ENGLISH VIEWS OF NAPOLEON'S HUNDRED DAYS, 1815-1914

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PREFACE

The career of Napoleon Bonaparte has been the center of considerable controversy. This conflict of opinions becomes increasingly evident when one surveys the various accounts of his life. What is the value of such a study? The worth lies in bringing one to the realization that each generation does, to a large degree, write its own history and to the historian in particular, the awareness that he must continually strive to avoid the pitfalls into which past historians have fallen. It is the goal of this paper to show that writers are often influenced by contemporary affairs in making their decisions but that by adhering to certain methods they can attain a greater measure of objectivity.

The aspect of Napoleon's career that has been studied in the preparation of this paper is the Hundred Days, the period between March 20, 1815, and June 29, 1815. Napoleon had returned from Elba, set himself again on the throne of France and finally met the combined forces of the allies and suffered defeat at the Battle of Waterloo. The Hundred Days was selected because it is an area in which writers have been in considerable disagreement and illustrates well various authors' opinions of Napoleon. This paper will be concerned with the views of English historians of Napoleon's Hundred Days between, and including, the years 1815 to 1914.

There are numerous aspects of the Hundred Days that are subject to considerable debate. The chief areas of controversy center around Napoleon's return to France; his conduct as a constitutional monarch and the Campaign of 1815.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

A PERIOD OF HOSTILITY, 1815-1830

In order to understand English views of Napoleon's Hundred Days it is necessary to outline the event of this episode and those of the preceeding year. In 1814 the allied armies had invaded France and on April 11, Napoleon had abdicated. He had not been defeated, however, and was able, by the treaty of Fountainbleau, to make arrangements for himself and his family. Napoleon was to receive a pension from the government of France, the Island of Elba and retain the title of emperor; pensions were provided for members of his family.

Napoleon, arriving in Elba, set about playing the role of emperor in his small kingdom and announced himself as politically dead. In fact, however, he observed closely the events in France and at the Congress of Vienna. The restoration of the Bourbons was causing widespread disaffection and Napoleon resolved a return to France. The Bourbons furnished him an excuse by failing to pay his pension.

On February 27, 1815, Napoleon and his small army set sail for France. On March 1, they landed at Cannes in Southern France and began to advance toward Paris; they met no opposition for the troops sent by Louis XVIII to capture

Napoleon joined their old emperor. The towns, the peasants, the majority of the people along his route warmly received him. In each place--Grosse, Gap, Grenoble, Lyons, Fountainbleau and finally Paris--the story was the same. Louis XVIII was forced to flee to Belgium and on March 20, Napoleon was back in the Tuileries.

Upon landing in France Napoleon made liberal promises to the people. He acknowledged his past wrongs and guaranteed peace and a constitution. This last obligation he immediately set about to fulfill and appointed several distinguished personalities to accomplish this task. Since these figures became embroiled in debate Napoleon drew up an Acte Additional to the Constitution of the Empire and submitted it to the population. This act was accepted by a large majority but many, especially the republicans, were hardly satisfied with the new constitution and its author.

In the meantime the Congress of Vienna had declared Napoleon an outlaw and stated its determination to drive him from the throne. The powers maintained that they did not attack the French people; they were fighting Napoleon.

Napoleon began preparations for war. The army was strengthened, arms production increased, and by June he had a large, well-trained force ready for the field. He then advanced to meet Blücher and Wellington in Belgium. His plan was to drive between the two armies and rout them separately. On June 16, he met Blücher at Ligny and defeated him. Blücher fell back and Napoleon dispatched Grouchy with 30,000 troops to prevent Blücher's union with Wellington. On

the same day Ney had met Wellington but had failed to destroy him. Wellington, however, was forced to withdraw to Mont. St. Jean. Napoleon's army followed and on June 18, 1815, the two forces met in combat. Grouchy was not able to detain Blücher and a force under Bülow advanced toward the scene of the battle. Late that afternoon Bülow attacked Napoleon's right flank. This was the decisive blow and thus was Napoleon defeated at Waterloo.

Napoleon returned to Paris and found the city in ferment and the assemblies clamoring for his dismissal. He submitted and on June 22, 1815, abdicated.[1]

FACTORS INFLUENCING NAPOLEONIC LITERATURE

English literature on Napoleon's Hundred Days between the years 1815-1830 proves to be quite hostile to his adventure. English writers of this era do not concentrate on the Hundred Days, as such, and most of the accounts are included in biographies of Napoleon.

English historians lagged--and were to continue to do so for a long while--behind their fellow historians on the continent. They were not concerned with any philosophy of history--at least this was not evident in the writings concerning the Hundred Days. Their judgements were colored by

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[1]Good accounts of the Hundred Days are found in the following: Louis Adolphe Thiers, History of the Consulate and The Empire of France Under Napoleon, Vol. XI. (Philadelphia, 1894); J. M. Thompson, Napoleon Bonaparte, (New York, 1952); F. M. Kircheisen, Napoleon (New York, 1932); T. A. Dodge, Great Captains: Napoleon (New York, 1907).

their prejudices and the only rules regulating these conclusions were their biases. Anything that was contrary to the interest of the English aristocracy was subject to severe criticism. There was no pretence to scientific objectivity and often political affiliations played a part in these authors' decisions. The Tory writers pictured Napoleon as a destroyer of liberties and England --the Tories--as restorer of peace. George Brandes sums the situation up very well when he asserts that:

> The political background of the intellectual life of this period is . . . undoubtedly a dark one--- dark with the terror produced in the middle classes by the excesses of the liberty movement in France.[2]

The authors with which we are concerned serve as excellent illustrations of this situation. They were conservatives and sought to exalt the position of the Tory party as savior of the world.

