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# THE WAR THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

THE FORGOTTEN WAR THAT SET THE  
STAGE FOR THE GLOBAL CONFLICTS OF  
THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY AND BEYOND



JOHN-ALLEN PRICE

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# The War that Changed the World

The Forgotten War that Set the Stage for the Global  
Conflicts of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and Beyond

John-Allen Price

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This e-book cannot defeat the French army in under one year – and it’s not through lack  
of trying.

To my father, John Lee Price (1929-1978),  
who, above all things, taught me to love history.



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## Introduction: The Forgotten Wars, and Why We Should Remember Them

*“Only the dead have seen an end to war.”*

-Plato (c.428 - 348 B.C.)

IN POP CULTURE and popular consciousness there appears to be room for only three historical wars: World War II, the Vietnam War and the American Civil War. Of the thousands of lesser-known wars only occasionally does one temporarily rise above the obscurity they are consigned to.

The Korean War surfaces every so often, as does World War I, an ancient Greek or Roman conflict and then there are numerous British civil wars. This can be gauged by the movies and mini-series, documentaries and TV shows that appear every year. We are, remember, talking about pop culture.

In this arena, by far and away World War II is the most popular conflict with literally thousands of movies set in its time period. Vietnam and the American Civil War have far fewer, but still respectable, numbers and then there are all the others.

Of these, World War I does have an amazing amount, but only if you include the one- and two-reelers from the silent era. Without that vast assemblage, the Great War sinks to the obscurity level of most other conflicts. But at least it does better than the Franco-Prussian War.

If you were to include *all* the movies from the silent era to the present age, including the ones produced by the highly nationalistic German cinema, then there are less than a dozen movies about the Franco-Prussian

War. One of the last, excepting Kenneth MacMillan's *1871*, which is really about the Paris Commune and not the war, was released more than 30 years ago.

1975's *Royal Flash* had seemingly everything going for it, but not its history. It was produced by Alexander Salkind, who a year earlier had scored a major financial and critical success with *The Three Musketeers*. It was directed by Richard Lester, who had previously directed both *The Three* and *Four Musketeers*. Its screenplay was by the novelist George MacDonald Fraser, who not only adapted one of his own *Flashman* novels for the script, he was also responsible for the adaptation of the Dumas novels *The Three Musketeers* and *Revenge of Milady*.

And then there was its cast. A then-young Malcolm McDowell played the lead, Britt Ekland his romantic interest and a supporting cast which included Alan Bates, Oliver Reed, Lionel Jeffries, the great Alastair Sim in one of his last film roles, Michael Hordern, Joss Ackland and an also-then-young Bob Hoskins.

*Royal Flash's* plot, and that of the original novel, borrowed heavily from the oft-filmed old chestnut of a novel by Anthony J. Hope: *The Prisoner of Zenda*. And yet it also slyly referenced the final precipitating incident to the Franco-Prussian War, the Hohenzollern Candidature. Filmed and acted in the same serio-comic style as Salkind's *Musketeer* films, and generally well-received by the critics who saw it, *Royal Flash* was a production that should not have missed.

But it did. *Royal Flash* was never theatrically released in the United States. It was never released on cable, barely released on videotape and only recently released on DVD. It remains a "lost film," lost just like the war it's set in.

More recently, two movies of varying success were released which should have dealt directly with the Franco-Prussian War, but did not at all. In December, 2003, *The Last Samurai* was released and supposedly told the "true" story of how the Meiji Emperor's army was modernized by the U.S. Army and the defeat of the Samurai Rebellion of 1877: the last major vestige of feudalism in Japan.

Approximately a year later *The Phantom of the Opera* was released and this was the much-anticipated movie version of the Andrew Lloyd Webber musical. Like most of the previous versions, at least eight, its Gothic story is set in a Paris opera house in the late-19th Century. But instead of an 1880s or turn-of-the-century time period, this *Phantom* is set between the summer of 1870 and the early spring of 1871. The very period of the Franco-Prussian War, yet the conflict is never depicted or even mentioned.

To say these movies are historically inaccurate is an understatement.

They are historical abominations in every sense of the word. It's hard to say which is worse. *Phantom of the Opera* is so bad it's almost funny while *The Last Samurai* is so bad it's insulting. *Phantom* actually shows Emperor Louis Napoleon III and the Empress Eugénie attending a New Year's Eve performance at the Paris Civic Opera House. One wonders how they managed it. By this time in real, as opposed to cinema, history Napoleon was in prison and Eugénie was in exile. I guess it was those good-conduct passes from Helmuth von Moltke.

Though more tangentially related to the Franco-Prussian War, *The Last Samurai* is worse because, unlike the world's first Alternate History Musical, it's taken a little more seriously. Far too many people think it's a reasonably accurate portrayal of America's first disastrous foray into Asian policy. Its first "Vietnam."

If this should be anyone's "Vietnam," and in no way can it be, then it's Germany's. By the late-1870s the then-new German Army was the most powerful and respected army in the world. But *The Last Samurai* insists on showing the wrong army, the American Army, training and modernizing the Meiji's Army. Wrong even down to the uniforms the Japanese soldiers wore, which is particularly sad since the one thing a Hollywood costume drama could always be counted on getting right is the costumes.

Apart from proving the moral "you should not learn history from the movies," let alone TV shows, novels or stage plays, these films also prove just how far into obscurity the Franco-Prussian War has sunk. And this should not be. Not just for those who have an interest in forgotten 19<sup>th</sup> century wars but for anyone who wants to understand the great global conflicts of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and even into this age.

Why? Because wars are not set-piece events, occurring independently and bearing no relationship to each other. But this is exactly the way they are taught, especially in the American public schools I've attended, not to mention the battles that compose any war. At least most people understand the relationship between last century's global wars; it probably helps that they were eventually numbered.

Unfortunately most other conflicts are not understood in this way. If they are understood at all it's as sudden, violent seismic events about as predictable as earthquakes. And yet, in the last few decades science has shown earthquakes do bear a complex relationship to one another, and can possibly even be predicted.

Historians have long known this about wars and other human events, but unfortunately the really important ones are not always the best known. It isn't always the bloodiest and most destructive wars which are the truly important ones. The wars that create as well as destroy are the most

important and this leads us to the Franco-Prussian War.

It destroyed forever monarchial rule in France, destroyed its last imperial empire, destroyed the dreams of Bonapartists and Bourbons alike; but the war also played mid-wife to the longest-serving republic in French history, and then there is Germany. It forged a nation out of what had once been, at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a vast collection of hundreds of countries and city-states. It created Europe's last imperial empire, a new hereditary enemy for France and a new competitor and threat to Britain.

The Franco-Prussian War was the first modern war in history. The first to see universal use of breech-loading, cartridge rifles: the Chassepot and the Dreyse. The first to see large-scale use, on one side, of cast-steel breech-loading artillery. The first to see large-scale use, on the other side, of rapid-fire weapons. The first to see universal use of railroads and telegraphs to transport, command and supply armies in the field, though only one side did it well. And it was the first conflict to see the evolution of tactics and strategic doctrine into what would later be called Maneuver Warfare.

In the Preface to one of the principal sources used for this book its author, L.P. Brockett, states: "The writer feels that no apology is necessary for the attempt here made to portray the progress of a war which, in its rapid movement, in its terrible destructiveness, and its stupendous results, is without parallel in history." These sentiments, if not these exact words, have been used to begin countless histories of the Second World War. And the Blitzkrieg tactics of that conflict owe more to the Franco-Prussian War than the First World War. The latter conflict gave Blitzkrieg the tools needed to fully exploit its concepts: wireless communications, airpower and armored vehicles. But not the knowledge how to use them.

In its day the Franco-Prussian War was the most studied and written about war in history. But most of that writing was in French and German, not in what would become the dominant language of the military: English. In literature and entertainment it would take 20 years for Emile Zola to write the one great novel set in the Franco-Prussian War. And soon after that its day would end in the cataclysm which would start in a Serbian town in the summer of 1914.

Since then the war has been little visited, has had little attention paid to it. In the last 40 years the number of authoritative texts published on it can be counted on one hand. Few monuments remain to its victories or its fallen. Even its participating nations have apparently forgotten about it, and since neither of these nations speak English it has truly become forgotten in popular consciousness and pop culture.

Until some action-figure movie star does a successful movie about the

Franco-Prussian War then it will be lost to pop culture, but it should still be remembered. Not only for itself, but for what it grew out of, what it ended, what it created and what it lead to. The echoes and consequences of this war can still be heard to this day, if you listen carefully enough. It is indeed “the war that changed the world,” as this book will outline.

## Prelude: Bratislava, December 26, 1805 – The End of What Was Neither Holy, Nor Roman, Nor an Empire...

*“You write to me that it’s impossible; the word is not French.”*

-Napoleon Bonaparte (1769 - 1821)

IF EVER A military historian were to write a book entitled *The Ten Greatest Victories of All Time* then the battle the Peace of Bratislava (also called Pressburg) codifies would surely be among them. Taken on its own the Battle of Austerlitz qualifies as Napoleon Bonaparte’s greatest victory. But *when* it happened raises it an order of magnitude higher.

Austerlitz, fought on the morning and afternoon of December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1805, came just six weeks after Admiral Horatio Nelson’s crushing victory over the combined Spanish and French fleets off Cape Trafalgar on the southwestern coast of Spain. This victory did not just eclipse Napoleon’s capture, a day earlier, of an Austrian army at Ulm; it was thought at the time to have ended the threat of invasion to Britain and presaged the eventual defeat of Bonaparte by the allied coalition arrayed against him.

Austerlitz reversed it all. In around eight hours of heavy fighting Bonaparte used his outnumbered and outgunned army to defeat the two armies advancing against him. By late afternoon both Czar Alexander I of Russia and Kaiser Francis II of Austria were in retreat, along with what remained of their forces. They left behind some 26,000 dead while the French Army lost 9,000.

As news of the victory spread, it stunned the world. It shook the confidence and resolve of the Allied coalition, and it began to unravel. In

Britain, the victory Nelson gave his life for suddenly meant nothing. Bonaparte's great enemy in its Parliament, William Pitt "the Younger" fell into a depression and would be dead by early in the new year. Sweden and Naples, the lesser partners in the coalition, wavered. Austria and Russia started arguing, and would negotiate with Napoleon separately.

And then there was that other major German power: Prussia. Nominally neutral in this latest round of wars with France, it had been edging toward joining the coalition and had even sent its Foreign Minister Count von Haugwitz to Vienna with an ultimatum for Napoleon. Prudently he withheld it and Prussia, for the moment, remained neutral.

In the meantime Kaiser Francis II and Czar Alexander I negotiated with Napoleon, and Francis was the first off the mark. Two days after Austerlitz he requested an audience with Bonaparte and Alexander was reduced to refusing an alliance with Austria and France against England, and promising to vacate Austrian territory after the signing of the peace treaty.

