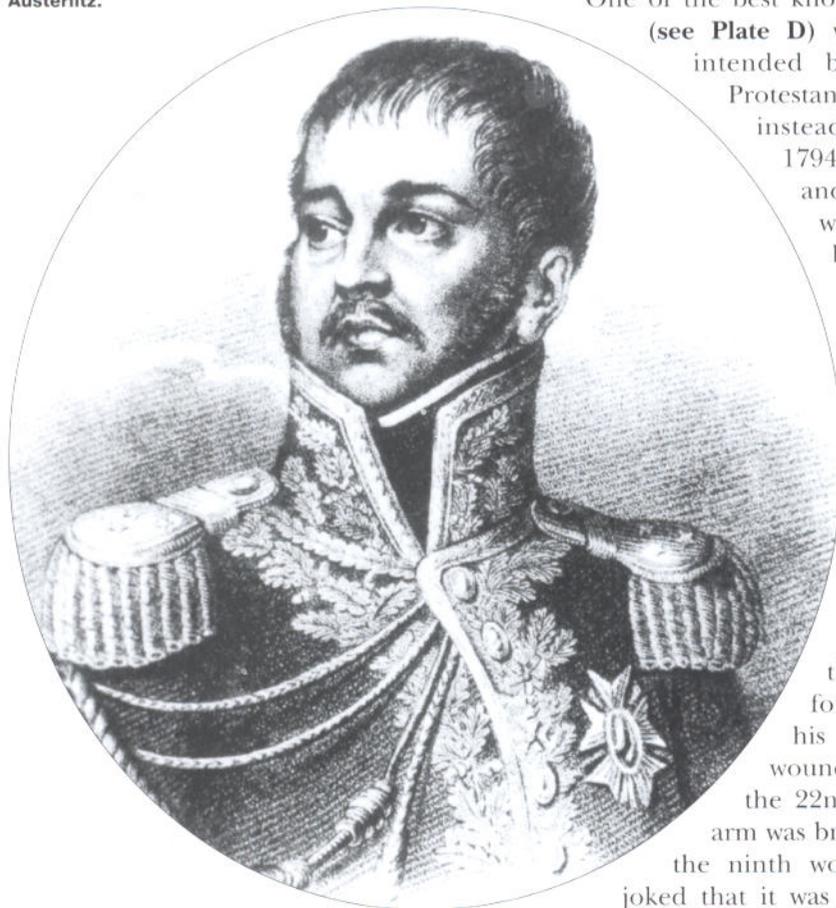
Corps of the Grande Armée and was personally distinguished, notably at Borodino, where he led the right wing; he was wounded at the Berezina. Rejecting overtures from Russia and Austria, he determined that both honour and political necessity demanded he remain loyal to Napoleon, and so formed a new Polish army around the wreck that had escaped from Russia. In 1813 he led VIII Corps of the Grande Armée, and fought his last battle at Leipzig. As always in the forefront of the action, on 12 October he was wounded in the hand by a lance. On 15 October, the day before the beginning of the battle of Leipzig, Napoleon appointed him a marshal. In the following three days of fighting Poniatowski sustained a number of injuries; and on 19 October, after the premature demolition of the bridge over the Elster which trapped him on the enemy-held side, he refused to countenance surrender and plunged into the river. Weakened by his wounds, he was hit again and was swept to his death.

Even his enemies lamented his fall. His body was recovered and buried temporarily nearby, his grave marked by a stone which, it was reported, became worn from Polish soldiers, returning home, symbolically sharpening their swords upon it. Subsequently he was interred in Cracow Cathedral, alongside the other Polish heroes Kosciuszko and Jan Sobieski. Like them, he remained an inspiration for those who sought an independent Poland.

Jean Rapp (1771–1821), one of the most famous of Napoleon's aides, portrayed as *général de division*, which rank he attained in December 1805 after distinguishing himself at Austerlitz.

#### RAPP, Général Jean, Comte (1771–1821)

One of the best known of Napoleon's ADCs, Rapp (see Plate D) was born at Colmar and was intended by his family to become a Protestant minister, but joined the army instead (1788). Commissioned in 1794, he served as ADC to Desaix and, after his death, to Napoleon, who found him to be a very brave and capable officer. He became *général de division* after Austerlitz, where he led a charge by the Guard cavalry; his return, bloody from his injuries, to announce his success, formed the subject of Gérard's famous painting. It was observed of him that despite holding the position of ADC to Napoleon he maintained the lively attitude of a light cavalryman, and this led to his collection of a formidable array of injuries: by his own computation, the fourth wound he received at Borodino was the 22nd of his career. When his left arm was broken by a bullet in 1806, it was the ninth wound to that limb; Napoleon joked that it was Rapp's unlucky arm that had



been hit, and that perhaps they would be finished fighting when they were 80 years old.

In June 1807 Rapp was appointed governor of Danzig and in 1809 a *comte*; in the campaign of that year he helped save the day at Essling by mounting a counter-attack instead of covering Mouton's retreat as he had been ordered – a disobedience for which Napoleon actually commended him. Subsequently he fell into some disfavour by showing sympathy for Josephine after her divorce, and for not implementing trade restrictions at Danzig; but he was back as Napoleon's ADC in 1812. He was wounded at Borodino after taking command of Compans' division following the injury to that general. At the end of the retreat from Russia he was besieged in Danzig, the garrison of which he commanded, until forced to surrender on 29 November 1813. A prisoner at Kiev until mid-1814, he rallied to Napoleon in 1815 and led the Army of the Rhine, winning a small action on 28 June and holding Strasbourg until the end of hostilities.

After a brief exile in Switzerland he was accepted back by the Bourbons in 1817. He remarked that this period of his life, in peace and in the bosom of his family, brought him happiness he had never before known, but it was short-lived: far from living until 80, he died at Baden in November 1821 aged only 50, of stomach cancer brought on, it was said, as a consequence of his many wounds.

ABOVE RIGHT **Général Jean-Louis-Ebenézer Reynier** (1771–1814), one of a number of notable soldiers from Switzerland who served in Napoleon's army. Although perhaps best remembered as the commander defeated at Maida, he saw extensive service, including in the Peninsula. In 1813 he was captured at Leipzig and died shortly after his release, probably of fatigue. He had something of a tainted reputation – Menou accused him of treason in Egypt, and in 1802 he killed **Général Jacques-Zacharie Dostaing** (1764–1802) in a duel; but Napoleon regarded him as an honest and loyal supporter. (Print after Guérin)

RIGHT **Général Horace-François-Bastien Sébastiani** (1772–1851). This Corsican is notable for his service as ambassador to the Ottoman Empire in 1806–07; he later fought in the Peninsula, and in 1812 commanded a cavalry division in the Russian campaign. Marbot stated that he was known only for his mediocrity, and having been carelessly caught out by the enemy he gained the nickname 'General Surprise'. In his later political career he held a number of important appointments, and in 1840 was appointed a marshal, as shown in this portrait. (Engraving by J.W.Evans after M.F.Winterhalter)





**Jean-de-Dieu Soult, Duc de Dalmatie (1769–1851).** Soult was respected and even admired by his enemies; Wellington, who met him after the war, remarked especially on his tall, commanding figure, his harsh voice – and a not very pleasing manner. From his title he was known to the British Army as ‘the Duke of Damnation’, and his skill in moving his troops around the Peninsula gave Wellington and his subordinates many bad moments. (Engraving by E. Findon after R. Grevedon)

### **SOULT, Maréchal Jean-de-Dieu, Duc de Dalmatie (1769–1851)**

Jean-de-Dieu Soult (see Plate A) was accorded by Napoleon the accolade of ‘the ablest tactician in the empire’ (alternatively, ‘the first tactician in Europe’) following his service at Austerlitz. He was born the son of a notary from Languedoc (though commonly called Nicolas it was not his real name), and enlisted as a private soldier in 1785. Just 18 months after receiving his first commission (1792) he was provisionally a *général de brigade*, and *de division* from April 1799. He served under Massena in Switzerland, and was wounded and captured during a foray from the siege of Genoa in 1800. Despite not having served under Napoleon in Italy, and never having met him, in March 1802 he was appointed colonel-general of the light infantry of the Consular Guard, apparently upon the recommendation of Massena and Murat. A marshal from 1804, he led IV Corps with great distinction at Austerlitz, served at Jena and Eylau, and was ennobled as Duke of Dalmatia (despite

never having visited that province) in June 1808.

