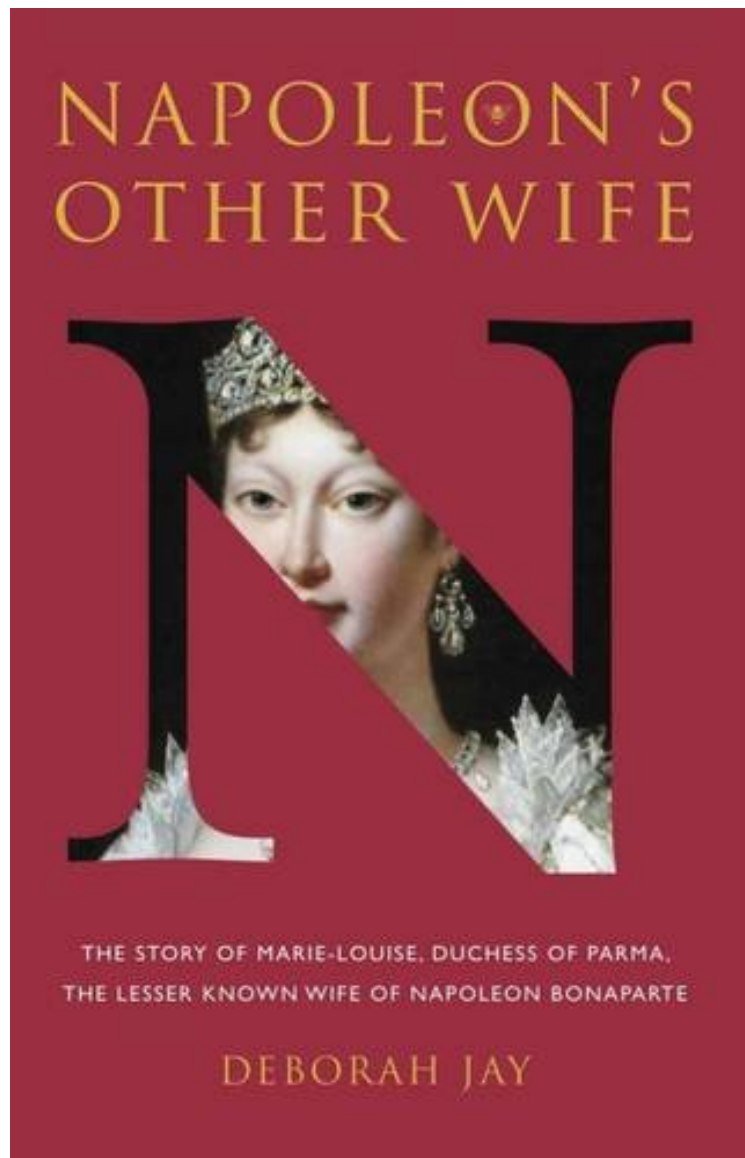


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Napoleon's Other Wife: The Story of Marie-Louise, Duchess of Parma, the Lesser Known Wife of Napoleon Bonaparte

Deborah Jay

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Deborah Jay : Napoleon's Other Wife: The Story of Marie-Louise, Duchess of Parma, the Lesser Known Wife of Napoleon Bonaparte before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Napoleon's Other Wife: The Story of Marie-Louise, Duchess of Parma, the Lesser Known Wife of Napoleon Bonaparte:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Oh, the poor thing! By Julie Corsi I was expecting, and looking forward to reading a light, historical romance novel - but that's not what this book is. This is an extremely well researched biography of a Habsburg "princess", Marie-Louise, daughter of Francis II of Austria and his second wife, Maria Theresa. Her parents were double- first cousins, with several of their children turning out less than normal. The Habsburgs were all about advantageous marriages for their sons and daughters with the goal of keeping power, land and money in the family. Marie-Louise, raised to detest France and Napoleon because he was at war with her family and Austria, was sacrificed into marriage with him to try to establish peace between the countries. Throughout the whole book, I kept thinking, "Oh, the poor thing!" A dutiful daughter, Marie-Louise always did her best to get along and follow her families' wishes - to love Napoleon, to produce his heir. But when he fell out of power, the Habsburgs didn't reward her royalty as they should have. "Oh, the poor thing!" Marie-Louise's life after Napoleon, as Duchess of Parma, is just as thoroughly documented. I feel that she might have found some measure of happiness, but look at her life as tragic.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A must read! By Customer Very interesting and informative --- it's a #1 seller and would probably make a great film.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Scholarly and lively biog of a little-known but worthwhile subject. By CineHound This book is a masterpiece! Trying to engage historical facts with smooth storytelling is a superb achievement by Deborah Jay. Very engaging and even though the book has 466 pages, I just could not put it down and read the whole book in about 10 days! Strongly recommended.

Marie-Louise's battle against adversity and pursuit of happiness outside conventional morality will appeal to anyone interested in an extraordinary story. It will also appeal to those interested in Napoleon who are prepared to open their minds to the other important facets of his very complex personality. Furthermore, Marie-Louise's tale is an inspiration to the woman of today. Napoleon's *Other Wife* is also ideally suited as recommended reading for "A" and higher level studies in the French Revolution, Napoleonic period and Italian Risorgimento. Eighteen-year-old Habsburg Archduchess Marie-Louise leaves Vienna in 1810 to marry Napoleon Bonaparte, now Emperor of France. Among the crowds who welcome her are those who rejoiced as her great aunt Marie-Antoinette's severed head was flaunted seventeen years earlier. Marie-Louise believes her duty is to cement peace between Austria and France, but Klemens Metternich, foreign minister to her father, Emperor Francis, has other ideas. He has engineered this marriage to change the course of European history. Within a year, Marie-Louise produces the dynastic heir expected of her and long desired by Napoleon. But his ill conceived invasion of Russia changes his fortunes irreversibly. Marie-Louise is forced to choose between her father and her husband when Emperor Francis declares war on Napoleon. She will have to fight for her existence for the rest of her life, not only for herself, but also for her son, to protect him against the Allies' vengeance. Despite the impossible pressures and irreconcilable demands upon her, she refuses to be cowed, strikes out for her own happiness and rides the currents which threaten to undo her. Her achievements are nothing short of heroic. This compelling narration of Marie-Louise's story in *Napoleon's Other Wife*, is unique, addressing the devastating impact of Napoleon's legacy on her private and political existence and revealing a woman of extraordinary resilience and courage.

"A fascinating, intimate biography which has all the drama of a romantic novel." Francesca Simon, author of the *Horrid Henry* series. "Racily written, entertainingly narrated, amazingly detailed, impressively researched, *Napoleon's Other Wife* tells a story few people will know." Piers Plowright, radio producer and broadcaster

About the Author Deborah Jay studied German and Italian, practised as a barrister and subsequently completed an MA in Biography and Creative Non-Fiction at the University of East Anglia. Having written extensively on aspects of law, *Napoleon's Other Wife* is her first biography. She lives in London with her husband and daughter.