By December 26, the treaty, hammered out by Foreign Ministers Talleyrand and Stadion, was ready. The Peace of Pressburg, as Bratislava was then called, gave Napoleon everything he should have expected and should have wanted. It forced Austria to cede all of Venetia, except the port of Trieste, and the Lombardy region of northern Italy to the Kingdom of Italy and it recognized Bonaparte as its king. Austria was also forced to surrender the Tyrol region and the Vorarlberg to Napoleon's main ally of the moment, Bavaria. Smaller lands were ceded to the Kingdoms of Baden and Württemberg; in all around three million people found themselves with new nationalities.

More importantly, the Peace of Pressburg made Napoleon Bonaparte the master of mainland Europe. For over a thousand years, since the crowning of Charlemagne by Pope Leo III on Christmas Day in the year 800, rulers had sought to recreate the empire the King of the Franks had forged: the Holy Roman Empire.

Entire lines of monarchs fought with each other to achieve the goal. The Bourbons of France and Spain aspired to it, the Hapsburgs of Central Europe and Spain owned the franchise, though the success of the Protestant Reformation in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century and the Thirty Years' War of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century doomed it.

And now, on the day *after* Christmas, a thousand and five years after Charlemagne's coronation had created it, the Holy Roman Empire ceased to exist in all but name with the rise to dominance of Europe's second Charlemagne: Napoleon Bonaparte I.

His coronation had already taken place with great pageantry the year before. As for the Holy Roman Empire, its final death knell would be

sounded about eight months later when, on August 6<sup>th</sup>, Kaiser Francis II would abdicate his throne and title. He would become Emperor Francis I of Austria. And the title of Kaiser would not be officially used again for 65 years.

In this age the long-dreamed of goal of German unification by German statesmen, philosophers and warrior-kings seemed as remote a notion as it had ever been. Napoleon controlled almost as much German territory and German subjects as French. Already his civil code was changing the German states under his rule in ways many German philosophers and leaders at the time believed would make them even less likely to unite, though Goethe didn't seem to mind. And, as events unfolded in the new year, the dream seemed to be consumed by the reality of what was then the new world order: Napoleonic Europe.

On July 19<sup>th</sup>, 1806, he would ratify the Treat of Saint Cloud, which he used to create the "Confederation of the Rhine." By his fiat what had formerly been a realm of some 360 separate Kingdoms, Duchies, Grand Duchies, Principalities and Imperial Free Cities was reduced by almost an order of magnitude to roughly 40 states.

With the stroke of his pen, Napoleon swept aside most of the medieval power structure of the German lands. Hundreds of German princes, barons, counts, dukes and knights of the soon-to-be-defunct Holy Roman Empire lost their independence, though not their lands. Borrowing the recently restored structure of Switzerland, at this time a wholly-owned puppet state of France, the new confederation Napoleon set up was something he hoped to use to administer his new territories and subjects. But not all were willing to accept.

Within a month of the Holy Roman Empire's disappearance, Saxony and Prussia were reversing their earlier policies of appeasement and mobilizing their armies. Czar Alexander I had not yet given up on his dream of destroying the French Revolution and its Corsican leader. In what he hoped was great secrecy he concluded an alliance with the two German states as well as Sweden.

However, through his spies, Napoleon knew of the correspondence between Berlin, Dresden, Stockholm and St. Petersburg. And he not only mobilized first, he already had his army in Bavaria, where it was picking up more forces, by the time the Prussian/Saxon ultimatum reached him on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1806.

And that army would easily be the finest he would ever command. Even the Bavarian troops were mostly veterans of Austerlitz, and the French troops were veterans not only of it but many of the earlier successful campaigns Napoleon had led, excepting of course his disastrous



Egyptian Expedition.

The coming war would also be the only time where most of his best commanders would take the field with him. The marshal called “the bravest of the brave,” Michael Ney was Bonaparte’s most loyal corps commander, and joining his staff was his apprentice, a former brigade commander in the Swiss Army: Antoine Henri de Jomini, the modern era’s most famous military strategist. Louis Davout and Jean Baptiste Bernadotte were his other corps commanders and his brilliant logistics chief, Louis Alexandre Berthier, saw to it the supply depots were well-stocked for his gathering troops.

By comparison, the Prussian Army had decayed to a shadow of its former abilities and prowess under the greatest of Prussia’s warrior-kings: Friedrich Wilhelm II/Frederick the Great. Those glories belonged to the previous generation as the results of the battlefield quickly showed.

On October 10<sup>th</sup>, three days after receiving the ultimatum, Napoleon’s Grand Army made initial contact with the Prussians at Saalfeld. It destroyed the better part of a division led by Prince Ludwig Ferdinand and killed the prince, who had been one of the major supporters in the Hohenzollern family for war with France.

On October 14<sup>th</sup>, only a week after receiving the ultimatum, Napoleon met the Prussian main army at Jena, a town on the Saale River southwest of Berlin. While the Battle of Jena, or more accurately the Battle of Jena/Auerstädt, does not rank as high as Austerlitz it belongs in the same league as again Europe was stunned by it.

Before the battle there were many, among them the British, Russians and the Prussians themselves, who ranked the Prussian Army as one of the most formidable on the continent. But that estimation was based on fond, respectful, memories by the outsiders of the Silesian Wars and the Seven Years’ War, and by self-delusion among the Prussians.

The twin battles – they occurred about 12 miles apart – all but destroyed the Prussian Army and sent the remnants into flight. Its officer corps was especially hard hit as those who were not killed in the battles were captured. Among them was one of Prussia’s most respected generals, Gebhard Leberecht von Blücher, and another was a young staff officer named Karl von Clausewitz, destined to be Jomini’s rival as a strategist.

As news of the defeats spread throughout the North German States, the temper of the populations changed from martial aggression to shock and docility. Saxony disassociated itself from the alliance and recalled its troops. When the Grand Army entered Berlin, on October 25<sup>th</sup>, the population was meekly subservient. Except for a few skirmishes, the army would not engage in major combat again until early December.

What followed, from December 1806 until June 1807, was one of Napoleon's less-destructive winter wars. He laid waste to most of Prussia's eastern provinces and Russia's western territories, much of what is present-day Poland, but it nearly destroyed his army. Had he suffered a single major defeat anywhere approaching the scale of Austerlitz or Jena/Auerstädt it would have meant the end of his empire.

Instead, what took place was a series of bloody, inconclusive battles which, combined with the inhospitable terrain, the bitter weather and a supply mess not even Berthier could resolve, almost ground down the Grand Army. Not even the coming of warmer weather improved the situation for what had been rock-hard frozen earth became an endless quagmire crossed by few good roads. It bogged down men, horses, wagons and artillery. But it did afflict both sides.

Not until June 14<sup>th</sup> did a Russian attack give Napoleon the opportunity to inflict a decisive defeat, near Friedland in East Prussia. The victory was not quite as stunning as the earlier thunderclaps, it didn't destroy either army, but it gave each ruler a chance to get much of what he wanted.

In the most remarkable and bizarre event in the entire series of Napoleonic Wars, Bonaparte and Czar Alexander I met alone on a raft moored in the middle of the Niemen River, near the town of Tilsit. For three hours they talked without benefit of Foreign Ministers, General Staffs, interpreters or even aides-de-camp. In three hours of flattery and hard negotiations they decided the fate of Europe.

For the Czar it meant ending one very destructive war to concentrate on a smaller one with Turkey, which Bonaparte had encouraged. It meant he got back his Polish territories and would not have a French army sitting anywhere on his borders. He was to mediate a peace between Britain and France, or join France in an alliance against it if negotiations failed.

For the Emperor it meant ending a war that threatened to unravel his entire domain. He had a free hand to humble Prussia, the only Germanic power which could destroy his Confederation of the Rhine, and render it impotent. He got other threats, and flashpoints for war, removed from his borders: namely the Russian troops in Dalmatia and the Ionian Islands. And if he could not get Russia itself to join him as an ally, at least she would remain neutral.

The Tilsit Treaties, three of them signed between July 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, codified all this and more. They made France and Russia allies, after a fashion, and the dominant powers of Europe. For Prussia, the other power at the talks but not allowed to negotiate, it appeared to be the end of its role as a power of any size or significance.

It would lose nearly half its population and territory to other German

states, such as Saxony, who had been more subservient to Napoleon. Its army was also to be cut in half and many of its officers, such as Blücher, who had fought against the French would not be allowed to rejoin it. Prussia was not allowed to join the Confederation of the Rhine, not allowed to negotiate and sign any treaties with other foreign powers, and finally was not allowed to join any alliance other than one commanded by France.

In all but name, and much like Switzerland, Prussia had become a puppet state. And with her humiliation the dream of a united and independent Germany appeared to retreat even farther from reality. It retreated into the idling dreams of philosopher-poets, into the realm of legend, where it would reside with Friedrich Barbarossa, in his centuries-long sleep somewhere under the Austrian Alps, awaiting the call to awaken him and defend his Reich in its greatest hour of peril.

But not, between Austerlitz and the Peace of Pressburg, and Friedland and the Treaties of Tilsit, the reality of German unification would be under the auspices of the Confederation of the Rhine. And the sovereignty of Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte I: the new Charlemagne of Europe.



## Part I – The Paths to the War

*“War, war is still the cry,  
war even to the knife!”*

-Lord George Gordon Byron (1788 - 1824)



## Chapter I: Europe After Napoleon

*“Tyrants never perish from tyranny, but always from folly – when their fantasies have built up a palace for which the earth has no foundation.”*

-Walter Savage Landor (1775 - 1864)

### ***Europe: From July 9, 1807, to July 15, 1815***

CHARLEMAGNE’S MASSIVE EMPIRE managed to last some 44 years after his coronation in 800. It even managed to outlast his death in 814 by some 30 years, but Napoleon’s would only last, depending on which starting date you use, approximately 15 years.

In the end it was not so much Wellington and his coalition army, or Blücher and his Prussians, or even Czar Alexander and his armies that defeated Napoleon but Napoleon himself. His imperial greed, grandiose schemes, imperious and irrational behavior, misuse and alienation of allies on both the personal and national level had cast the die by the time he sent his last Grand Army into Russia in June of 1812.

By then his army was composed more of allied forces than French and their quality, particularly the French, would not be equal to the men of previous Napoleonic armies. There were fewer veterans, the attrition rates of earlier campaigns had been heavy, and there were fewer of his greatest weapon: his loyal, brilliant and combat-experienced marshals.

When the Grand Army crossed the Niemen River, Napoleon still had marshals like Michael Ney, Davout and Berthier with him. But Joachim Murat, who was also his brother-in-law, was now the King of Naples and

Bernadotte had taken up a similar offer from the Swedish royal family to be their crown prince.

