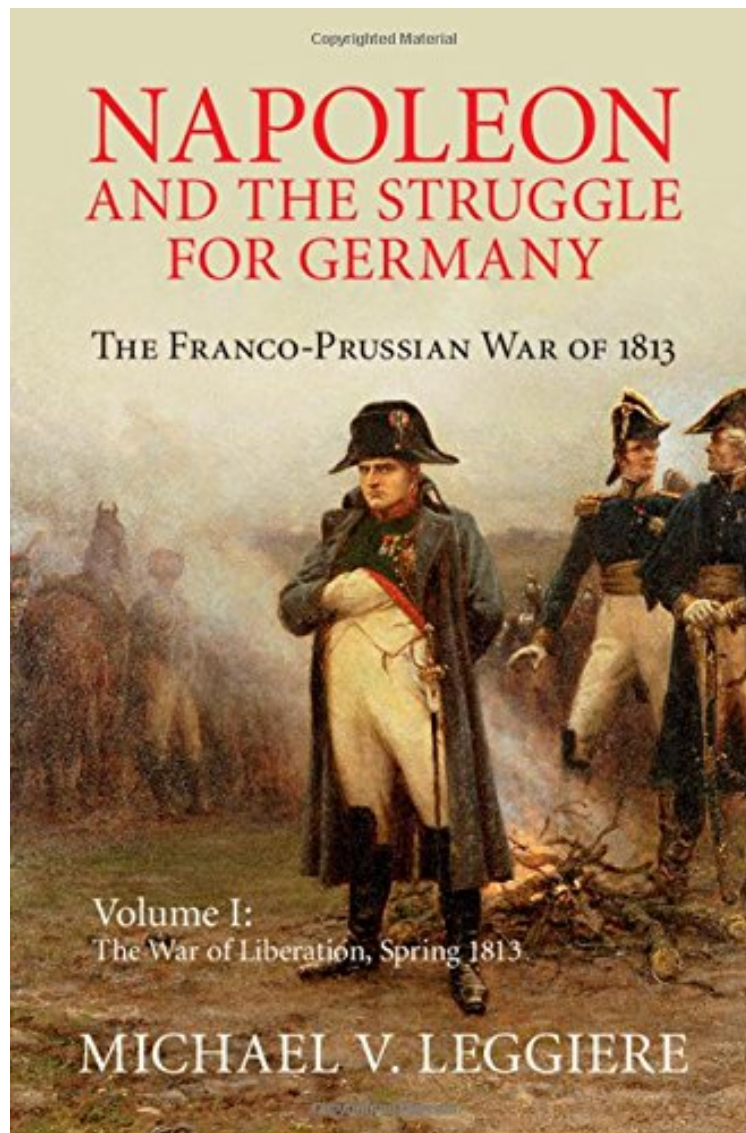


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Napoleon and the Struggle for Germany: The Franco-Prussian War of 1813 (Cambridge Military Histories) (Volume 1)

Michael V. Leggiere

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#938419 in Books Michael V Leggiere 2015-05-12 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.98 x 1.10 x 5.981, 2.24 #File Name: 1107080517498 pages Napoleon and the Struggle for Germany The Franco Prussian War of 1813 Cambridge Military Histories Volume 1 | File size: 61.Mb

Michael V. Leggiere : Napoleon and the Struggle for Germany: The Franco-Prussian War of 1813 (Cambridge Military Histories) (Volume 1) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Napoleon and the Struggle for Germany: The Franco-Prussian War of 1813 (Cambridge Military Histories) (Volume 1):