For Napoleon’s Spanish campaign Soult was called up hurriedly to take over Bessières’ command, and entrusted with the pursuit of Gen. Sir John Moore, who defeated him at Corunna. Although he won the action of Ocaña, his great reputation began to suffer in the Peninsula. He had always shown a penchant for plundering, but more damaging were rumours (probably unfounded) that he was intending to make himself King of Portugal. In September 1809 he was appointed Joseph Bonaparte’s senior commander, and led the Army of the South, but relations with other commanders were marked by internal conflict and lack of co-operation. His attempt to relieve Badajoz led to defeat at Albuera (1811); and continuing ferment led to his recall to France at Joseph’s instigation in early 1813. Soult led IV Corps at Lützen and Bautzen, but as the situation in Spain deteriorated he was sent back in overall command (excluding Suchet’s army).

By then it was too late, but Soult demonstrated his skills in actions from the Pyrenees to Toulouse to the admiration of his enemies: William Napier remarked that every British officer who had the honour to serve against him admired his military talents. Wellington thought that ‘Soult did not quite understand a field of battle; he was an excellent tactician – knew very well how to bring his troops to the field, but not so well how to use them, when he had brought them up’; and that ‘in the field he is apt to doubt and hesitate, and to lose the proper moment for acting... a very clever fellow, but... he will take time to consider and look about him’<sup>33</sup>. Soult became War Minister under the First Restoration, but joined Napoleon again in the Hundred Days as chief of staff – probably a squandering of his talents. Proscribed after Waterloo, he emigrated to near Düsseldorf, but was permitted to return home in 1819 and was restored to his rank in 1820. He served as War Minister again in 1830–34 and 1840–45, and was ambassador to London for the coronation of

Queen Victoria. He retired from public duty in 1847 and was given the rank of *maréchal-général de France*, held previously only by Turenne, Saxe and Villars. It is debatable whether his talents matched those of such exalted company, but Soult was certainly one of the very best of Napoleon's commanders.

### **SUCHET, Maréchal Louis-Gabriel, Duc d'Albufera (1770–1826)**

One of the few among Napoleon's subordinates who were able to demonstrate their talents in almost entirely independent command, Suchet (see **Plate K**) achieved a strangely mixed reputation in the Peninsula, though his military skills were unquestioned. The son of a Lyons silk merchant, he entered military service via the National Guard of that city in 1791. Although never a member of Napoleon's inner circle, he came to notice with the Army of Italy, and service as Brune's chief of staff in Switzerland was followed by promotion to *général de brigade* (March 1798), *de division* in July 1799. He held a divisional command in the Grande Armée 1805–07 (including Austerlitz and Jena). In Spain from 1808, he at first led a division before succeeding Junot in command of III Corps in April 1809. With this, which became the Army of Aragon, he made his name. After the capture of Lerida, Tortosa and Tarragona he was promoted to marshal (8 July 1811), and as governor of the region enjoyed more success than other French administrators, behaving in a generally humane manner which did not antagonise the population as elsewhere.

He was not, however, averse to harsh measures: at Lerida he drove civilians before his troops towards the garrison, so that its commander, Garcia Conde, capitulated rather than slaughter innocents. This conduct – 'scarcely to be admitted within the pale of civilised warfare' – provoked condemnation, including the following from William Napier: 'Suchet justifies it, on the ground that he thus spared a great effusion of blood which must necessarily have attended a protracted siege, and the fact is true. But this is to spare soldiers' blood at the expense of women's and children's, and, had Garcia Conde's nature been stern, he, too, might have pleaded expediency, and the victory would have fallen to him who could have longest sustained the sight of mangled infants and despairing mothers'<sup>34</sup>.

Suchet's success continued: he defeated Blake at Saguntum (where he was shot in the shoulder), and captured Valencia in January 1812, being ennobled as Duc d'Albufera. Although defeated at Castalla, he compelled the Allies to raise their siege of Tarragona. A further mark of imperial favour was his appointment as *colonel-général* in the Imperial Guard in succession to Bessières; and when Soult returned to the Peninsula in overall command – a unification of effort much needed but achieved too late – Suchet's was the only army which remained independent. His last victory, at Molina del Rey in January 1814, was in a lost cause.

Suchet supported Napoleon during the Hundred Days, though his talents could perhaps have been employed more effectively than in commanding the Army of the Alps. He was deprived of his titles and offices by the Bourbons and retired into private life, but was re-appointed as a peer of France in 1819. Napoleon once remarked that

**Général Anne-Jean-Marie-René Savary, Duc de Rovigo (1774–1833).** A diplomat and security expert as well as a soldier, Savary served as ADC to Desaix and to Napoleon, to whom he became devoted. At Heilsberg on 10 June 1807 his arrival with the Fusiliers of the Guard and two batteries of artillery saved Murat, whose cavalry had been routed by the Russians under Bagration and Uvarov (Murat's thanks was to accuse Savary of cowardice). In addition to campaign service, and a spell as ambassador to Russia, his various appointments involved him in the execution of the Duc d'Enghien, and from 1810 he was Fouché's successor as Minister of Police – a distinctly sinister record. Back in favour after the 1830 Revolution, he commanded the French Army in Algeria 1831–32. (Engraving by A.E.Anderson after Lefevre)



he knew the 'depth' of all his generals – whether their talents led them to sink to their waist, chin or over the head; and when considering them in this light, Suchet was the first he mentioned as having improved markedly in courage and judgment.

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OPPOSITE **Napoleon's farewell to the Imperial Guard at Fontainebleau, April 1814, when he embraced Général Jean-Martin Petit (1772–1856), their commander, as a symbolic way of embracing all his most faithful followers. (Print after Horace Vernet)**

OPPOSITE **Louis-Gabriel Suchet, Duc d'Albufera (1770–1826).** The most effective of the French marshals who served in the Peninsula, he operated mainly against Spanish armies in the east of the country. Suchet was paid a notable compliment by Napoleon: that if he had had two marshals like Suchet, the Peninsular War might have been won. Another remarkable tribute, given the hatred with which Spain's French occupiers were generally regarded, was the fact that upon his death in 1826 a mass was said for him in the cathedral of Saragossa, which had been his seat of government in Spain. This gesture would seem to confirm that he had exercised his powers with some humanity. (Engraving by R.A.Muller after J.B.P.Guérin)

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## THE PLATES

**A1: Maréchal Jean-de-Dieu Soult, c1807**

**A2: Général Louis Saint-Hilaire, c1809**

**A3: Aide-de-camp to a Marshal, c1807**

The figure of **Soult** at A1 is taken from a portrait by Rudder, after Broc, depicting the uniform of colonel-general of the Chasseurs à Pied of the Imperial Guard, to which position he had been appointed in March 1802. The regimental uniform is combined with insignia of rank: the gold oak-leaf embroidery of general officers, the crossed batons on the epaulettes and gold sash interwoven with white indicating a marshal; the aiguillette on the right shoulder is indicative of the Imperial Guard, but the embroidery upon the breeches is unusual. The ceremonial épée of antique style is carried on a shoulder belt, partially concealed by the ribbon of the Légion d'Honneur, the medal and star of which are also worn. The second star is that of the Order of St Hubert of Bavaria, awarded to Soult in 1806.