Antoine de Jomini served reluctantly in the Grand Army, as he was also a general in Czar Alexander's army, and so did the Austrian marshal, Karl von Schwarzenberg. Blucher refused to come out of retirement and fight in a Prussian Army under Napoleon's control. And Clausewitz did them all one better by deserting the Prussian Army and joining Alexander's.

Nine months later he was joined by his nation, the first major power to break with Napoleon, and by the fall of 1813 Emperor Francis I and the Austrian Army had also switched sides. Sweden joined the reformed Allied Coalition by sending Bernadotte to the continent with a corps of 30,000. And finally the aged Gebhard von Blücher, 71 at the time, came out of retirement.

To many in the Prussian Army his return was treated like Barbarossa himself had at long last awakened from his sleep to defend ancestral Germany. Initially given command of all Prussian field forces, by early October he would lead the coalition forces at the pivotal Battle of Leipzig.

Also called the Battle of Nations, Leipzig was fought over a momentous six days, between October 14<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Much like the pivotal battle of the American Civil War, the Seven Days' Battles, it was a protracted series of indecisive engagements with heavy losses – until the afternoon of the 18<sup>th</sup> when Bernadotte arrived with his Swedish corps, plus an additional Prussian corps and 70,000 Russian reinforcements. And with the tide of battle swinging against the battered Grand Army something completely unexpected happened: the Saxon Army turned its guns on the French lines.

By the afternoon of the 19<sup>th</sup> Napoleon was in headlong retreat and from this point on he would know little except defeat. All around him there appeared nothing but disaster. His Confederation of the Rhine was coming apart at the seams as country after country responded to Prussia's call for German unity. To the north Holland was rebelling against French rule and throwing out its officials. To the south Murat had allied his Kingdom of Naples with the Austrians in order to save his illegitimate throne.

Also in the south Sir Arthur Wellesley, the Viscount of Wellington, was capping a six-year campaign on the Iberian Peninsula by entering southern France and taking the city of Toulouse. And finally to the west, what had been Napoleon's greatest foreign policy triumph: his maneuvering of the United States into declaring war on Britain at about the same time he invaded Russia, was being easily contained by existing British forces in the Canadian colonies and the Royal Navy.

It was only Allied hesitancy and squabbling that gave Napoleon



roughly another six months on the throne, from early November, 1813 until April 13<sup>th</sup>, 1814 when he at last signed the Act of Abdication. From here he should have passed into history and exile on the Mediterranean island of Elba, while the Congress of Vienna convened to clean up the mess he had made of Europe.

But, of course, this is where it did not end. Napoleon's exile lasted ten months, until history's consummate opportunist detected opportunity in the near-breakup of the Congress. By the beginning of 1815 it had become so deadlocked and antagonistic that Prussia and Russia had signed a secret defensive alliance while France, Austria, Britain and many smaller German states were negotiating one of their own.

It was onto this quarrelsome chessboard that Napoleon stepped when he landed at night in the Gulf of Juan in southern France on March 1<sup>st</sup>, setting off seismic shockwaves which reverberated across Europe, and initiating the legendary One Hundred Days.

The hindsight and judgment of history is that this event was brazen, foolish and could not possibly have succeeded. And yet, at the time the impossible repeatedly happened in Napoleon's favor and it looked, however briefly, as if he might regain power.

He persuaded unit after unit of French troops he encountered to join him until it became a triumphal procession on the road to Paris. At Châlons he met Michael Ney, commanding the French Army and following a promise he made to Louis XVIII, the restored Bourbon king, that he would bring the renegade emperor back "in an iron cage." But the impossible happened, the marshal who was the "bravest of the brave" returned to his original loyalty, and brought the rest of the army into Napoleon's camp.

This shockwave drove Louis XVIII out of Paris, under the personal protection of Marshal Berthier, and stunned the Congress of Vienna back to reality. A week before its participants had considered Napoleon's return to indeed be folly. Now, on March 13<sup>th</sup>, the four Allied Powers declared war on Napoleon, not France, and two weeks later they plus France signed a new formal alliance.

But by then Napoleon was back in Paris and most of the French army and public was with him. However, Louis Berthier was not; he had retired to his estate in Bavaria after seeing to the king's safety. For over a year Antoine de Jomini had been a personal adviser to Czar Alexander. And then there were Napoleon's most successful enemies: Wellington was in Belgium raising a British-Dutch-Hanoverian army and Blücher was mobilizing the Prussian Army.

Against all the odds Napoleon organized a new army and on June 16<sup>th</sup> gained another impossibility; he attacks both Blücher's and Wellington's

armies and prevents them from linking up. Alas, two days later the three armies meet again at Waterloo where the folly ends with 25,000 French casualties.

Four days later, on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, Napoleon abdicates for the last time after returning to the Elysee Palace in Paris. He did it not so much because of the defeat and disintegration of his last army. Or because Blücher was hot on his heels and promising to shoot him like a common outlaw. He did it due to the actions of another French hero, the Marquis de Lafayette.

The hero of both the American and French revolutions, he had stayed out of Napoleon's wars until he became convinced that Bonaparte was going to turn France into a dictatorship. Finally accepting a political position, as a leading Senator in the Chamber of Peers, he got the members of both it and the Chamber of Representatives to carry a resolution agreeing with the alliance signed in Vienna on March 25<sup>th</sup>.

The resolution declared France was in danger, that both Chambers would remain in session for as long as the danger existed, a not-too-subtle recognition of Napoleon being the problem, that the danger would end when the Bourbon monarchy was restored and anyone attempting to dissolve the Chambers would be guilty of high treason.

Faced with being shot like an outlaw by the Prussians, or being guillotined as a traitor by the French, Napoleon signed the Order of Abdication, again, and retired to the château at Malmaison. A poignant choice as the château's former owner, Empress Josephine, had died but a few months earlier, some say of the heart he broke when he divorced her for Princess Marie Louise of Austria.

Three weeks later, with the Allies in Paris and Louis XVIII back on the throne, Napoleon left Europe forever on the Royal Navy frigate HMS *Bellerophon*. On August 7<sup>th</sup> he was transferred to a larger ship, HMS *Northumberland*, and after ten weeks at sea he reached St. Helena. Having passed out of history, he would now spend the remaining years of his life crafting his legend.

### ***After Napoleon: The Winners and Losers***

Many historians, also novelists, poets and playwrights, talk about a great peace/calm/silence settling over Europe after Napoleon departed its shores. Unless they are speaking metaphorically this is not true; not even the fighting died away completely after he left. There was the fate of the artificial kingdoms and thrones he had created. Problems that the Congress of Vienna wrestled with even as the armies converged on each other in

southern Belgium.

With other monarchs and generals in the field, it was left to the ministers, chief counsels and foreign secretaries to decide the future of Europe. Count Aleksei Arakcheyev represented Russia whenever Czar Alexander was not in court. Maurice de Talleyrand represented what was now a French government-in-exile and hoped to prevent its dismemberment as advocated by Arakcheyev and the Prussian delegation, lead by Chancellor Karl von Hardenberg and Foreign Minister Wilhelm von Humboldt. Viscount Robert Castlereagh was Britain's Foreign Secretary and Prince Klemens von Metternich represented Austria and was the chief architect of the conference's decisions.

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, 1815, a week before Napoleon's heart-stopping initial victory over Wellington's and Blücher's forces, they issued their imposing Final Act. They jointly declared it would change the structure of Europe forever, provided the resurgent Napoleonic threat was first defeated. In reality what they decided upon would only remain intact for 15 years, and in less than 50 years would be in tatters. But for now it would apportion out the lands, reward the winners and punish the losers.

*Russia:* The recreated Kingdom of Poland would be its puppet state, under the rule of Czar Alexander, as would the Grand Duchy of Finland, which it grabbed from Sweden in 1809. Plus, it would get an equal portion of the reparations France would now be forced to pay out.

*Austria:* Would also receive reparations and the Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia in Italy, to add to its empire of Hungarians, Czechs, Germans Slavs, Serbs and dozens of other races. It would emerge from the Wars as the leading military power in mainland Europe – a position it would retain until 1859.

*Prussia:* Did not get any vassal states but had all the territory it lost after Jena restored to it and then some. It gained territory from Saxony and on both sides of the Rhine; in all it doubled in size. It returned to its preeminent position among the Germanies, only Austria would rival it.

*Britain:* Got its share of reparations and some overseas territories, but its greatest reward from the Napoleonic Wars was something far more valuable than land or money: mastery of the seas. After Trafalgar, no other nation would seriously threaten its naval supremacy during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, though that didn't mean someone would not occasionally try.

Other states to gain were the Kingdom of Holland, which got its independence back plus all the Belgian territories, and Switzerland – it also regained its fabled independence. The Papal States were also restored, to the Pope, and the Kingdoms of Sardinia and Naples were restored to their original ruling families. And finally Sweden, which had gained a crown

prince from the Wars, had Norway ceded to it by Denmark.

*France:* In the first Treaty of Paris, signed on April 12<sup>th</sup>, 1814, France lost the empire Napoleon had created and was reduced to its borders of 1792. However, in return for Bonaparte's abdication, it did not have to pay reparations and would not have occupation troops in its territories.

Now, its borders were reduced to those of 1790. It lost Nice and the Savoy region to the Kingdom of Sardinia and its Rhineland territories to Prussia and other German states. It was saddled with a billion francs in reparations and would have British and Prussian occupation troops garrisoned on its lands until they were paid. A few of its overseas territories were ceded to Britain, but France lost something far more important – its *ennemi héréditaire*.

Never again would she be able to compete with her centuries-old, traditional hereditary enemy to be the world's dominant power. In fact, the two would now cooperate, even become allies if the threat or the local, meaning colonial, situation made this advantageous to them. If France wanted a new *ennemi héréditaire* it would have to create one.

*Bavaria:* The largest German state south of the Main River, and among the Germanies one of Napoleon's earliest allies, lost most of the territory it had gained through that alliance. It also lost some of its independence – it was forced to sign a new alliance with Prussia – but the Wittelsbach family, the oldest ruling family in the Germanies, got to stay on the throne.

*Saxony:* Despite its dramatic change of sides at the pivotal Battle of Leipzig, this North German state was dealt with a little more harshly than Napoleon's other Germanic allies. It lost most of its Grand Duchy of Warsaw to Prussia and Russia, as well as other lands, but its king, the former elector of Saxony, was allowed to keep his throne.

*Poland:* Invaded by Sweden and dismembered by Prussia, Austria and Russia a generation earlier, this nation had been toyed with by Napoleon throughout his reign. Alternately encouraged and suppressed by him, the dream of Polish independence had been all but ignored by the Congress of Vienna. Paid lip service by the creation of the Kingdom of Poland, under the Czar's dominion, it would remain unfulfilled until after the end of World War I.