15 of 16 people found the following review helpful. A pastrami sandwich

By Joseph Key

The last we heard from Mr. Leggiere was in 2007 when he published *THE FALL OF NAPOLEON*, one of the most unusual books of history I'd ever seen. It was volume 1 of a history on the 1814 campaign. Thus I was pleasantly surprised that instead of finishing the 1814 campaign he had moved forward to the 1813 campaign with a volume on the 1813 spring campaign. I have always felt that given its importance the 1813 campaign had been given short shrift. The only worthwhile modern account was Nafziger's published in the late 90's, which I personally found somewhat lacking, falling in the something is better than nothing category. So I was excited when I saw that Mr. Leggiere was taking the campaign on. For want of a better term I consider Mr. Leggiere an academic historian who specializes in the Napoleonic Wars. An analogy is in order. Think of a good pastrami sandwich which has mounds of meat between two slices of bread. For your average military historian the meat is an account of battles, tactics and strategy. Armies and their makeup, and the leaders who led them and the soldier who fought. The politics and diplomatic events are the bread surrounding the meat. To Mr. Leggiere and others like him the meat is the diplomacy and politics of the period while the fighting is the bread. I find the politics and diplomacy of this period fascinating, though at times a bit tedious as you can't wait for the action to start. Diplomacy is often like watching sausage being made. The focus of this book is Prussia and its attempt to lead the struggle for German liberation from the Napoleonic yoke, after Napoleon's disastrous failure in Russia gave his enemy's an opening they never thought would occur. His hero is Gerhard Scharnhorst the architect of the rebuilt Prussian army after the disaster of 1806. Scharnhorst was instrumental in cementing the alliance with Russia that was essential if Prussia was going to have an opportunity to defeat Napoleon. Despite its focus on Prussia and German liberation Napoleon is given his due and almost equal time. This book is indeed an interesting addition to study of this campaign but not what I hoped would become the standard work on it. The book gets only four stars from me because it comes up short on the military end. For example one of the standard components of most military history's are a couple of chapters comparing the opposing forces early on. This book dispenses with that, which is rather shocking since both sides had to rebuild their armies from scratch. Napoleon lost his grand army in Russia and had to totally rebuild it in the early months of the year. Prussia's army had to be rebuilt almost from scratch after the strictures put on it by Napoleon after the Treaty of Tilsit. None of this is covered in the book. A word also must be said about the book's maps, first on the positive side. There are six maps bunched together in the book's front. Normally this is a big no-no for me, but unlike other authors that do this Mr. Leggiere has a note in the text indicating to the reader which of the maps in the front he needs to refer to. These six maps are there because they are referred to throughout the text. There are also many other well done maps spread through the text. But this is the other area where Mr. Leggiere falls short by having the military aspects the bread rather than the meat. The two great battles of Lutzen and Bautzen are each covered with two maps apiece of an operational nature showing the whole battlefields. Mr. Leggiere provides a good operational account of these battles but more military oriented readers may like to see more tactical details. This is the first of three volumes on the 1813 campaign, forget what you hear about this being a two volume work as a note in the next volume indicates that a third volume will be necessary, but I will deal with that in my review of the next volume. By the way this is not the first book published on the spring campaign this year. Earlier this year James Arnold privately published a book on the same campaign. Though covering the same subject the two books actually complement each other. Being a traditional military historian Mr. Arnold deals in more detail with the military stuff than does Mr. Leggiere. As that book is not listed on Amazon's sight I will not go into more detail on it until it appears. Mr. Leggiere has still written a very good account of this campaign. If not the last word it will do until such a book arrives.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Struggle through the approach march and your patience will be rewarded

By Michael Knights

As a reasonably nerdy student of Napoleonic military history and a wargamer I found this to be a book with two faces. The first face, much of the lead-up to Lutzen, was quite painful reading. Great scholarship, no doubt, but dull and heavy to fight through. The account of the maneuvering is very complete and really gives a sense how armies found and lost each other, and how generals commanded on the march. But you really need to fight through the wordage and in the absence of good maps it is not fun. The other face of the book is the quite stunning account of the battle of Lutzen. For a wargamer it is great stuff, not just in terms of understanding this specific battle but also for really digging down into the nuts and bolts mechanics of how Napoleonic battles really worked. It is also a great read on the state of the armies and commanders by 1813, which provides a lot of useful pointers to committed wargamers who want to tweak army lists and rules. A third of the way in I was cursing this book, but by the end I was glad I bought it and wanted more.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great

By Bravo16

Level of detail is a bit off putting at beginning, but shines when describing the battles. Most thorough depiction of Lutzen and Bautzen I have read. It does favor the Prussian-Russian side.