Général Comte de **Saint-Hilaire** (1766–1809) was a much-wounded and much-admired officer who was distinguished as commander of the 1st Division of Soult's IV Corps, notably at Austerlitz in the attack on the Pratzen Heights, and at Jena and Eylau. In 1809 he was mortally wounded while leading the 3rd Division of Lannes' II Corps at Aspern-Essling. He was much lamented, 'the pride of the army, as remarkable for his wit as for his military talents'<sup>132</sup>. He is shown as figure A2 in the dress uniform of a general officer, with gold oak-motif embroidery upon breast and skirts. *Général de division* is indicated by the double line of embroidery on collar and cuffs, three silver stars on the epaulette and on the knots of the sash and sword knot, and red lines woven into the sash; *général de brigade* had a single line, two stars, and blue lines respectively. The decorations are those of the Légion d'Honneur (medal and star) and the medals of the Orders of the Iron Crown and of Military Merit of Maximilian Joseph of Bavaria.

The *aide-de-camp* illustrated as A3 wears the blue hussar uniform decreed by Berthier for the ADCs of marshals in March and May 1807, which also included a gold-laced dolman with red collar and cuffs and a shako worn in summer. Some variations are known, and some marshals dressed their ADCs in distinctive uniform; e.g. Berthier objected to the use of grey or red trousers, the latter intended to be the preserve of his own ADCs.

**B1: Général Emmanuel de Grouchy, c1809**

**B2: Général Laurent Gouvion Saint-Cyr, c1804**

**B3: Général François Fournier, c1811–12**

This plate depicts three very different cavalry uniforms. The figure of **Grouchy** at B1, taken from a portrait, shows a uniform of chasseur style in accordance with his appointment as colonel-general of Chasseurs in July 1809. The three silver stars of the rank of *général de division* are carried upon the high lace of the breeches and upon the knot of the sash.

**Napoleon in the uniform for which he became best known, as very commonly worn on campaign: the undress coat of the Chasseurs à Cheval of the Imperial Guard, with a small bicorn hat and a grey greatcoat – see Plate D. (Print after Meissonier)**

**Gouvion Saint-Cyr** was appointed colonel-general of Cuirassiers in July 1804. A portrait by Isabey shows cuirassier uniform with silver embroidery and the helmet-comb supporting an 'apostrophe'-style crest; another by Aubrey, upon which figure B2 is based, shows a more conventional helmet with the white plume of the staff, and the gold embroidery and sash of a *général de division*.

Both these uniforms consisted of additional distinctions being overlaid upon the basic costume of the respective branch of service; but figure B3 represents what must have been a non-regulation uniform designed by or for the individual. Taken from a Gros portrait of 1811–12, General François **Fournier** (1773–1827) wears a uniform of hussar style but in colours not worn by any regiment: red with a green pelisse and a red shako, with the usual symbols of his rank of *général de brigade* – gold sash with light blue lines, two silver stars on the cuffs and below the gold eagle on the red sabretache.

Fournier was an unpleasant character, arrogant and lecherous; Lejeune described him as 'a noted duellist and bully, the terror of all peaceable men', and he was more than once in trouble for dereliction of duty and political intrigue. His military qualities, though brittle, earned him the post of



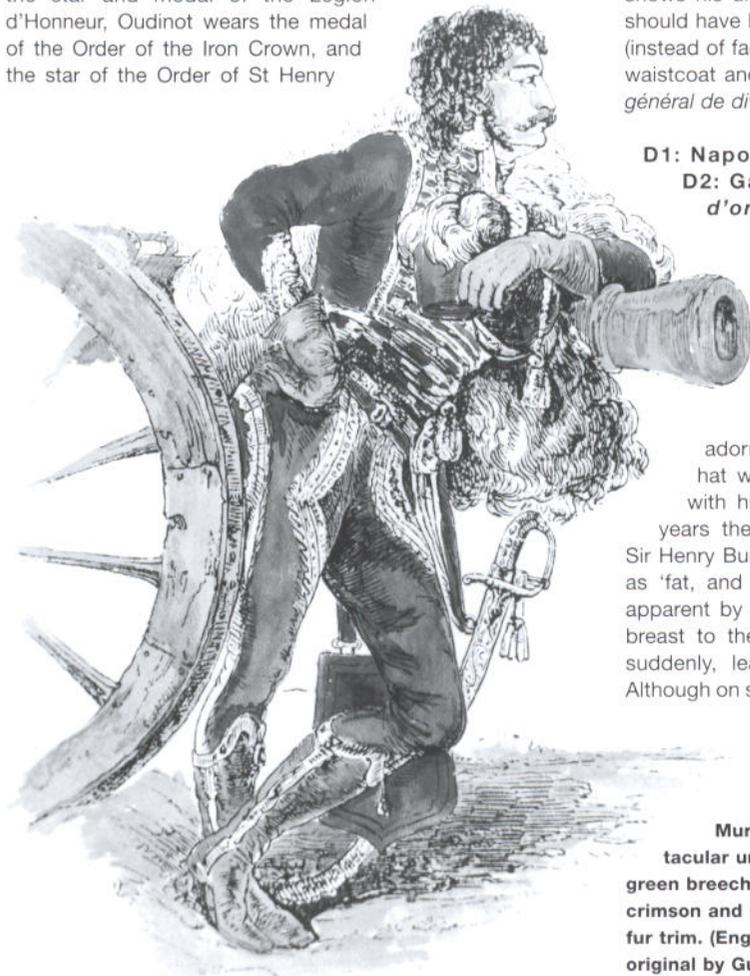
Lasalle's chief of staff in 1807, and promotion to *général de brigade* the following June. In the Peninsula he commanded a dragoon brigade and the cavalry of IX, later VI Corps. Becoming *général de division* in November 1812, he won fame at the Berezina when, at the head of the German cavalry of IX Corps, he made the vital and heroic charges at Studianka which helped keep open the path of retreat. He did not distinguish himself in 1813, however, and was given no further employment under the Empire.

**C1: Maréchal Nicolas-Charles Oudinot, c1811**

**C2: Général Charles-Etienne Gudin de la Sablonnière, c1811**

**C3: Capitaine Hyacinthe de Dreux-Nancré, ADC to Gudin**

Figure C1 reconstructing the appearance of the heroic **Oudinot** is taken from Robert Lefevre's portrait of 1811, showing that version of a marshal's coat – *grand uniforme* – which had the maximum amount of gold oak-leaf embroidery, and skirts without turnbacks. Other portraits show a similar uniform, with epaulettes and a hat with gold lace edging instead of the black lace depicted by Lefevre. The sword is a ceremonial, light-bladed épée; another portrait of Oudinot shows such a weapon with the pommel in the form of a bearded head. In addition to the star and medal of the Légion d'Honneur, Oudinot wears the medal of the Order of the Iron Crown, and the star of the Order of St Henry



of Saxony which he was awarded in 1808. (For a description of Oudinot during the Russian campaign, see commentary to Plate I1.)