*Italy:* Similarly encouraged and suppressed on Napoleonic whims, the dream of Italian unity and independence was also ignored by the Congress, as it split the lands between Austria, Sardinia and Naples, and restored the Papal States to the Pope. However, this dream would not have to wait quite as long as Poland's to be fulfilled.

*Denmark:* Having first lost its fleet to Britain in September of 1807 – what was not sunk ended up taken as war prizes – Denmark now lost

Norway to Sweden. It also lost its claim on the two tiny principalities of Schleswig and Holstein on its southern border. They were now part of the newly-formed German Confederation, but the Danes would bide their time.

*Portugal:* Britain's oldest European ally had suffered terribly during the Peninsula War phase of Napoleon's conflicts. While it got some of the reparations, it lost power and prestige, and in eight years would lose the crown jewel of its overseas empire. Already, there were independence movements forming in Brazil.

And the title of the biggest loser in the Napoleonic Wars goes to:

*Spain:* At differing times France's most powerful ally and her bitterest enemy, Spain easily suffered more casualties in this long era of conflict than any other nation except for France and Russia. Material damage was even greater as there was scarcely a city or town which had not been turned into a battlefield during a six year-long campaign marked not just by major battles and sieges but by a new form of operations the Spanish called "Little War": Guerrilla Warfare.

Whether in the countryside or the cities, the following term was first used in Saragossa, *Guerra y cuchillo*: "War to the Knife." It was a nightmare, memorably chronicled by the painter Francisco José de Goya, in which no quarter was given and atrocities were frequent.

It destroyed Spain. First as a major power and then as a stable country with a cohesive, nominally functioning society. While its slide as a major power started before Napoleon came to power, its imbecilic royal family truly did not help the situation; it was accelerated by Britain's partial destruction of its fleet at Trafalgar, by the interdiction of its overseas trade and virtually completed by Napoleon's ludicrous attempt at seizing the Spanish throne for his family.

It turned the craven idiot, Ferdinand VII of the Bourbon-Parma House, into a national hero and sparked a national uprising which, quite unlike the French Revolution of a decade earlier, had no group of leaders, no desire to change its existing government but wanted simply to destroy the French. The uprising soon found common cause with the Portuguese rebels and within a year, Wellington had arrived on the Iberian Peninsula with a small but disciplined force of British troops.

As bad as the war was for Spain itself, it had far graver consequences for the Spanish colonial empire in the Americas. In hindsight it's not too ironic that the empire's decline was initiated by Napoleon, before he even started his attempt to take the Spanish throne.

Fifteen years earlier, in the then-secret Treaty of San Ildefonso of 1800, he engineered one of the greatest real estate swap/swindles in history. In

exchange for the tiny, and fated to be short-lived, Kingdom of Etruria in Italy, part of present-day Tuscany, Spain returned the Louisiana Territory to France. Napoleon had wanted it to establish his empire in North America, but in three years the world situation had changed and he began negotiations with the American minister/ambassador to his court for the Re-sale of the Century.

In the astonishingly short time of two weeks the deal was worked out. France got 80 million francs, roughly 15 million dollars, it needed for the imminent resumption of its war with Britain, America was doubled in size and Spain got left holding the bag.

From this point on Spain's decline in the new world was inexorable. Given the ignorant, high-handed and autocratic treatment of the colonies by the royal family and its court officials this was perhaps inevitable, but world events accelerated what Napoleonic scheming had started.

Two years after the purchase was concluded, revolutionaries in Venezuela unsuccessfully declared their independence in 1806. Spanish forces crushed them but the turmoil spread to New Granada, present-day Columbia, in the west, to Argentina in the south and the Central American colonies in the north. By 1810 a popular uprising led by local priests was underway in Mexico.

A year later the Venezuelans tried unsuccessfully again, this time under the command of the Great Liberator himself: Simon Bolivar. Though betrayed and defeated, the Spanish colonies in South America had found a leader they eventually united around. And in the following year they took heart from the successful declaration of independence by Mexico's wealthy landowners.

It would not be until after the Napoleonic Wars had ended that another Spanish colony in the Americas would succeed in its bid for independence. When it did, Argentina in 1816, its leader was a veteran of the Peninsular War: General José de San Martín. He followed it up with victorious campaigns to liberate Chile and Peru while Bolivar finally lived up to his reputation by freeing his native Venezuela and later New Granada.

Wars of liberation continued in Spanish America into the 1840s – the Dominican Republic gained its freedom in 1844 – but its last colonies would not be lost until the United States took them at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. By then, while it still retained some overseas territories, Spain had shrunk to a shadow of its former imperial greatness. Thanks largely to the strife inflicted on it by its imbecilic royal family and Napoleon's schemes.

And the biggest future winners to emerge from the Napoleonic Wars will be:

“By this increase in territory, the power of the United States of America will be consolidated forever, and I have just given England a seafaring rival which, sooner or later, will humble her pride.” Napoleon Bonaparte said this soon after concluding the Louisiana Purchase in December 1803 with the U.S. negotiators, Minister Robert Livingston and future President James Monroe.

At the time of Purchase, America was a relatively narrow strip of 17 states from the New Brunswick/Quebec border in the north to Florida, then a Spanish colony, in the south. Ohio had just been admitted to the union and the overall population was approximately six million.

The phrase “Manifest Destiny,” and all that went with it, would not be heard in America for another 42 years. But it had its beginnings here, with the Purchase, the subsequent Lewis and Clark Expedition and the opening of the Santa Fe Trail by 1821.

By then Florida had been purchased from Spain, one of the more peaceful losses of Spanish Territory, and Missouri had been admitted as the 24<sup>th</sup> state. And then-President Monroe was formulating what would become the Monroe Doctrine, which he formally presented to Congress in December, 1823.

In an ironic inversion of what Napoleon had hoped for, the two seafaring rivals now cooperated, with the United States providing the policy that the Americas were “henceforth not to be considered as subjects for further colonization by any European power” and Britain supplying the might to back it up with the most powerful military force on the planet: the Royal Navy.

Though it would take another two wars of imperial conquest, something Napoleon would understand, and two global conflicts, the intensity and scale of which would astound even him, America was on the path to becoming the dominant world power.

“Judge for yourself if we have anything to fear from a nation as sensible, as reasonable, as dispassionate, as tolerant as the Germans. A nation so far removed from any form of excess that not one of our men has been murdered in Germany during a war.” Napoleon wrote this to Marshal Louis Davout some eight years later in 1812, while he was heavily engaged in the Peninsular War and preparing for the invasion of Russia.

The Germanies had been at peace since the Tilsit Treaties, some four years earlier, with most of their populations either resigned to French rule, or actually enjoying it. But not in Prussia, where her shattering defeats at Jena and Auerstädt and subsequent humiliation at Tilsit sparked something remarkable.

Then Foreign Minister, later Chancellor, Karl von Hardenberg warned

the Prussian royal court it must either face the new realities brought about by the French Revolution, or be doomed like the Bourbon Kings. So Friedrich Wilhelm III initiated reform, actually a quiet revolution, from the top down rather than try to suppress a far more violent one from the bottom up.

For civil and governmental reform he turned to Hardenberg and a man he had once dismissed as an “obstinate and disobedient official”— Baron Heinrich von Stein. Together, these men lifted Prussia out of the Medieval Age and recast it as a modern monarchy.

They worked quickly and efficiently and, approximately three months after Prussia’s humiliation at Tilsit and a year after the defeats of Jena and Auerstädt, the King issued the era-ending Edict of Emancipation. At the stroke of his pen he ended serfdom, most of the feudal privileges of the nobles, restrictions on the sale of lands and almost all caste distinctions.

No longer was a noble restricted to living off the toil of the peasants who worked his land. He could now engage in any trade or industry he wished and sell his land to whoever he wanted, not just to other nobles. Further land reform worked out by von Stein allocated two-thirds of former noble lands to the serfs, who were now called Freeholders, and one-third to the nobles.

The growing merchant class could buy any of these lands, hold commissions in the army and engage in almost any business with the nobles. Jews, until then under a host of racist restrictions, were given the civil rights of any other Prussian citizen. Almost overnight these reforms were instituted, with few protests, and made Prussia one of the most progressive states in Europe.

To reform his army, Friedrich Wilhelm III turned to two of his best surviving generals: Barons Gerhard von Scharnhorst and August von Gneisenau. They took an army shattered by its defeats and cut in strength by Bonaparte’s dictates to 42,000 active-duty personnel and transformed it in much the same way Stein and Hardenberg transformed the country.

With manpower levels now critical, incompetent officers were removed, promotion was based on merit and not birth, recruiting mercenaries was ended, skill took precedence over blind discipline and innovative tactics were encouraged. The cadre system was instituted, which allowed most units to be staffed with a skeleton force of active-duty personnel and filled out at regular intervals with either recruits for initial training or reservists for refresher courses.

In just over four years, just as the magnitude of Napoleon’s disaster in Russia had become apparent, it was this army that Prussia fully mobilized and unleashed on its battered conqueror. Its success on the battlefield



helped it achieve alliances with Austria and Russia and, more importantly, rallied the other Germanies to the cause of national unity.

For a short, tantalizing period in the momentous days of 1813 to early 1814, it seemed as though the dreams of philosopher-poets and warrior-kings could be realized: a united Germany. However, as soon as the threat which brought them together had left the stage, Napoleon and his first abdication, the hot desire for unity cooled.

Alas, it was not so much a want for hegemony under Prussian control that fueled the fires but a hatred of French rule. Some who favored unity wanted Austria to be included, but others feared the size of its empire and its ethnic composition – most of its population was distinctly non-German. And the Austrians themselves showed little interest in unification.

With Napoleon gone the older resentments and fear of Prussian rule reasserted themselves. So much so that by early 1814, on the eve of Bonaparte's return from Elba, many of the smaller German states were negotiating the not-so-secret alliance with Britain, France and Austria against Prussia and Russia.

Even though this crisis had largely been neutralized by the time he landed, most of the Germanies still did not rally to Prussia's new call to arms and unity. Mostly it was fear which paralyzed them. Fear that Napoleon would yet again pull off the impossible and the principle battleground of the new war would be their lands. Fear that even if this did not happen, Prussia would use the emergency to scheme for an enforced unity under its dominion.

Even her very military prowess, the speed at which she re-mobilized and fielded her armies as compared to the slow pace of Russia and Austria, now worked against Prussia. The one other German state to field any kind of force during the Hundred Days, the Hanoverian Cities, chose to ally itself with the coalition army Wellington was assembling instead of Blücher's.