This is the first comprehensive history of the campaign that determined control of Germany following Napoleon's catastrophic defeat in Russia. Michael V. Leggiere reveals how, in the spring of 1813, Prussia, the weakest of the great powers, led the struggle against Napoleon as a war of national liberation. Using German, French, British, Russian, Austrian and Swedish sources, he provides a panoramic history that covers the full sweep of the battle for Germany from the mobilization of the belligerents, strategy, and operations to coalition warfare, diplomacy, and civil-military

relations. He shows how Russian war weariness conflicted with Prussian impetuosity, resulting in the crisis that almost ended the Sixth Coalition in early June. In a single campaign, Napoleon drove the Russo-Prussian army from the banks of the Saale to the banks of the Oder. The Russo-Prussian alliance was perilously close to imploding, only to be saved at the eleventh-hour by an armistice.

"This is by far the best study in English of the spring campaign of 1813 which played a crucial part in the final defeat of Napoleon. Based on an impressive array of archival and published sources in many languages, Michael Leggiere traces the desperate Prussian struggle against the new French armies raised by Napoleon after the disaster of 1812, and their equally decisive efforts to keep their exhausted Russian allies in the war. It is unlikely that Leggiere's account will ever be surpassed." Rory Muir, author of *Wellington: The Path to Victory, 1769-1814*"The 1813 campaign has been rather neglected in recent decades, above all because it was the traditional stamping-ground of German nationalist historians preaching the virtues and achievements of Prussia and its army. It is high time for a detailed new military history rooted in sources not previously available which seeks to provide a balanced view of the Prussian war effort. Michael Leggiere does this with remarkable skill and the result is a readable and fascinating account of Prussia's remarkable achievement." Dominic Lieven, author of *Russia Against Napoleon: The Battle for Europe, 1807 to 1814*"I wish I had had this book in front of me while writing *Citizen Emperor*. This is a significant contribution to military history and sets Napoleon's loss of the German campaign in a context that has not been seen before in the English language. Leggiere is the preeminent military historian for the Napoleonic Wars." Philip Dwyer, author of *Citizen Emperor: Napoleon in Power, 1799-1815*"With this first of two volumes on the 1813 Campaign, Michael Leggiere surely secures his position as a preeminent historian of Napoleonic warfare. In *Napoleon and the Struggle for Germany*, Leggiere uses profound archival research from across Europe to unearth the machinations and thought-processes within the disjointed allied command, and at Napoleon's headquarters. Leggiere reminds us of the complexity of war, and the inherent difficulty of maintaining alliances; and highlights parallels with the better known difficulties in the Anglo-American alliance during the Second World War." Huw Davies, author of *Wellington's Wars: The Making of a Military Genius*"This is military history at its most instructive and fascinating. Leggiere skilfully links the dynamics of operational military history to the opportunities and strains of coalition warfare, showing how the Sixth Coalition faced major difficulties from the outset. This approach offers a valuable perspective in which to consider Napoleonic warfare." Jeremy Black, author of *The War of 1812 in the Age of Napoleon*'Beyond doubt ... Leggiere has made a major contribution to the literature, and military specialists will read his work with profit. His command of the narrative is assured and his judgements acute and sensible.' Charles J. Esdaile, H-France

About the Author Michael V. Leggiere earned his PhD from Florida State University in 1997 after completing work at FSU's Institute on Napoleon and the French Revolution. His first book, *Napoleon and Berlin: The Franco-Prussian War in North Germany, 1813* (2002) won the La Société Napoléonienne Internationale 2002 Literary Award. His article, 'From Berlin to Leipzig: Napoleon's Gamble in North Germany, 1813', which appeared in the January 2003 volume of *The Journal of Military History*, won the Society for Military History's 2004 Moncado Prize for excellence in military history. Dr Leggiere's second book, *The Fall of Napoleon: The Allied Invasion of France, 1813-1814* (Cambridge University Press, 2007) won the La Société Napoléonienne Internationale 2008 Literary Award. Dr Leggiere's third book, *Blücher: Scourge of Napoleon*, was published in February 2014. Dr Leggiere has conducted extensive archival research in Paris, Vienna, and Berlin in 1994, 1995, 1998, 2001, 2002, 2004, and 2009 and topographic research in Germany, France, and Poland in 1998, 2002, and 2013. He is an active member of the Society for Military History, and serves on the Board of Directors of the Consortium on the Revolutionary Era. In 2005 he received the La Société Napoléonienne Internationale Legion of Merit Award for Outstanding Contributions to Napoleonic Studies.