A similar coat is worn by figure C2, *Général de Division Comte Gudin* (1768–1812), with the breeches and stockings of the so-called *petit uniforme* (an equivalent English term might be 'levée dress') for general officers, for service on foot. He wears the medal and star of the Légion d'Honneur, and the medal of the Order of St Henry of Saxony. A popular officer of aristocratic family, Gudin achieved the rank of *général de division* in 1800, before leading a division of Davout's Corps from 1805. Wounded at Auerstädt, Eylau, and four times at Wagram, in 1812 he was leading Davout's 3rd Division at Valutina when fatally mangled by a ricocheting roundshot. He was buried within a bastion at Smolensk; Lejeune arranged smashed muskets in star patterns above the body, inspired by the trophies of arms found in the grave-mounds of ancient Gallic warriors and thinking it a fitting memorial for one 'from whose admirable character as a commander so much might have been hoped'<sup>19</sup>.

Gudin's ADC, Capt. Hyacinthe-Louis-Ernest de **Dreux-Nancré** (1787–1848), originally served in the infantry but after a serious leg wound at Friedland he entered the cavalry and served on the staffs of Vandamme and, from July 1809, Gudin. Figure C3 is from a contemporary portrait which shows his uniform as a light cavalry version of that which should have been worn by ADCs, including light blue piping (instead of facings), a light blue shako, and a red or crimson waistcoat and brassard (a red armband signified an ADC to a *général de division*).

**D1: Napoleon in campaign uniform, c1809–12**

**D2: Gaspard Gourgaud, officier d'ordonnance, c1812**

**D3: Général Jean Rapp, ADC to Napoleon**

The emperor is shown as figure D1 in the uniform for which he is best known, and which he most commonly wore on campaign: the green undress coat of the Chasseurs à Cheval of the Imperial Guard, a grey greatcoat, and the small cocked hat adorned only by a tricolour cockade – 'the little hat which has in some measure become identified with his person', according to Las Cases<sup>20</sup>. In later years the *chasseur* coat was not especially flattering; Sir Henry Bunbury met him in July 1815 and described him as 'fat, and his belly projects; but this is rendered more apparent by the make of his coat... hooked tight over the breast to the pit of the stomach, and there is cut away suddenly, leaving a great display of white waistcoat'<sup>26</sup>. Although on some ceremonial occasions Napoleon wore very

**Murat** – see Plate F – in one of his earliest spectacular uniforms, in Egypt in 1799: scarlet dolman, dark green breeches and buff-yellow boots, with silver lace, crimson and silver sash, and dark green pelisse with white fur trim. (Engraving by G.Dorrington after M.Jacque, from an original by Guérin)

elaborate costume, his preference was for the plainest style. He sometimes wore the blue uniform of the Grenadiers à Pied of the Imperial Guard, and in 1814 and 1815 was supplied with coats of the National Guard, perhaps to raise the morale of these troops by wearing their uniform. Note the hanging epaulettes.

Created in September 1806, Napoleon's *officiers d'ordonnance* (orderly officers) originally wore the green uniform of his civil household, but in January 1809, to distinguish their exclusively military duties, a uniform of similar cut was decreed – a *frac* of hussar style in light blue (officially *bleu barbeau*, cornflower-blue), with facings and breeches the same, a scarlet waistcoat, the silver embroidery upon collar, cuffs and lapels in a motif of palm and oak. Figure D2 represents Gaspard **Gourgaud** (1788–1852), Napoleon's principal *officier d'ordonnance*, who became a *chef d'escadron* in 1812 and a general during the Hundred Days. One of Napoleon's most faithful subordinates, he was commissioned in 1802 and joined Napoleon's staff in 1811; near Brienne he may have saved Napoleon's life by killing the leader of a party of Cossacks which was approaching his tent. He served as an aide in 1815, and accompanied Napoleon to St Helena. Although 'a gentlemanly man, and possessed of much propriety of feeling'<sup>37</sup>, he was a prickly character, and not averse to duelling in defence of his own or his emperor's honour.

Figure D3 illustrates one of the most famous of Napoleon's ADCs, General Jean **Rapp**. It is taken from a portrait by Jean-Jacques Lagrenée, which shows the crimson and gold horse-furniture of general officers.

**E1: Jérôme Bonaparte, King of Westphalia**  
**E2: Captain-General of the Guard, Westphalia**  
**E3: ADC to French Général de Division**

Based upon a portrait by Kinson, the figure of King **Jérôme** at E1 includes the white uniform characteristic of the Westphalian army. The principal decoration worn is the Order of the Crown of Westphalia, in the blue ribbon and upper breast star; it was instituted by Jérôme in December 1809 and bore the motto *Charakter and Aufrichtigkeit* ('Character and Sincerity'). Among the other decorations is the star of the Légion d'Honneur and, at the neck, the Order of the Golden Fleece. Westphalian general officers wore a uniform similar to that of the French, in dark blue with gold lace and similar rank distinctions, though ADCs wore blue with yellow facings. In March 1807 Berthier issued orders which specified distinctive colours for the ADCs of princes commanding corps; for Jérôme this was green hussar uniform with red facings and silver lace, and the same colouring was used by his orderly officers when king, in a *chasseur*-style coat, bicorn and white breeches. Figure E2 shows a **Captain-General of the Westphalian Guard** in court or levée dress, taken from a print of 1810 by Alexander Sauerweid. These officers took turns for duty in attendance on the king, and commanding his bodyguard; the similarities with French uniform are quite marked. The Westphalian cockade was light blue with a white edge.

Figure E3 illustrates the regulation uniform of a **French aide-de-camp**, as specified in September 1803: a dark blue coat with light blue facings, gold epaulettes and gilt buttons, the dress version with horizontal pockets, the undress with concealed pockets. The turnbacks bore the gold *demi-*



**Murat as King of Naples, wearing a white uniform with scarlet facings and gold lace. The medal nearest the centre of the jacket is the red-enamelled, five-pointed star of the Royal Order of the Two Sicilies. The centre of the obverse bore the three-legged symbol of Sicily within a blue circlet inscribed 'Joseph Napoleo Siciliarum Rex Instituit' (later amended upon Murat's accession to the throne); the reverse bore the prancing horse of Naples within a circlet bearing 'Pro Renovata Patria'. (Print after Gérard)**

*foudre* lightning-bolt motif of the staff. This was worn with a white waistcoat, blue breeches (white is often shown for full dress), hussar boots, a bicorn bound with black lace, and a black leather waist belt with gold trim and gilt plate. The plume and the brassard, worn on the left arm, identified the rank of general to whom the ADC was attached: *général en chef*, white brassard and white plume with red tip; *général de division*, scarlet brassard and dark blue plume with red tip; *général de brigade*, light blue brassard and plume. There were, however, many recorded variations upon this uniform, such as that shown as Plate C3.