In the end, Prussia had to settle for being the most powerful state in the new version of the Napoleonic Confederation of the Rhine. This time it was called the German Confederation, it was composed of mostly the same 38 states as the previous one, and its legislative body, the Federal Diet, would meet in one of the last remaining Imperial Free Cities: Frankfurt au Main, Frankfurt on the Main River, the traditional dividing line between the north German states and the southern ones.

For that brief, tantalizing period the dream of German unity flared brighter than it had in centuries and seemed so close to fruition. Now it had gone dormant again, back asleep like its legendary hero. Even the man who had been cast as the modern-day Friedrich Barbarossa, Marshal Gebhard

von Blücher, soon retired from the scene. He had no desire to lead a national unity movement or to govern. His love was the command of armies in the field, but at 73 even he realized his days were at an end and he retired to his farm for the last time.

This is what it seemed like at the time, but in reality Barbarossa had not gone back to sleep – he had been reborn. On April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1815, at the same time Blücher and Wellington were organizing their respective armies, a centuries-old Junkers family welcomed its newest addition at its Schönhausen estate, near the Elbe River in Brandenburg. He was a strapping, robust son and was given a robust name: Otto Edward Leopold von Bismarck. The new Barbarossa had been born.

## Chapter II: France Under the Bourbons

*“They have learned nothing, and forgotten nothing.”*  
-Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Perigord (1754 - 1838)

### *Europe at Peace*

HAD IT ALL *really* happened? In the Great Silence which finally settled in after such a prolonged conflict – more than 20 years – people began to ask, did it really take place? The Jacobins and Reign of Terror. Robespierre, Danton and Hebert. The Thermidor Coup against the Jacobins, the Rise of Napoleon and the endless wars, both internal and external, which wove around them.

For many people, and not just those on the other side of an ocean or a continent away, it didn't happen at all. Readers of English Literature from the period of the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century will, sooner or later, be struck by the dichotomy between many of the contemporary novels written in the period and the historic fiction written about the period from a later age.

In the novels of Patrick O'Brian and Cecil Scott (C.S.) Forester, Britain is under siege and the continued threat of invasion from Bonaparte. Jack Aubrey and Horatio Hornblower, and the fully-detailed iron men and wooden ships they commanded, are its only line of defence against, what another character says, is “an entire continent arrayed against us.” Britain under threat/siege is also an underlying theme in more literary books like *A Tale of Two Cities*, by Charles Dickens, and *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, by

Baroness Emmuska Orczy. And in Bernard Cornwell's series *Sharpe's Rifles*, all of England seems to be involved in the grueling Peninsular War.

And yet, if you were to read any of Jane Austen's novels, written both of the period and in the period, you would swear they were taking place in another era, or an Alternate History universe. In her tales of provincial life among what seems a near-to-impooverished English middle class the name Napoleon is only occasionally mentioned. Nor is Horatio Nelson, Wellington, Egypt, Trafalgar, Austerlitz, Jena or any of the other personalities or events of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars.

Historians, Literary Critics and readers with a love of history have wondered which version of this period is true? The reality is both are, for the Hornblowers, Aubreys and other military men, and even Sydney Carton and Lucie Manette of *A Tale of Two Cities*, belonged to a different world than the winsome and often self-sacrificing heroines of *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*.

They were different aspects of the same era, and the key words are "cities" and "provincial." For Austen's novels are of life in rural English manor homes, very isolated and all-but-independent of the cities – make that port cities – where most of the military stayed when they were not at sea or on a battlefield. News arrived, if it arrived at all, with the latest friend, relative or traveler to stop by. Newspapers existed, but rarely circulated beyond the major cities and, while there were a few stagecoach lines, travel beyond the cities was largely up to the individual.

In Europe the impact of the whole era of political turmoil, revolution and war largely depended on whether you lived a rural or urban life, and how close your home was to a battlefield. In Spain or Portugal this meant nearly everyone. In some of the more remote Germanies their only contact with the era was dealing with French officials and the ruinously high taxes they imposed.

The French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars were the last major conflict to occur before the first age of Mass Communications, before the first age of Mass Transport, and before the Industrial Revolution, which was already nascent by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and nipping at the heels of the passing era.

If the continent and the British Isles had been strung with a network of telegraph lines, if daily newspapers, much less weekly and monthly magazines, had national circulations, if there had been a greater presence of canals and Macadamized roads, not to mention the existence of railroads, then the impact of the passing era would have been more apparent. However, just because it was not obvious didn't mean it did not happen, or have a profound effect.

People discovered they had a voice. Ethnic groups began to have aspirations to their own national identities. This was particularly true among the Poles, the Italians, the Hungarians and even the Belgians. People discovered they had rights, and not just to land they toiled. And this was particularly true of the French.

### ***France and Louis XVIII***

Shortly after returning to Paris for the second time, after having made sure the coast was clear by allowing the victorious allies to enter it the day before, Louis XVIII convened a meeting with members of the provisional government at Tuileries Palace. He reiterated his support for the Constitutional Charter he had “granted” France approximately a year before, on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1814.

And for everyone there, as well as those who could not, a wild and daring gamble had paid off. First and foremost, Louis’ return to France and the throne meant the country would not be dismembered, something Prussia and Russia strongly advocated. And second, by restating his support for the Charter, he averted a civil war between the Ultra-royalists and the Liberals.

But it did not end the conflict between them. As so often happens, an even-handed approach pleased neither side. By the provisions of the Charter, the Royalists got a Chamber of Peers, the Senate, whose members were appointed by the King. It also reserved the right to initiate legislative action to the crown and made the Catholic Church the official state religion.

While the Liberals objected to the language Louis used in “granting” the Charter to the French people, and the rights he reserved for the crown, the Royalists objected to there being a Constitutional Charter at all. They, and especially the Ultra-royalists lead by the comte d’Artois, objected to the retention of the Napoleonic Civil Code, most officials from his regime, the lower Chamber of Deputies and the confirmation of the sale of state-held property to new owners.

Thousands of Royalists abandoned lands, homes and other properties in their flight from the French Revolution and the Reign of Terror. When they returned, they had hoped most of it would be ceded back to them. Now Louis XVIII, one of their own, had ordained that all the sales had been legal and were final. Many would never forgive him for it.

However, Louis had bigger problems to resolve. He had foreign troops garrisoned in France and a billion francs in reparations to pay. Many thought the troops, who would stay until the vast sum of money had been

paid, would be on occupation duty for the better part of a decade. But France had an overlooked resource it could tap.

Unlike Portugal and Spain, who were losing their overseas empires through revolution and blazingly stupid autocratic rule, France emerged with most of its empire intact. Its worst loss was its Haitian colony on the island of Hispaniola just as Napoleon was rising to power.

Before revolution swept the colony, it produced half the world's coffee crop and half the sugar Europe annually consumed. Now the colony was not only lost to France, the plantations that produced those crops were still in ruins and Haiti's economy has been a basket case ever since.

But there were still other French island colonies in the Caribbean, and then there was French Guiana on the northeast coast of South America. Almost from the moment Haiti was lost, the army Napoleon sent to retake it lost 25,000 to yellow fever and barely 2,000 to combat; plantations on the other islands and in Guiana were expanded to replace it. And this was at a time when France had a monopoly on world coffee production. Not until much later in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century would Brazil and later Columbia eclipse it in coffee and sugar output.

The result was, instead of taking five to ten years to pay off its indemnities, France had them paid off in less than three. By the end of 1818, with the artworks Napoleon had looted from across Europe returned to their rightful owners and the debt paid, the last of the occupation troops left French soil. In an ironic twist of history the last to go were Prussian troops, they would not be back for 52 years.

With these acts Louis XVIII, along with statesmen like Talleyrand and Francois de Chateaubriand, had managed to return France to the community of nations in Europe. By 1818 she was allowed to join the Quadruple Alliance of major powers (Russia, Austria, Prussia and Britain), making it the Quintuple Alliance.

By then she had also become a member of the Holy Alliance – not so much a true coalition of nations as a manifesto amongst the crowned heads of Europe. It held them to treat their subjects according to Christian principals. But more importantly it swore them to come to each other's aid if their rule was threatened. As such it was less a pact of collective security among sovereign nations as it was a promise among sovereigns for collective security against their people.

This suited most of the French aristocracy, and especially the Ultra-royalists, quite well. And yet they were still not happy. Louis was content to rule France under the constraints of the detested Constitutional Charter and France had not yet returned to its rightful place as the dominant power of mainland Europe. That title was still held by Austria, for by now the

post-Napoleonic Era had acquired its own rightful name: the Age of Metternich.

### ***Europe and the Age of Metternich***

Prince Klemens Wenzel Lothar Metternich began his diplomatic career as Austria's minister/ambassador to the court of Napoleon Bonaparte. He handled the emperor's outbursts, threats and tirades better than most other court diplomats. By 1810 he had succeeded Count Philip Stadion as Austria's Foreign Minister and represented his emperor and country at some of the most important diplomatic gatherings/meetings in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

He negotiated the marriage between Napoleon and Emperor Francis' daughter, Marie Louise. He mediated the Prague Conference of June, 1813 between the Prussians and Russians on one side and France on the other. He hosted the momentous Congress of Vienna from mid-1814 to late-1815, and thereafter held periodic congresses of the Quintuple Alliance members.

At Vienna, Verona, Troppau and a dozen other locations they decided not so much the fate of nations but how to keep what they thought was the rightful ruler on the throne. Sometimes they helped prevent a usurpation, such as when the first great Congress was ending Napoleon's brother-in-law, Joachim Murat, tried to take back the Kingdom of Naples. They quickly supported the Bourbon claim and Murat, after he was captured, was quickly executed.

But mostly they worked to suppress revolutions and independence movements, even at the expense of keeping a despot on the throne. By 1820 the reactionary and brutal regime of Ferdinand VII finally ignited in Spain the kind of uprising it had long since sparked in its New World colonies. Barely a year later another Bourbon Ferdinand, Ferdinand I of the Two Sicilies, also created a revolution with his cruelty.

Prince Metternich, by now not just Austria's Foreign Minister but its newly-appointed State Chancellor, responded by urging the Holy Alliance to send military aid to the despotic Ferdinands. Austria, along with the King of Sardinia, sent troops and ships to Sicily while France responded to the Spanish Crisis.

Even if he had wanted to, Louis XVIII could not have refused the call for aid. He had over-stacked the Chamber of Peers with Ultra-royalist Senators who clamored to send aid to a monarch that, some 14 years earlier, France had removed from power. But that had been the France of Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte I and this was the France of the restored

Bourbon kings mobilizing to save another Bourbon king.

In the end, and in rapidly failing health, Louis XVIII could not resist Metternich, his Senators or his family, especially not his brother and sons. Their zeal to go to war in Spain reached such a fever pitch they refused to allow a Russian army the right to march through France; Czar Alexander had to content himself with aiding the Greeks in their war of independence with the Ottoman Empire.

