

INTRODUCTION



Welcome to the 2011 Annual for *Against the Odds Magazine*. This issue we look at the Waterloo campaign from a broad view. You are not just commanding a single army, but you are running an entire country! Can you manage France better than Napoleon, or fail to be “humbugged” by the Corsican Ogre as the Allies. Military matters, economics and politics mix in this fascinating study by noted designer and author John Prados. Thanks for making this Annual part of your wargaming experience and I hope it leads you to either extend your subscription or start your march to adventure with one of the top wargaming magazines in the world.

Andy
Andy Nunez
Editor

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| BEYOND WATERLOO: Napoleon's Last Gamble..... | 1 |
| Allied Powers Against France..... | 3 |
| Massing the Armies..... | 5 |
| Calling the Nation to Arms..... | 8 |
| The Carapace of France..... | 11 |
| The Emperor Maneuvers..... | 13 |
| Brief Overview of the Battle of Waterloo..... | 15 |
| BEYOND WATERLOO - Rules of Play | |
| The Last Days of the War..... | 22 |
| Bibliography..... | 24 |
| Appendix: Imponderables of Waterloo..... | 26 |

by John Prados

| | |
|---|-----------|
| LOST OPPORTUNITIES: McClellan, The Young Napoleon..... | 31 |
|---|-----------|

by Michael A. Rinella

| | |
|--|-----------|
| THE BOLDEST OF MISSIONS: Count Felix von Luckner..... | 37 |
|--|-----------|

by Blaine L. Pardoe

Cover Artwork: "The Battle of Waterloo" by Ernest Crofts (late 19th century)

BEYOND WATERLOO

Napoleon's Last Gamble

by John Prados

with maps by Terry Leeds

In exile on the island of Elba for nearly a year, fed up with his shrunken world, Napoleon I, former Emperor of the French, chose his moment well. In Paris, the Bourbon king, Louis XVIII, restored after Napoleon Bonaparte's fall, had blundered so much and blustered so long that by 1815 Frenchmen had begun to remember the Emperor fondly. Among the king's missteps—not calculated to induce the former ruler to rest quiescent—after his abdication Louis XVIII refused to part with the francs stipulated for support of Napoleon's family or his small island state. A restive Bonaparte and an unpopular monarchy spelled opportunity. In Vienna, the potentates of the Allied Powers who had defeated the Emperor after years of war so engrossed themselves re-dividing Europe that they threatened to fight each other. Some Allied diplomats, anxious to spirit Napoleon away from Europe, advocated moving him to the far distant island of St. Helena, word of which is said to have reached the Frenchman. That signaled threat. Late in February 1815 Napoleon decided to make his move.



"Napoleon Leaving the Isle of Elba" by Joseph Beaume

It was in the dead of night on a quiet Sunday, the 26th, when Napoleon embarked his tiny army of a thousand or so aboard the brig *Inconstant* and some other vessels to sail for the mainland. Colonel Sir Neil Campbell, the British overseer on Elba, was on a trip to Leghorn and missed this action, even though Napoleon's ships were still visible from the island at dawn. When Campbell returned he found the eagle flown. The novelist A. P. Herbert concocts a nice little scene in which Napoleon's sister Pauline entices the British officer to dally for a kiss before leaving to pursue, though there are other versions of this critical failure, including one where Campbell's warship, the Royal Navy frigate *Partridge*, was delayed by an exchange of signals with a Bourbon

warship that had spotted the *Inconstant*. Napoleon effected his escape, landing near Cannes on March 1. Before the morning, his small force was on the road for Paris. At the first opportunity the aspiring emperor addressed Frenchmen and women. "Citizens! ...Your hopes will be fulfilled," Napoleon trumpeted. "The nation's cause will triumph once more...I live only for the honor and the happiness of France...Today equality among all classes, and the rights you enjoyed for twenty-five years and that our fathers so longed for, become once more a part of your existence."

Meanwhile, Colonel Campbell made his way to Genoa and warned British and Austrian authorities. A dispatch from the Austrian consul arrived at Vienna on March 7. Prince Klemens Lothar von Metternich, the Austrian foreign minister, would remember that remarkable day vividly. He had returned late the previous evening after another interminable session of the Congress of Vienna and left instructions not to be disturbed. The urgent message was brought to him anyway. Metternich, after futile tossing and turning in bed, read it. Inside a half hour he was closeted with Austrian Emperor Francis at the Hofburg palace. "Napoleon seems to want to try his luck at a new adventure," the latter remarked, "That is his business." By 10 AM Metternich had seen Russian Czar Alexander and Prussian King Frederick William. The Austrian minister saw an effective declaration of war take place within the space of two hours. Not long after, a dispatch arrived for British plenipotentiary Lord Wellington, furnishing new details of Napoleon's escape, though none of his destination.

The Allied Powers were willing to fight before they knew very much at all. Lacking information, however, they proceeded with business as usual, sessions of the Congress of Vienna as well as the night's scheduled entertainment, the pantomime *Le Caliphe de Baghdad*, featuring Countess Dorothee Périgord, niece of the French foreign minister, whom some believed sleeping with him. Others took lightly the news of Napoleon's return, laying bets at 10-1 odds that within a fortnight Bonaparte would be dead. But more serious fears took hold. The Allied Powers soon declared Napoleon an outlaw for leaving Elba, and on March 13 they signed a formal international declaration to that effect.

Paris took center stage, however. After all, unless Napoleon could re-establish himself at the head of France, all of this would go away. King Louis XVIII discovered he had a problem due to a sealed message brought by Baron de Vitrolles on March 5. News of Napoleon's landing reached the French capital two days later, the same time as Vienna. Louis XVIII resisted



A Journal of History and Simulation
Against the Odds Annual 2011
published December 2011

EDITOR

Andy Nunez

PUBLISHER & ADMINISTRATIVE

C. Rawling

LAYOUT

Mark Mahaffey

PROOFREADING

Jack Beckman

GAME ART

Mark Mahaffey
Charles Kibler

PRINTING COORDINATION

Phoenix Printers

DIE-CUTTING

Sure Fold Company Inc.
Philadelphia PA

AGAINST THE ODDS MAGAZINE

is copyright © 2011 by LPS, Inc.

All rights reserved.

Printed in the USA.