**F1: Maréchal Joachim Murat, King of Naples, c1810**

**F2: Neapolitan officier d'ordonnance**

**F3: Neapolitan aide-de-camp**

This plate depicts the most colourful of all Napoleon's subordinates, **Murat**, during his period as King of Naples, with two of his staff officers. Probably no general ever possessed a wider range of uniforms than Murat. Figure F1, from a portrait by Gros of 1810 which shows a yellow peakless *czapka*, green *kurtka* with crimson facings and silver lace, and chamois pantaloons, was by no means a singular example of the taste of his wardrobe. Among his many recorded

Eugène de Beauharnais – see Plate G1 – as colonel of the Chasseurs à Cheval of the Imperial Guard, an appointment he was given in October 1804. (Engraving by C.A.Powell after Henri Scheffer)



OPPOSITE A French general officer, portrayed to illustrate the *Ordre de la Réunion* – see also Plate L3 – founded by Napoleon on 18 October 1811 as a decoration for those who had contributed to his victories, and intended to be limited to 11,200 recipients. Its badge was a 12-pointed, white-enamelled star, and its ribbon was sky-blue; in English it is sometimes termed the 'Order of Integration'. The blue flecks upon the sash of this figure denote him as a *général de brigade*. (Detail from painting by Eugène Lami; The Royal Collection © 2001, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II)

costumes were white or scarlet hussar uniforms; a form of staff uniform in white, with bicorn; in bad weather, a fur-edged green or crimson pelisse, with a hat or low *czapka*. At the beginning of the 1812 campaign he wore a uniform more akin to the period of the Thirty Years War: a light blue satin frock-coat of archaic cut, an open collar resembling a ruff, gold *brandebourg* lace loops, red or white breeches, huge deerskin boots and a 17th-century style, plumed, brimmed hat with a diamond clasp – upon first sight it led the artist Albrecht Adam to enquire the identity of the drum-major to whom Napoleon was speaking! Murat was so well known for his extravagant costumes that the public nicknamed him 'King Franconi' after a circus rider and director of a Paris theatre, and even Napoleon declared that Murat's exaggerated costumes and mannerisms gave him 'the appearance of a quack operator or mountebank'<sup>38</sup>. The decorations include the medals and stars of the Légion d'Honneur and the Royal Order of the Two Sicilies, the

scarlet ribbon of the former being given precedence over the blue of the latter out of respect for Napoleon. The Order of the Two Sicilies was founded by Joseph Bonaparte in 1808, its medal in the form of a very distinctive red-enamelled five-pointed star.

Murat's staff also wore ornate uniforms. Berthier's order of March 1807 (when Murat was Grand Duke of Berg) specified for his ADCs an amaranth hussar uniform with chamois facings, to which were added chamois legwear and white pelisse, all with gold lace. Figure F2 here, however, depicts an orderly officer (*officier d'ordonnance*) in distinctive white hussar uniform with sky blue facings and crimson breeches. Also shown as F3 is one of Murat's **Neapolitan aides-de-camp**, in a uniform derived from that of French ADCs, with the brassard and plume indicating an officer attached to the staff of a commanding general. Both staff officers wear the Neapolitan cockade, crimson with a white edge.

**G1: Eugène de Beauharnais, Viceroy of Italy, 1812**

**G2: Italian aide-de-camp**

**G3: Adjoint attached to staff of Imperial Guard**

Although portraits show **Eugène** in a number of ornate uniforms, the plain uniform illustrated as figure G1 is taken from a depiction by Albrecht Adam, when Eugène was commanding the Army of Italy during the 1812 campaign. In addition to his appointment as viceroy, and his command of the forces of that kingdom, he was also a general in French service. The plain service uniform was probably more to his reserved taste; the pointed cuffs are not a common feature. Among variations shown in contemporary pictures are blue or white breeches, and the ribbon of the Légion d'Honneur worn either underneath the open-fronted coat, or over the closed coat. The staff uniform of the Kingdom of Italy was similar to that of France, but in the dark green national uniform colour; Eugène is also shown in a version of this uniform, as viceroy, with crimson facings and silver lace, including embroidered oak-leaf loops on the breast.

Eugène's **Italian aide-de-camp** shown as G2 wears a *chasseur*-style uniform in the national dark green, with sky-blue facings and silver lace; Lejeune shows a similar uniform including a single-breasted *surtout* and overalls, green throughout, with silver lace edging the facings and silver aiguillette. Based on a print by Martinet, figure G3 is a staff captain or **adjoint of the Imperial Guard** wearing what appears to have been an unofficial variation: the regulation uniform of an *adjoint* was a single-breasted *surtout* similar to that worn by *adjutants-commandants*, with red facings and epaulettes of rank, the only other decoration being two embroidered oak-leaf loops on each side of the collar. The hussar-style horse furniture depicted by Martinet includes a dark blue shabraque with gold lace edging and scarlet piping, with a gold eagle in the rear corners.

**H1: General Josef Poniatowski, 1812**

**H2: Général Louis Chouard, 1812**

**H3: Adjudant-commandant, full dress, 1812**

These figures show uniforms from the 1812 campaign in Russia. **Poniatowski** would have had no time to wear the uniform of a marshal of France, holding that rank for only four days before his death in action. Figure H1 shows him uniformed as a general of the army of the Duchy of Warsaw, based on a number of contemporary portraits. The jacket is a short-tailed *kurtka* of Polish style, with crimson collar; crimson cuffs are also recorded for general officers, and the distinctive silver lace was in a zig-zag configuration, or one resembling a length of ribbon folded back upon itself. Portraits show Poniatowski wearing the scarlet ribbon of the Légion d'Honneur, sometimes with that of the Polish Order of Virtuti Militari (light blue with black edges), the stars of both orders being worn upon the left breast.

Figure H2, based on a portrait of Général Louis-Claude **Chouard** (1771–1845), is another example of generals' uniform being adapted for a particular arm of service. A cavalryman from 1792, whose various staff appointments included ADC to Moreau, Chouard was wounded five times at Austerlitz; he rose to command the 2nd Cuirassiers and served in the campaigns of 1806–09. Promoted general in 1811, he led the 2nd Carabinier Brigade from August 1811 until he was wounded (twice) at Borodino. His jacket bears the



embroidery of a *général de brigade* but is cut to resemble that of the Carabiniers, although theirs were white. In May 1807 Napoleon ordered generals and staff officers of Cuirassier formations to wear the cuirass, and accordingly Chouard wears the copper cuirass and helmet of the Carabiniers, the helmet's black crest perhaps recalling the black feather edging worn by *général de brigade* on the bicorn. In October 1813 Chouard became *colonel-major* in the Dragoons of the Imperial Guard, but was discharged at the First Restoration. During the Hundred Days he led a cavalry brigade in the Army of the Moselle.

In dress uniform, as illustrated at H3, *adjutants-commandants* wore single-breasted coats with red facings and oak-leaf embroidery loops – nine on the breast, three on the cuff and pocket, and two on each side of the collar. Their waist belt bore a trophy of flags, sword and oak-wreath motif. For their undress uniform, see Plate I3.

**I1: Maréchal Ney, 1812**

**I2: Général Jean Marchand, 1812**

**I3: Adjudant-commandant, service uniform, 1812**

This plate illustrates a scene from the Russian campaign featuring **Ney**, one of his divisional commanders, and a senior staff officer. From a portrait by Langlois, Ney is shown at I1 wearing a typical non-regulation overcoat as used in cold climates, an alternative to the ordinary greatcoat (see Plate K2). Few officers can have appeared quite so smart at the end of the retreat from Moscow; for example, Oudinot's wife described her husband 'dressed in a dark brown fur coat, with, on his head, a black astrakhan cap, dragged down over the ears; and he would have reminded me of a tame bear, if his legs had not been encased in a certain pair of boots, well lined with fur, but presenting to the outside view nothing save a blue and white striped ticking (the ticking of a feather-bed). These two striped legs emerging from under the fur coat had an indescribable effect'<sup>36</sup>.