They even refused British help and the Duke of Wellington, England's envoy to the Alliance Congress in Verona, promptly withdrew the offer. If Britain wanted combat in Europe, it was already having trouble along the Indian-Burmese border, then it would have to seek it with Russia in assisting Greek independence. And if France wanted war on the Iberian Peninsula to itself then it was welcome to it.

### *France and Charles X*

“One hundred thousand Frenchmen, commanded by a Prince of my family, whom I fondly call my son, are ready to march with a prayer to the God of Saint Louis that they may preserve the throne of Spain to the grandson of Henry IV.”

Louis XVIII used this statement to open a joint session of Chambers in January, 1823. France's ambassador to Spain had already been recalled from Madrid, then the seat of the revolutionary Constitutional Ministry, and most Senators and Deputies enthusiastically cheered the mobilizing of the army.

But it would not be until the middle of March that the Duke of Angoulême and his command staff left Paris. And it was not until April 7<sup>th</sup> when his vanguard crossed the frontier south of the port city of Bayonne and entered Irun on Spain's northeastern coast. A ponderous pace, especially compared to the movement of armies in the Napoleonic Era, though it did match the overall pace of Louis XVIII's reign.

Portly to the point of being morbidly obese, hobbled by gout, polite and tactful to a fault, Louis XVIII had proven to be more tolerant, respectful and enlightened than most of the other current European monarchs. He had tried to be all things to all people, and ended up getting respect from very few. Most had applauded him when he quickly paid off France's war reparations, but that ended five years earlier and now, seemingly everything went wrong with the Spanish Expedition.

Even when it went right, the war provided nothing but trouble for France and Louis. By mid-September the French force, with fanatical



Spanish royalists, had surrounded Cadiz, where the Constitutional Ministry held Ferdinand VII captive. In exchange for his release, he accepted the French position not to take any reprisals against the revolutionaries.

However, less than a day after his release Ferdinand reversed all his pledges and declared null and void the amnesty he had signed. Within a week he initiated a reign of terror the likes of which Europe had not seen since the Jacobins. He banned for life from Madrid and its environs anyone who had been part of the Constitutional Ministry. Then came the death warrants and lastly, the revival of the Inquisition.

Perhaps the one good thing to emerge from Napoleon's invasion of Spain, namely the suppression of the centuries-old bureaucracy of state terror called The Spanish Inquisition, came back in full force. By the end of the year several leaders of the revolt had been hanged, and they were followed to the gallows by men and even women for the crime of merely possessing a picture of one of the leaders.

Metternich was shocked by it, and soon decided the Alliance should leave Spain to her own devices. Louis XVIII was saddened by it, got blamed for it, and quickly agreed with the Duke of Angoulême to withdraw the expeditionary force. Even the Ultra-royalists were shocked and renounced what Ferdinand was doing.

Except, there was one – he was the Ultra-royalists' Ultra-royalist, the comte d'Artois and Louis XVIII's younger brother: the future Charles X. He openly approved, and less than a year after the French withdrawal, and approximately four months after his older brother's death in September of 1824, he was crowned king at the Cathedral of Reims in January, 1825.

Immediately he proved to be a different monarch than his brother. The tact, the tolerance, the respectful politeness which had marked Louis XVIII's reign vanished as Charles X set about making use of the gains the Ultra-royalists and the Clerical Party had made in both Chambers in the previous year's elections, about the time of his brother's death.

Louis' final appointments gave the Ultra-royalists an absolute majority in the Chamber of Peers, while the sympathy vote and government manipulation saw only 19 Liberals returned to the Chamber of Deputies. The political climate became so unhealthy for Liberals that Talleyrand thought of going into exile and the Marquis de Lafayette virtually did; he accepted a long-offered invitation to visit America as a hero of its revolution. And stayed until 1827.

Charles X got legislation passed to appropriate one million francs for the Royalists whose land and property had been seized and sold during the French Revolution. He also outlawed sacrilege, very broadly defined, and passed laws enforcing an old aristocratic favorite, *primogeniture*: the

exclusive right of inheritance belonging to the first-born son.

By these acts and others in the following years he attempted to restore power to the Bourbon Throne, the aristocracy who supported it and the Catholic Church. In effect, he was attempting a counter-revolution to the revolution of some 40 years earlier. And what he could not get through legislation he would take by imperial decree.

In April, 1827 Charles disbanded the National Guard units of Paris after they protested to him about the re-establishment of Jesuit schools. This brought Lafayette back to defend the organization he helped create some 38 years earlier, and began an anti-clerical reaction which culminated a year later in the electoral defeat of Charles' ministry.

One would have thought a reversal like this would chasten a king. Instead it launched him, so unlike his brother and very much like the despised Napoleon, on even grander flights of fancy. In the most dangerous, Charles sought to capitalize on the Alliance victory in the naval battle of Navarino over the Turkish fleet to redraw the Ottoman Empire and the map of Christian Europe.

It only served to raise alarm in Holland and the German Confederation, and reporting on it caused more attempts at press restrictions at home. To distract an increasingly restive public he tried more meddlings in the European status quo and other foreign adventures. By the middle of 1829 he was mobilizing an expedition to Algeria, but by then it was too late.

### ***The July Revolution and the Fall of the Bourbons***

“My brother will not die in that bed.”

Louis XVIII said this when, in his final days, he saw what would be his death bed. Rarely has a king spoken more prophetic words about his successor; Charles X would die in exile, as would the monarchs who came after him. Louis would have the last laugh on them all: he was the last French ruler to die in-state and in France.

For his brother the final slide began, ironically enough, with his greatest military success. The Algerian Expedition finally got underway at the beginning of June, 1830, after the Dey/Governor of the city of Algiers was foolish enough to insult the local French consul and provide the pretext for invasion.

Landings began on the North African coast by mid-June and from the start, the war was an outstanding success. Nearly 50 million francs in war booty, then a hefty sum, were seized in the opening weeks and Britain grew nervous enough about the conquest to formally ask the French government

not to retain any territory once its honor had been satisfied.

But Charles would have none of it. Emboldened by the victories, he was in no mood to listen to foreign governments or even his own. Responding to an earlier vote of no-confidence by the Chamber of Deputies he issued the fateful July Ordinances on July 25<sup>th</sup>. They dissolved both Chambers, renounced the Constitution his brother had signed and returned France to an absolute monarchy. To Charles X, his Ministers and supporters their counter-revolution was complete.

And it lasted all of three days. The news was scarcely out when the streets of Paris were filled with protesters, then with barricades and by nightfall over 600 had been erected and the city was all but impassable. Charles declared a state of siege and called out the National Guard, who arrived on the streets wearing the banned tricolor cockades on their hats and even waving some lovingly preserved tricolor flags.

News rapidly spread throughout France, turning an uprising into a revolution. And then it spread beyond the borders, turning revolution into a call-to-arms across Europe. Back in Paris, Lafayette moved to take command of the National Guard and prevented it from becoming a disorganized, vengeful rabble, while Talleyrand and Chateaubriand prepared to counter any reactions by Charles X.

They feared he would call upon his fellow monarchs in the Holy Alliance to come to his aid, and foreign troops would be marching into France. In reality they need not have worried, the last Bourbon king played whist as artillery and musket fire rattled the windows of his palace. When informed that two regiments of regular troops had gone over to the revolution and the Louvre had been taken, Charles X replied, "They exaggerate the danger."

Only when Tuileries Palace was stormed and sacked, when tricolors flew from clock towers and other high points in Paris, did he rescind the fateful Ordinances and dismissed his Ministry, along with the hated Chief Minister Prince Polignac. By then it was far too late. The provisional government installed at the Hotel de Ville declared Charles X deposed and neither Metternich nor any member state of the Holy Alliance or Quintuple Alliance were willing to reverse it. Bourbon rule of France had passed into history.

### *France After the Bourbons*

It all moved so rapidly afterward. Charles X tried to retain the throne for his family by abdicating to the Dauphin, the former Duke of Angoulême.

Lafayette was offered the role of President if he would make France a constitutional republic, something urged by firebrand new politicians like Louis Adolphe Thiers and Francois Guillaume Guizot.

But France's hero demurred. He feared the rest of Europe would attack if a new republic was declared, and more importantly he feared France itself was not ready to be a republic. Instead he gave his support to a constitutional monarch, to what he called, "a popular throne, surrounded by republican institutions."

Lafayette turned to Louis Philippe, the Duke of Orléans and the eldest son of Philippe Égalité, one of the few untainted heroes of the French Revolution. At a stroke it calmed Europe's fears of another major conflict and it gave the French people a popular ruler to support.

In spite of his initial reluctance, on August 9<sup>th</sup>, at the formal request of the Chamber of Peers and Chamber of Deputies, Louis Philippe accepted the French crown with a solemn oath to uphold its constitution. By then the Dauphin had resigned all rights to the throne and, on August 16<sup>th</sup>, sailed into exile from Cherbourg with Charles X, their families and an entourage of attendants large enough to fill two ships.

Called the "Citizen King" and his reign the "July Monarchy," Louis Philippe immediately began cooperating with new politicians like Thiers and Guizot, even helping to advance their careers. But it was in diplomacy that he really moved swiftly, employing old hands like Talleyrand and Chateaubriand to soothe European apprehensions at this new French Revolution, and something more important.

Without having meant to, and completely unlike the leaders from 40 years earlier, those who lead the July Revolution provided the spark and inspiration to insurrections across Europe. Long-simmering ethnic tensions and new-found class hatreds exploded into clashes and open revolts in Holland, the German Confederation, Sardinia, Naples, the Papal States, the Italian provinces of the Austrian Empire, its Hungarian region and finally Russia's Polish Kingdom.

And everywhere crowned heads and government officials blamed France for it all. Except in Spain, where the re-institution of the Inquisition ignited still another revolt to Ferdinand VII's rule and his mad quest to stamp out "the disastrous mania for thinking."

Fairly or unfairly, and in spite of the success in the following year that Talleyrand and Chateaubriand would have, European governments and even certain civil populations began to hold France more and more responsible for the waves of anxiety, anarchy and conflict which would periodically sweep the continent.

## Chapter III: The Germanies – The Slow Road to Unity

*“What is the German Fatherland? Wherever the German tongue is heard.”*

-Ernst Moritz Arndt (1769 - 1860)

### ***The German Confederation: The Early Years***

THE FIRES OF German unity cooled almost as soon as the Prussian and Hanoverian armies had returned from the field in 1815. Friedrich Barbarossa seemingly went back to sleep when Blücher retired to his farm, and especially when he died there in September of 1819.

In reality he was under the loving tutelage of his mother, the former Wilhelmina Mencken and would soon be sent to the Plamann Boarding School in Berlin. But his story is for a later phase, when he fully plunges his hand into the time stream, for now the story is the somnolent state of German nationalism.