An alternative to an overcoat was the caped cloak, and that worn by figure I2 is taken from an existing example. This figure represents Ney's long-serving subordinate Jean-Gabriel **Marchand** (1765–1851). A lawyer of gentlemanly background under the Ancien Régime, Marchand fought with the Army of Italy and was promoted *chef de bataillon* by Schérer on the battlefield of Loano. He led a brigade in Ney's VI Corps in 1805, became *général de division* that December, served at Jena and Friedland, and was ennobled as a *comte* in October 1808. He earned a reputation as a reliable divisional commander, leading the 1st Division of Ney's VI Corps in Spain, including at Busaco and Fuentes de Oñoro, and the 25th Division of III Corps in Russia.

The service dress of *adjudants-commandants* illustrated as figure I3 was similar to full dress (see Plate H3), but dark blue throughout, with the embroidered loops carried only upon the collar and cuffs. As in full dress, the coat skirts bore the *demi-foudre* thunderbolt motif.

**J1: Général Jean Baston, Comte de La Riboisière, 1812**

**J2: Général Jean Desvaux de Saint-Maurice, 1813**

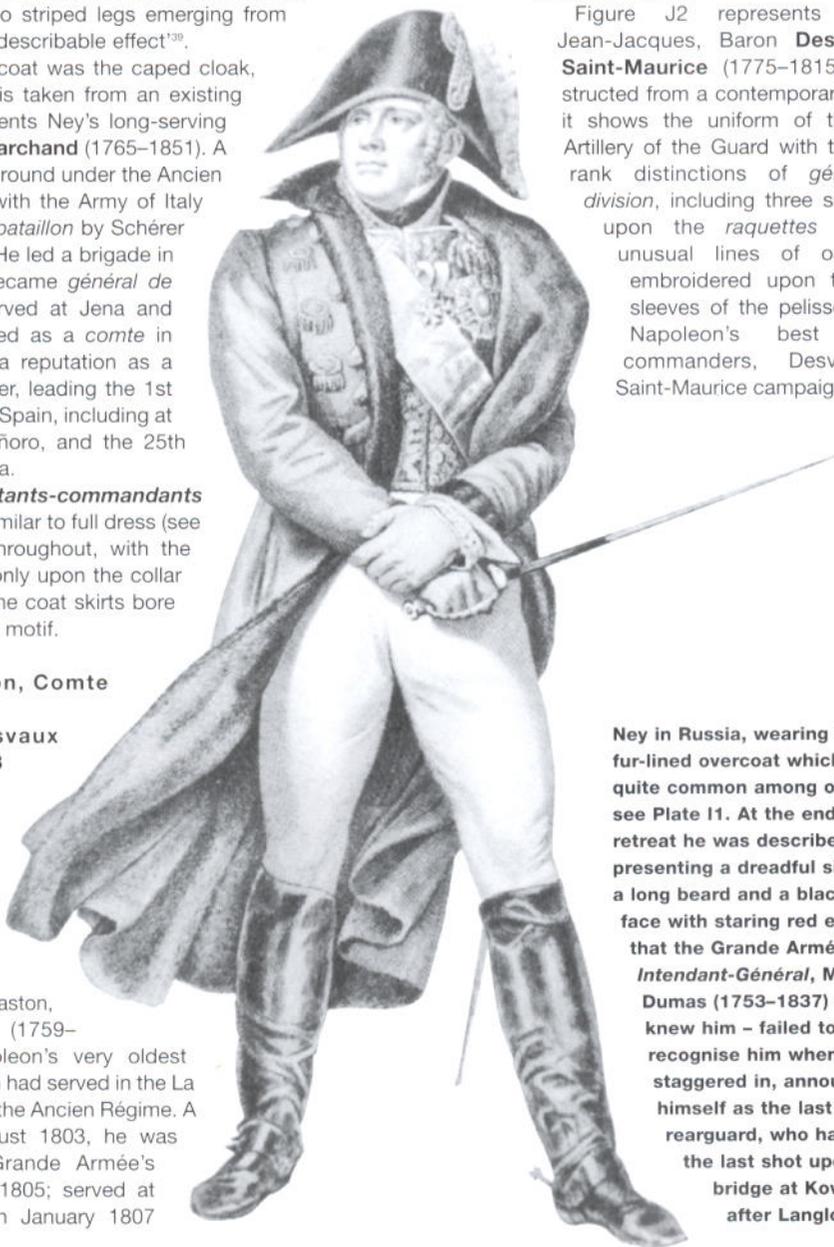
**J3: Dominique Larrey, Chief Surgeon to the Grande Armée, 1812**

This plate illustrates three personalities from the 'supporting services' of the Grande Armée in 1812.

Général Jean-Amboise Baston, Comte de **La Riboisière** (1759–1812) was probably Napoleon's very oldest military colleague, since both had served in the La Fère artillery regiment under the Ancien Régime. A *général de brigade* in August 1803, he was appointed head of the Grande Armée's artillery park in November 1805; served at Austerlitz and Jena; and in January 1807

became *général de division* and commander of the Imperial Guard artillery. After service at Eylau and in Spain, in January 1812 he was appointed artillery chief of the Grande Armée. One of two sons who accompanied him to Russia was mortally wounded at Borodino; greatly distressed, the general survived the retreat only to fall ill after reaching safety, and died at Königsberg in December 1812. Taken from a portrait by Gros, figure J1 shows La Riboisière (or 'Lariboisière') wearing artillery uniform (dark blue with red piping, including on the dark blue waistcoat) with the embroidery and sash of *général de division*. The ribbons over the shoulder are those of the Military Order of Baden (light orange with white edges) and the Order of the Iron Crown (orange-yellow with green edges); the medals are those of the Légion d'Honneur and the Orders of the Iron Crown and of St Henry of Saxony.

Figure J2 represents Général Jean-Jacques, Baron **Desvaux de Saint-Maurice** (1775–1815); reconstructed from a contemporary portrait, it shows the uniform of the Horse Artillery of the Guard with the added rank distinctions of *général de division*, including three silver stars upon the *raquettes* and the unusual lines of oak-leaves embroidered upon the lower sleeves of the pelisse. One of Napoleon's best artillery commanders, Desvaux de Saint-Maurice campaigned in the



**Ney in Russia, wearing the fur-lined overcoat which was quite common among officers – see Plate I1. At the end of the retreat he was described as presenting a dreadful sight, with a long beard and a blackened face with staring red eyes, so that the Grande Armée's Intendant-Général, Mathieu Dumas (1753–1837) – who knew him – failed to recognise him when he staggered in, announcing himself as the last of the rearguard, who had fired the last shot upon the bridge at Kovno. (Print after Langlois)**

1790s with the Armies of the Alps, the Pyrenees and Italy. Wounded before Ulm in 1805, in 1806–07 he was Marmont's head of artillery with the Army of Dalmatia, transferring in 1808 to the Army of Italy. In 1809 he served at Raab and Wagram, and in June became *général de brigade*; that July he was appointed colonel-major of the Artillerie à Cheval of the Imperial Guard, and was ennobled in October. He led the Guard artillery in Russia; present at Lützen, Bautzen and Hanau, in November 1813 he became *général de division*. In 1815 he was appointed head of the Guard artillery; he served at Ligny and, in personal command of the Guard artillery reserve at Waterloo, was killed on the spot by a cannon shot.

**Larrey** is shown at J3 in a uniform depicted by Lejeune, when he was *Chirurgien-en-Chef* to the Grande Armée. The coat with crimson velvet collar and cuffs identified surgeons (physicians and pharmacists had black and green facings respectively), the facings with a double line of gold foliate embroidery. The *aguillette* marks Larrey's association with the Imperial Guard, though as their chief surgeon he could have worn a double-breasted coat with similar colouring and pointed cuffs. Wearing his hair very long was a personal foible: Larrey believed that he became ill whenever it was cut short!

**K1: Joseph Bonaparte, King of Naples and Spain, c1808**

**K2: Maréchal Jean-Baptiste Jourdan, 1811–13**

**K3: Maréchal Louis-Gabriel Suchet, 1811–13**

This plate shows three of the leading French personalities of the Peninsular War, and various orders of dress. At figure K1, **Joseph Bonaparte** wears the very plain, lapelled coat depicted in a portrait by Wicar; his plain bicorne bears the Neapolitan cockade, crimson and white. The decorations are those of the Légion d'Honneur.

Figure K2 shows **Jourdan** wearing the double-breasted greatcoat used by general officers, in this case bearing the gold embroidery of rank upon the cuffs and on the stand-and-fall collar, with the sash worn atop the coat. Again, the decorations are those of the Légion d'Honneur.

Figure K3 is taken from a portrait of **Suchet**, and shows the single-breasted *frac* commonly worn by general officers on service, with the embroidery of rank restricted to the collar and cuffs. He wears the ribbon and medal of the Légion d'Honneur, and the medal of the Iron Crown.

**L1: Général Edouard de Colbert, 1815**

**L2: Général Louis-Michel Letort, 1815**

**L3: Général Maurice-Etienne Gérard, 1815**

This plate features three great fighting officers who all held the rank of *général de division* during the Hundred Days campaign (though note that after the first Bourbon Restoration in 1814 the rank of *général de division* had officially been replaced by *lieutenant-général*).

**Colbert** (L1) and **Letort** (L2) both wear the regimental uniforms of their respective units: as commander of the combined Guard Lancers regiment at Waterloo Colbert wears that of the 2nd (Dutch or 'Red') Lancers of the Imperial Guard (2e Cheveau-Légers Lanciers de la Garde Impériale), while 'Brave Letort' wore that of the Empress' Dragoons (Dragons de l'Impératrice) of the Guard for his last fight at Ligny. In both cases their uniforms include the insignia of divisional general's rank – gold oak-leaf



**Larrey (left) and an inspecteur aux revues (right).** Larrey wears an alternative uniform as *chirurgien-en-chef* of the Imperial Guard to that shown in Plate J3: dark blue with crimson facings including lapels, gold lace and *aguillette*. The *inspecteurs aux revues* wore coats of a lighter shade of blue, with scarlet facings and silver lace and buttons. (Engraving by Lacoste after De Moraine)

embroidery upon the facings, and the sash. The figure of **Gérard** at L3, taken from a portrait by David, shows that battle-hardened infantryman as commander of IV Corps at Ligny, in the general officers' plain dark blue undress uniform, with epaulettes as the only real ornamentation. He wears the star and medal of the Légion d'Honneur, the star of the Order of the Sword of Sweden (which this protégé of Bernadotte had been awarded in 1814), and the medals of the Order of the Réunion and, at the neck, the Order of the Dannebrog of Denmark (awarded 1808).

# INDEX

Figures in **bold** refer to illustrations

2e Cheveau-Légers of the Imperial Guard (the 'Red Lancers') **L1**, 16-17, 63

aides-de-camp (ADC) **A3**, **C3**, **F2**, **G2**, 6, 7-9, 9, 57, 58, 60, 61  
Napoleon **D3**, 5, 7, 15, 27, 28, 50-51, 53, 59  
Albuera, battle of, 1811 52  
artillery 3, 6, 29

Aspern-Essling, battle of, 1809 4, 5, 8-9, 25-26, 51  
Angerau, Maréchal Pierre-François Charles, Duc de Castiglione (1757-1816) 8  
Austerlitz, battle of, 1805 25, 50

Bacler d'Albe, Louis-Albert-Ghislain (1761-1824) 3  
Badajoz, sieges of, 1811 and 1812 9, 52  
Beauharnais, Général Eugène-Rose de, Viceroys of Italy, (1781-1824) **G1**, 7, 10, 10-11, 11, 60, 61  
Bernadotte, Maréchal Jean-Baptiste Jules (1763-1844) 18  
Berthier, Maréchal Louis-Alexandre, Prince de Neuchâtel et de Wagram (1753-1815) 5, 6, 59  
Bertrand, Général Henri-Graeven (1773-1844) 3  
Bonaparte, Jérôme, King of Westphalia (1784-1860) **E1**, 11-13, 12, 59

Bonaparte, Joseph, King of Naples and of Spain (1768-1844) **K1**, 13-15, 14, 23, 24, 52, 63  
Borodino, battle of, 1812 10, 16, 17, 22, 25, 50, 51  
Bourmont, Général Louis-Auguste-Victor (1773-1846) 19-20  
Brune, Maréchal Guillaume-Marie-Anne (1763-1815) **I3**  
*bureau topographique* 3-4

Caulaincourt, Général Armand-Angustin-Louis, Marquis de, Duc de Vincence (1773-1827) 4, 15, 15  
Caulaincourt, Général Auguste-Jean-Gabriel, Comte de  
Caulaincourt (1777-1812) 15-16  
Charpentier, Major 9  
Chouard, Général Louis-Claude (1771-1845) **H2**, 61  
Cintra, Convention of, 1808 25  
Clarke, Maréchal Henri-Jacques-Guillaume (1765-1818) **16**  
Colbert, Auguste-François-Marie (1777-1809) 16  
Colbert, Général Edouard de, Comte de Colbert-Chabanais (1774-1853) **L1**, 16-17, 63  
Colbert, Louis-Pierre-Alphonse (1776-1843) 16  
Corunna, battle of, 1809 52

Danzig, defence of, 1813 5, 51  
Daru, Pierre Bruno (1767-1829) 6  
Daumesnil, Général Pierre (1777-1832) 9  
Desvaux de Saint-Maurice, Général Jean-Jacques, Baron (1775-1815) **J2**, 62-63

Dreux-Naucré, Captain Hyacinthe-Louis-Ernest de (1787-1848) **C3**, 58  
Drouot, Général Antoine, Comte (1774-1847) 17, 17-18  
Duhesme, Général Philibert-Guillaume (1766-1815) **16**  
Duroc, Gérard-Christophe-Michel (1772-1813) 4

Elchingen, battle of, 1805 45  
engineers 3, 6  
Exelmans, Général Remy-Joseph-Isidore (1775-1852) 27  
Eylau, battle of, 1807 8, 22, 26, 31, 45

Fournier, Général François (1773-1827) **B2**, 57-58  
Foy, Général Maximilien-Sébastien (1775-1825) 18, 19  
Friedland, battle of, 1807 16, 22

garrisons 9  
Gérard, Général Maurice-Etienne, Comte (1773-1852) **I3**, 18-20, 63

Gourgaud, Gaspard (1788-1852) **D2**, 59  
Gouvion Saint-Cyr, Maréchal Laurent, Marquis de (1764-1830) **B2**, 20-21, 21, 57

*grand quartier-général* (general headquarters) 3-4, 5-6  
Grouchy, Maréchal Emmanuel, Marquis de (1766-1847) **B1**, 21-23, 22, 57