It was still present. Still there in the daily lives of citizens of 38 different states. It had probably been too much to ask the peoples of 360 separate entities to unite into one state, but shrinking that number by nearly an order of magnitude had, in the end, been accepted with few difficulties.

For now the vague boundaries of German nationalism were defined by language, folk traditions and ethnic origins. It was a casual nationality, it had yet to be defined by such things as physical boundaries, unifying state institutions and documents like a national charter or constitution.

It *did* have a national legislature, a federal diet which met at regular intervals in Frankfurt au Main. But it was a weak institution, certainly not

as strong as Chambers in France or Parliament in Britain. It could not even be considered as strong as Congress, as it then existed, in the United States.

The Federal Diet, from its very inception, was bedeviled by two major problems in its assembly, Austria and Prussia. Both were major world powers, charter members of the Quintuple Alliance and the Holy Alliance, and Austria was the dominant military power in Europe.

However, it was Prussia that other historians have defined as “less a state with an army but an army with a state.” Smaller, but better organized and disciplined, it was Prussia where the military reforms of Scharnhorst and Gneisenau, and the social reforms of Hardenberg and Stein, had been initiated and by now institutionalized.

Austria, by comparison, was weak for its size, not nearly as efficient and had something which made most Germans apprehensive in giving it dominance in German affairs: most of its population was not German. In fact its German-speaking peoples of Bohemia, Moravia and Austria proper were a distinct minority compared to the Hungarians, Serbs, Italians, Slavs, Poles, Czechs and literally dozens of other nationalities that composed the empire.

One could call this racism but, conversely, most of the other peoples of the Austrian Empire were equally wary of what they saw as a solid German hegemony deciding their futures. Already, some were agitating for a legislature of their own, like the German Confederation, to settle their own issues. And then there were other nationalities who wanted to take it a step further – they wanted independence.

As for the Confederation itself, it often fell to the middle powers of Saxony, Baden, Bavaria and Württemberg to decide matters before the assembly. And increasingly, despite the commanding presence of Metternich, decisions started going more and more in Prussia’s favor. For it was Prussia that was seen as the state of the future while Austria appeared intent on living in the past.

### ***The State of German Unity***

Here is a topic whose complexity and history makes it worthy of a book all to its own, though it would make for some mighty dense reading. To distill it down to the essentials: the concepts of nation-state and nationality developed rather differently in Western Europe than in Central Europe.

In countries like France, Spain, Portugal, Holland, even Denmark and most especially Great Britain, these two concepts evolved together in an almost symbiotic and mutually nurturing union. In Central and Eastern

Europe the concept of nationality/national-identity greatly preceded the concept of nation-states and helped mold them into a rather different idea.

In the Germanies, what kings and warriors could not forge the philosophers and poets would ponder and exalt. And right from the start the German philosophers proved to be rather different than their British, French and New World counterparts. Intellectually they were less interested in human rights and the rights of the individual than in the freedom of the human spirit. With the nation-state concept lagging behind nationality, they idealized what the eventual united German would look like into the “Rechtsstaat”: the Right State or, more loosely, the Idealized State.

From roughly 1800 to 1871, “Rechtsstaat” was the most popular word in the vocabulary of German philosophers and Liberals. This was especially true of the Bureaucratic Liberals, in the Stein and Hardenberg mold, and the Moderate Liberals, where most of the philosophers resided. Only the Radical Liberals like Heinrich Heine, Ludwig Börne and the most energetic and insulting of Friedrich Hegel’s students, Karl Marx, rejected the dogma that freedom of the human spirit was more important than human rights.

But most of the Radicals were isolated literati more interested in being poets and if they did any collaborating then they were like Heine, who collaborated with Franz Schubert, Robert Schumann and Felix Mendelssohn in putting his poems to music. And there was an even more important way they were like Heinrich Heine: most lived abroad in exile. This made the Radical Liberals the smallest of the liberal movements in the Germanies and, when the time came, the weakest.

This left the field to the Bureaucratic and Moderate Liberals like Marx’s mentor Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Johann von Herder, the brothers August and Friedrich von Schlegel, Adam Müller, Johann Christoph Schiller, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and the philosopher who really started it all: Immanuel Kant.

Of the giants of German philosophy and literature, it was Kant who most successfully fused the two meanings of “freedom” (of the human spirit and of the individual) together. He blended this with his dual beliefs in the equality and dignity of Man, the supremacy of Law and what he saw as the practical necessity of an authoritarian government. Kant is responsible for bringing the traditional German association of liberty and the absolute state, meaning the Idealized Germanic State, into the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

It was shortly after Kant’s death, in February of 1804, that German liberalism fractured into its three distinct movements. It was his friend Goethe, founder of the “Sturm und Drang” (Storm and Stress) literary movement of the previous century, who saw to it that Kant’s beliefs were

spread to the other German philosophers. And, since he was widely admired as the “last universal author of European literature” they gained in their day great credence.

Goethe and Kant were even admired in the great competing philosophical movement in the Germanies: Romantic Conservatism. Less well known now, mostly because it has far fewer “celebrity” philosophers whose work has survived the test of time, it was in its day quite powerful as it had the support of the Prussian Government, churches of all denominations and aristocratic orders from across the lands.

Romantic Conservatism borrowed its main philosophy from a foreigner, the British statesman and political philosopher Edmund Burke. They especially borrowed from his masterpiece book “Reflections on the Revolution in France” published in 1790. He advanced that the “social contract” theory of French philosophers actually extended through time. Between the living, the dead and the unborn, and it was a contract which could not be broken by the fancy of the living generation.

To this foreign acquisition the Romantic Conservatives added the concepts of natural law and organic theory from one of the leading Liberal philosophers of his day: Johann Gottfried von Herder. A contemporary of Kant, they would end up dying within a few months of each other, and a member of Goethe’s “Sturm und Drang” movement; he was also a court chaplain at Weimar who thought states and societies were living organisms in their own right. He believed they had their own unique character and created a word for it: “Volksgeist.”

“Christ died not only for men, but also for states,” was written by one of the lesser lights of the Liberal Movement, Adam Müller, but it perfectly describes one of the main pillars of the Romantic Conservative Movement: the “Ständestaat.” While “Rechtsstaat” was the idealized German state, the “Ständestaat” was the idealized natural state. It was an outgrowth of the revered Martin Luther’s belief that God created the state to maintain order in a sinful world, and its societal groups were ordained by God.

Whether it was “Rechtsstaat” or “Ständestaat,” these idealized nation-states needed absolute power, of course justly wielded, by either its sovereign or governing body, in order to work. And on the concept of absolute power both the Liberals, of whatever stripe, and the Romantic Conservatives were in agreement – they were ambivalent about it.

To the Romantic Conservatives absolute power, and by extension the Absolute State that wielded it, was the enemy of the feudal system they admired. But in the modern world, which had grown so sinful, most of them understood they needed absolute power in some form for their “Ständestaat” to maintain order.



To the Liberals, except maybe the Radicals, absolute power was the necessary means for an authoritarian government to achieve their desired “Rechtsstaat.” They believed through the proper exercise of state power that the state would replace the Church as the repository of moral values and moral authority among the Germans.

The problem for both movements is they were dealing with concepts, theories and idealized states. Real nation-states had borders, unifying institutions and founding documents. They also had something else, something most of these philosophers studiously ignored: unforeseen seismic events which would compel their creation.

So while the German philosophers and poets, who did not even pretend to be spokesmen for the middle-class from which they mostly came, defined and exalted their imaginary states in their treatise papers, articles and poems, a real nation-state was being forged in the “Sturm und Drang” of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. And on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 1871, in the Hall of Mirrors of Versailles Palace, it would be proclaimed Germany.

### ***The Germanies and the July Revolution***

To the casual observer of history, the July Revolution of 1830 was a three-day summer storm mostly confined to the Paris environs. A brief lashing of musket fire, the rumble of cannons and Bourbon rule in France finally ended in a whimper.

In reality the July Revolution set off uprisings and civil wars across Europe, and they would last for two years until the middle of 1832. They would be the first post-Napoleonic storm the German Confederation would weather, though it had been preceded, as anyone who studies meteorology would know, by a pre-frontal squall line.

Between October of 1827, around the time of the Quintuple Alliance victory over the Turkish fleet at Navarino Island, and the middle of 1829, when the whole chimerical project finally collapsed, a tremor pulsed through the Germanies. And it was caused entirely by forces outside the Confederation wishing to redraw the map of Europe.

Russian operations during the war over Greek independence from the Ottoman Empire were making Austria nervous. In addition to naval operations, Russian troops had captured the Romanian provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia; Austria officially asked for the troops to be withdrawn, Russia encouraged France to seize the Rhineland territories if Austria attacks, and soon the ill-kept secret was common knowledge throughout Europe.

Charles X only exacerbated the crisis by proposing a partitioning of the Ottoman Empire, along with a radical rearrangement of Europe. Russia was to get the Bosnian and Serbian provinces from Austria. Saxony and the Dutch regions of Holland were to be ceded to Prussia, while France was to get back the Rhineland territories and the French/Flemish-speaking provinces of Holland. Finally, the king of Holland would become the Sultan's governor of Constantinople. In all a ludicrous plan whose only result was the partial mobilizing of the German armies to prevent it from being implemented.

Approximately a year later the armies, and particularly the Prussian Army, were being fully mobilized. For there was war and revolution all along the borders of the German Confederation. The July Revolution had come, and it was hardly a passing summer storm.

In France there was revolution and its monarch deposed. In Poland the general uprising this sparked grew rapidly into a full-scale civil war, while in Holland those Flemish and French-speaking provinces so desired by Charles X united to form Belgium. Even in the south, French aid to rebel groups in Austria's Italian provinces led to uprisings in Modena and Parma.

To be sure the July Revolution also sparked uprisings in the Germanies, but the revolts in Brunswick, Hesse and the Bavarian Palatinate were easily suppressed by the beginning of 1831. Their principal result was the reaction of the Federal Diet, repressing liberal publications, societies and college professors. In the end all the revolts caused was a new exodus of German Liberals to Switzerland, France and America.

And still the wars and revolutions continued at the borders of the Germanies. While France had quickly been settled, the civil war in Russia's Polish kingdom escalated into bitter fighting. French and Dutch troops were marching into Belgium, where the great fortress in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, a major eastern anchor to German defences, was threatened. The uprisings in northern Italy had by now spread to the Papal States, and there was unrest in Hungary.