Godin de la Sablonnière, Général Charles-Etienne, Comte (1768-1812) **C2**, 58

Hundred Days, the, 1815 **L1**, 11, 14-15, 22-23, 27, 46, 52, 53

*Inspecteur aux revues* 6, 63  
Intendance, the 6

Jena, battle of, 1806 36, 45  
Jourdan, Maréchal Jean-Baptiste, Comte (1762-1835) **K2**, 23, 23-24, 24, 63

Kellermann, Général François-Etienne, Comte de Valmy (1770-1835) 24-25, 25

Lannes, Maréchal Jean, Duc de Montebello (1769-1809) 8-9  
Larrey, Dominique-Jean, Baron, (1766-1842) **J3**, 25-26, 26, 63, 63  
Las, Général Jacques-Alexandre-Bernard (1768-1828) 27  
Leipzig, battle of, 1813 28, 50  
Lefort, Général Louis-Michel, Comte (1773-1815) **L2**, 26-27, 63  
Lützen, battle of, 1813 10, 16

Macdonald, Maréchal Jacques-Etienne-Joseph-Alexandre, Duc de Tarente (1765-1840) 17, 27-28, 28  
Marbot, J.B.A.M. 7-9, 12, 13, 18, 20, 23, 45, 47  
Marchand, Général Jean-Gabriel (1766-1851) **12**, 62  
Marengo, battle of, 1800 24-25, 29  
Marmont, Maréchal Auguste-Frédéric-Louis Viesse de, Duc de Raguse (1774-1852) 28-30, 29  
marshal's baton 24

Massena, Maréchal André, Duc de Rivoli, Prince d'Essling (1758-1817) 11, 20, 45, 47, 52

medical treatment 25-26  
Moncy, Maréchal Bon-Adrien-Jeanot de, Duc de Conegliano (1754-1842) **30**

Moutbrun, Général Louis-Pierre (1770-1812) **31**  
Moreau, Général Jean-Claude (1755-1828) 9  
Mouton, George (1770-1838) 5  
Murat, Maréchal Joachim, King of Naples, Grand Duke of Berg (1767-1815) **F1**, 30-31, 31, 36, 52, 58, 59, 60

death of 45  
as King of Naples 31-32, 59  
and Napoleon 31, 32  
qualities 31  
and the Russian campaign 5, 32  
service 31-32  
staff **F2**, 30  
treachery of 32

Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) **D1**, 4, 54, 57, 58-59

aides-de-camp **D3**, 5, 7, 15, 27, 28, 50-51, 53, 59  
and Beauharnais 10, 11  
bodyguard 4-5  
and Caulaincourt 15  
and Drouot 17  
and Gérard 20  
household 5  
and Jérôme Bonaparte 11, 12, 13  
and Joseph Bonaparte 13, 14, 15  
and Jourdan 24  
and Larrey 25  
and Lefort 27  
and Macdonald 28  
and Marmont 28, 29  
and Murat 31, 32  
and Ney 45, 46  
and Poland 49  
and Rapp 50-51  
and Soult 52  
staff **D2**, 4, 5, 6, 59  
and Suchet 53-54  
Ney, Maréchal Michel, Duc d'Elchingen, Prince de la Moscowa (1769-1815) 11, 45, 45-47, 46, 62, 62

*Ordre de la Réunion* 61  
Ornano, Philippe-Antoine d' (1784-1863) 27  
Ordino, Maréchal Nicolas-Charles, Duc de Reggio (1767-1847) **G1**, 47, 47-48, 58, 62

Penissal War, the, 1807-14 13-14, 18, 20, 29, 45-46, 52, 53  
Percy, Pierre-François (1754-1825) 26  
Peit, Général Jean-Martin (1772-1856) **55**  
*petit quartier-général* (little headquarters) 4-5  
Philippon, Général Armand (1761-1836) 9  
Pomiatowski, Maréchal Josef Anton, Prince (1763-1813) **H1**, 48, 48-50, 49, 61

Quatre Bras, battle of, 1815 17, 46

Rapp, Général Jean, Comte (1771-1821) **D3**, 5, 50, 50-51, 59  
Reynier, Général Jean-Louis-Ebenzer (1771-1814) 51  
Ribosière, Général Jean-Amloise Baston, Comte de la (1759-1812) **J1**, 62  
Roustan (1780-1815) 4  
Russian campaign of 1812 **H1**, 1, 11, 18-19, 20-21, 28, 46, 47-48, 49-50, 61, 62  
retreat from Moscow 5, 22, 32, 46, 62

Saint-Hilaire, Général Louis, Comte (1766-1809) **A2**, 57  
Salamanca, battle of, 1812 18, 29  
Savary, Général Anne-Jean-Marie-René, Duc de Rovigo (1774-1853) 53

Sébastien, Général Horace-François-Bastien (1772-1851) 51  
secretarial department 3

Soult, Maréchal Jean-de-Dieu, Duc de Dalmanie (1769-1851) **A1**, 52, 52-53, 57

staff officers  
*adjoints* **G3**, 3, 4, 7, 61  
*adjutants-commandants* **H3**, **I3**, 3, 6-7, 61, 62  
brigade 7  
*corps d'armée* 6-7  
divisional 7  
garrisons 9  
*officiers d'ambulance* **D2**, **F3**, 4, 5, 6, 7, 59, 60  
staff system 3  
Suchet, Maréchal Louis-Gabriel, Duc d'Albuera (1770-1826) **K3**, 53-54, 54, 63  
swords 24

Tancarville, Auguste Bataille de 7

Thouvenot, Général Pierre (1757-1817) 8

Tolentino, battle of, 1815 32

Tralagan, battle of, 1805 17

Triare, General Joseph (1764-1850) 11

uniforms  
2e Cheveau-Légers of the Imperial Guard (the 'Red Lancers') **L1**, 43

aides-de-camp **A3**, **C3**, **D3**, **G2**, 9, 57, 58, 59, 61  
garrison officers 9  
general officers **A2**, **C2**, **H2**, **J1-2**, **K2-3**, **L3**, 57, 58, 61, 61, 62, 63  
*Inspecteur aux revues* 63  
marshal's *grand uniforme* **C1**, 58  
Neapolitan **F2**, 60  
*officiers d'ambulance* **D2**, **F3**, 5, 6, 7, 59, 60  
staff officers **G3**, **H3**, **I3**, 4, 61, 62  
Westphalian **E1**, **E2**, 59

Veiland, Michel (1767-1815) 9

Vittoria, battle of, 1813 14, 24, 24

Wagram, battle of, 1809 10, 16, 17, 28, 47

Waterloo, battle of, 1815 13, 17, 18, 19-20, 23, 46

Wavre, battle of, 1815 20

Wellington, Sir Arthur Wellesley, Duke of, (1769-1852) 18, 30, 52

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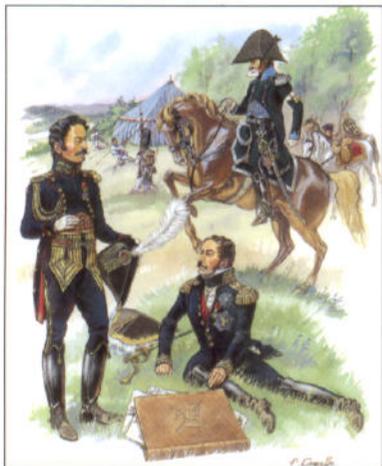
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