Eventually the work of Metternich, Talleyrand, Humboldt, Chateaubriand and a host of other diplomats settled most of the troubles. Belgium became an independent state and chose Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg as its king. The German Confederation retained the fortress in Luxembourg while the grand duchy was annexed to Belgium. France ended aid to the Italian rebel forces when Austria received backing from Russia and Prussia. And Metternich added the Machiavellian touch by informing the newly-crowned Louis Philippe of the latest volunteer to join the Carbonari political movement in Italy. A name he knew would stoke the

fears of any French monarch – the son of a one-time king of Holland: Charles Louis Napoleon Bonaparte.

Metternich also worked hard on his German brothers. From Prussia he secured an alliance with his country to aid Russia under the protocols of the Holy Alliance to subdue the Polish revolt. From the Federal Diet he got even more repressive measures passed: forbidding all political meetings and associations, new press censorship rules and declaring the refusal by any legislature to pay taxes to be an act of rebellion.

By the middle of 1832, nearly two years after the official ending of the July Revolution, it finally did end with the successful suppression of another Paris uprising. By then Belgium, with Luxembourg, were independent of Holland, Poland was once again part of the Russian Empire, the status quo had been restored in Italy and the German Confederation found itself rather uncomfortably more like the Austrian Empire: a police state.

### ***The Zollverein: Unity Through Free Trade***

A year and a half later, on January 1<sup>st</sup> of 1834, a far-reaching step toward German unification was achieved through legislative agreement on a new German Customs Union: the Zollverein. This was to be the Prussian Foreign Minister's, Baron Wilhelm von Humboldt, last and greatest gift to a unified Germany. Nothing he achieved at the Congress of Vienna, or the frantic rounds of negotiations following the July Revolution, would quite equal the establishment of a Pan-Germanic free trade union.

Under the Zollverein, 36 of the 38 states in the Confederation abolished all inter-state tariffs and taxes. Economically, 30 million Germans became one nation and another unifying institution would be created: the Zollparlament. This was an interstate parliament created by the Federal Diet to deal with administering the customs union.

And it could not have come at a more opportune time for the most pervasive and sweeping revolution of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century was finally making its presence felt on the European continent. The one that would erase the feudal system so loved by the Romantic Conservatives, and reinforce the class-ridden social structure so hated by most Liberals: the Industrial Revolution.

In its early days it had largely been confined to the British Isles by the Napoleonic Wars and especially Napoleon's Continental System of anti-British embargoes. After the wars Europe was too devastated to think about building factories or exploiting new technologies. And many

countries, such as Austria and most notoriously Spain, actively fought to hold back the future.

But the Industrial Revolution was not a tide which could be stopped, only delayed. It arrived piecemeal in France, Holland and the Germanies. And brought with it the First Age of Mass Production, the First Age of Mass Communications and the First Age of Mass (Mechanized) Transport. It was the Germanies, much more so than anywhere else in Europe, where the importation of the Industrial Revolution went from imitation of all things British to original invention.

In the year preceding the Zollverein's creation, the German mathematician and astronomer Johann Karl Friedrich Gauss displayed the first practical results of his experiments in magnetism. Four years before either Charles Wheatstone in Britain or Samuel Morse in the United States, the celebrated discoverer of non-Euclidean Geometry demonstrated the world's first electromagnetic telegraph at the university town of Gottingen. And among the people who saw this demonstration was an impressionable college student, the future Barbarossa himself, Otto von Bismarck.

Already the first public railroads were in operation, and doing a booming business, in Great Britain. Modern steamships, at this point almost entirely paddlewheel-types, were plying the Atlantic, Mediterranean and moving into inland waterways. The future was arriving, and the German Confederation had just created the bureaucracy to manage it.

### ***Strasbourg, and a Future Emperor Makes His Appearance***

1836 had not been a good year for Louis Philippe. In January his Ministry was defeated over budgetary issues and forced to resign. Francois Guizot formed a new Ministry, however, by the end of February it too had unraveled. Louis Thiers formed a third Ministry in as many months and for a time conditions looked better.

Alas, it did not last part mid-year with military reverses in Algeria, they lead to Marshal Clauzel being relieved of command, and the worsening situation in Spain. The endemic revolts there had grown to a level of frequency and intensity that they acquired a name of their own: the Carlist Wars.

Even though Britain refused Philippe's offer for a joint intervention, they were already involved in enough wars, Thiers persisted in mounting one until his Ministry had to resign over this issue in early-September. And then, at the end of the month, when things seemingly could not get worse, events turned amusing.

Entering France at the border city of Strasbourg, Louis Napoleon Bonaparte met up with his few allies and appealed to the city's garrison to support him the same way the French Army had supported his uncle when he returned from exile on Elba. Amazingly enough, they did, but at the very next garrison Louis Napoleon was quickly arrested, along with most of his supporters. What he meant to be his entrance onto the world stage had turned into a pratfall.

Apart from a brief flare-up of tensions with Prussia, Louis Philippe had initially accused them of being behind this brazen fiasco, the King treated it as comic relief and was lenient. He gave the Bonaparte prince a less-than-princely sum of 15,000 francs per year provided he went into exile in America like his more common-sense uncle, Joseph.

Louis Napoleon did in fact sail to America. But he did not stay there long, and when he returned to France for another coup attempt it would be under even less opportune conditions and the penalty for his foolishness would be far more severe.

### ***1840: The Egyptian Crisis and the Germanies***

At first glance these two subjects should have nothing in common and many Germans of the period wished they did not, but great power machinations made it so. In particular, and yet again, it was France who took what should have been a diplomatic quarrel and turned it into a major war crisis.

One of the results of Napoleon's Egyptian Campaign at the beginning of the century was the separation of Egypt from the Ottoman Empire. Though it was restored, in a vicious war between 1805 and 1811, the man who did it was Mehemet Ali, an ambitious officer who admired Napoleon and molded his career after him.

Made Pasha of Cairo in 1805, he slaughtered the Mameluke ethnic minority, expanded Ottoman rule into the Sudan and started a massive westernization of the lands he controlled. He raised an Egyptian Army, the first since the days of the Pharaohs, and set his family up as the heredity rulers of a virtually independent Egypt.

By 1840 Mehemet Ali controlled Palestine and Syria as well as Egypt and Sudan, and had the backing of France, the principal customer of her cotton crop. But other members of the Quintuple Alliance supported at least a partly reconstructed Ottoman Empire and excluded France from the negotiations.

Louis Philippe responded to this affront by expanding his army and

navy budgets, initiating the construction of new Paris fortifications, the first since the days of the legendary French engineer-general Sébastien de Vauban, and incited a call to recover the Rhine provinces. In this he hoped to capitalize on the recent death of Friedrich Wilhelm III and the ascension to the throne of his son, Friedrich Wilhelm IV.

All Philippe ended up doing was rallying the German Confederation to Prussia's side and mobilizing most of the German armies. Austria mobilized its army and a joint British/Austrian fleet rapidly took control of the Mediterranean, assisting in Turkish operations to retake Syria, and eventually making a show of force off Alexandria which compelled Mehemet Ali to come to terms. And in the midst of all this, on August 6th to be exact, events once again turned amusing.

Reprising his role as Bonnie Prince Charlie, Louis Napoleon Bonaparte returned to France to claim the throne. This time he crossed the English Channel with a corps of around 50 true believers, and a pet eagle, to land at Vimereux near Boulogne. An apocryphal tale from this incident claims the eagle flew away the first chance it got. If this is true then it acted with some common sense as Louis and his "army" were quickly arrested as conspirators.

This time Louis Philippe took a dim view of the farce by giving him a life sentence and sending him to the prison/fortress at Ham in northeastern France. Bonaparte arrived at his new home at about the same time the coalition fleet bombarded the port city of Beirut and landed part of the Ottoman force which recaptured Syria within a month.

The crisis ended in early November with Mehemet Ali accepting Allied terms and the downfall of the most recent Thiers Ministry. However, the budget increases to the French Army and Navy remained and the fortress construction continued. This caused tensions between France and the Germanies to lessen only very gradually, which in turn served the cause of German unity by strengthening alliances between Prussia and the smaller German states.

The year ended on a grandly ironic note with Philippe welcoming another Bonaparte back to France – the original one. On November 30<sup>th</sup> a French ship docked in Cherbourg carrying the body of Napoleon Bonaparte. His journey from the remote island of St. Helena in the South Atlantic was almost over.

A few days later, on a cold and somber December morning, a magnificent funeral carriage drawn by a team of 16 horses returned Napoleon to Paris. Built to commemorate his victories, but not finished until long after his death, the procession took Napoleon for the first and last time under the completed Arc de Triomphe.

As it did so, the sun broke through the grey mists. While it gave little warmth it was brilliant, it illuminated everything. Just like the sun at Austerlitz, exactly 35 years earlier, on the day of his greatest victory. The cries of “Vive l’Empereur!” filled the streets and carried the procession to the Hôtel des Invalides, where a new tomb had been built under the dome of its chapel for Napoleon.

There he was laid to rest, back in the city he so loved, but if Louis Philippe thought he was burying Bonapartism along with the first Bonaparte he was sadly mistaken. Not even the embarrassing fiasco of Louis Napoleon’s second coup attempt could blunt the growing cult of personality around the late-emperor.

Whether it was the poetry of Alphonse de Lamartine, whose political actions a decade later would be so important to the next Napoleonic empire, or the songs about the “Little Corporal” by Pierre Jean de Béranger, or the early works of Victor Hugo, the history of Europe’s then most-notorious dictator was being transmuted into the romanticized legend of a Republican hero.

Even the long-suppressed paintings of Napoleon’s court painter Jacques Louis David were again on public display. Especially his iconographic masterpiece *Le Premier Consul Franchissant le Mont Saint-Bernard*, loosely translated as *Napoleon at Saint-Bernard’s Pass*, was accepted as accurate when in reality Bonaparte climbed the pass on a mule and not a white charger with flowing mane and tail.

In the Germanies this burnishing of the Napoleonic legend was treated with rather less apprehension than the sustained, post-crisis, increases in France’s military budgets and the continued construction of new Paris defences. They did more than give the Prussian Military Intelligence Service something to investigate. They served as a continual impetus to greater and greater military cooperation inside the German Confederation.

Already, three times since the end of Napoleon’s Wars, French revolutions and political crises had threatened the Confederation’s states with insurrection and war. Nor would they be the last, for the most dangerous was to come.

And yet, through it all the German philosophers and poets continued to idealize the future united German state without giving much thought of the mechanisms that would form or forge it. However, one of the lesser lights did at least provide a symbolic contribution to a united Germany, and he would live to see it put into action.

August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben was, by 1841, a professor of German language and literature at the University of Breslau in Prussia. In this year he would publish a book, *Unpolitische Gedichte*, that was

critical of the Prussian government and would lead to his removal. But on September 1<sup>st</sup> the martyr would publish a poem meant as a paeon to the mythical united Germany. It's title: "Deutschland, Deutschland, über alles"... "Germany, Germany, above all."

The mythical state just got its national anthem.