Helen Maria Williams was born in London in 1762, the daughter of an army officer. She spent most of her life in France, however, and was in that country during the entire period of the Revolution and in 1815 she wrote one of the earliest accounts of the Hundred Days. She had at first felt sympathy for the Revolution but had recanted when it became vicious and had welcomed Napoleon's ascent because she felt he would stop the bloodshed. This hope, however, had been quickly smothered, for instead of stopping the

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[2]George Brandes, Main Currents in Nineteenth Century Literature tr. by Diana White and Mary Morison (London, 1901-1905), IV., p. 30.

slaughter he had merely channelled it into another course.[3]

Miss Williams is extremely important to this period for later accounts follow closely her presentation of the Hundred Days. As one biographer notes,

> The honesty with which she wrote carried conviction to many of her readers; and there can be little doubt that her works were sources of many erroneous opinions as to facts, which have been largely accepted as matters of history, instead of--as they really were, in their origin--the wilful misrepresentation of interest parties.[4]

John Gibson Lockhart is important in that he represents a later writer of Napoleon's Hundred Days--1829--who reflects the pattern set by Miss Williams. He was born in 1794, the son of Reverend John Lockhart. He proved to be a brilliant student and became a distinguished member of the student body at both Oxford and Edinburgh. Lockhart was an aggressive Tory pamphleteer and soon gained recognition as a writer which won for him the editorship of the Quarterly Review. His most famous work is the biography of his father-in-law, Sir Walter Scott.[5]

The Tory writers take the position that Napoleon's return was a well planned conspiracy. This position can

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[3]John K. Laughton, "Helen Maria Williams", The Dictionary of National Biography, ed. Sir Leslie Stephen and Sir Sidney Lee (London, 1917), XXI, p. 404.

[4]Ibid., p. 404.

[5]Leslie Stephens, "John Gibson Lockhart", The Dictionary of National Biography, XII, pp. 47-48.

be understood if we keep in mind that they were attempting to justify the policy of the British during the Hundred Days. If Napoleon had returned against the will of the French people and as their oppressor then the allies were right in crushing him. It is with this theme that these authors are occupied.

TORY VIEWS OF NAPOLEON'S HUNDRED DAYS

The return of Napoleon to France was viewed with hostility by the Tory writers and of these Helen Maria Williams is the most critical; for her it represented a well-planned conspiracy. She felt that it was inconceivable that Bonaparte would throw himself into France with only a handful of followers; after all, it had not been a year since he had to disguise himself in order to escape from the country. She held that this revealed his cowardice and that he would not have ventured a return unless he had been assured French support: It was too much of a coincidence that all of the troops happened to be located in places other than the route that Napoleon was to travel; it was also strange that the fleet steered clear of the waters between Elba and Provence. The return, she asserts, was too well carried out to attribute to providence.[6]

In discussing the sources of Napoleon's support Miss

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[6]Helen Maria Williams, A Narrative of the Events Which Have Taken Place in France From the Landing of Napoleon on The 1st of March, 1815, Till the Restoration of Louis XVIII With an Account of the Present State of Society and Public Opinions (London, 1815), pp. 28-30.

Williams contends that it lay primarily in the army. The Emperor and the eagles were the symbols of their well being and they felt that they themselves shared a part of his military glory. They remembered the pleasures that had awaited them after a battle; the sacking of towns, the feast offered them by the people of conquered areas and they also recalled the favor and prestige they enjoyed at home. All of these things, she maintains, the officers identified with Napoleon and this "blood-thirsty" element sought to restore him to the throne. With every mile of his advance his army "snow balled". He met no opposition for the way was well paved for his advance.[7]

Miss Willims asserts that there is other evidences to support her theory of a widespread conspiracy: the defection of Ney and an incident at Cannes, the point of landing. The members of the administration were deeply in involved in the plans for Napoleon's return. At Cannes the National Guard had offered to take Napoleon into custody but the prefect had refused their services and had maintained that this could not be done for he had not received orders to that effect.[8] Miss Williams also states that Ney admitted that he intended to join the forces of the Emperor even while he was telling Louis XVIII that he would ". . . bring Napoleon back in an iron cage."[9] This she classifies as "black perfidy"

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[7] Ibid., pp. 33-35.

[8] Ibid., p. 37.

[9] Ibid., p. 45.

and asserts that ". . . his country will have slight compensation for this terrible act, even knowing that he is condemned to be marked in history."[10]

There was nothing miraculous in Napoleon's journey, maintains Miss Williams, it required no display of courage. The people who would have opposed him were unarmed, defenseless and those who could have stopped him were ready to receive him with open arms. Here Miss Williams, like other writers of this period, feels it is her duty to offer a warning to posterity against the "military spirit" which can provide for the conquest of one's own country. The thing called glory breeds contempt for the rights of one's own countrymen as in the case of the French army for it conquered its homeland.[11]

Miss Williams declares that the people had no choice but to submit to the usurper; they were in no position to offer active resistance. The solons of Paris were, however, soon busy and they bitterly criticized the new government.[12] This minimum of opposition did not give a true picture of the sentiments of the people; they much preferred the allies to Napoleon for the allies had set a precedent for kindness in their conquest of France in 1815. They had won the hearts of the French nation. It was not to be supposed that the people preferred the harsh rule of Napoleon to freedom under

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[10] Ibid., p. 45.

[11] Ibid., pp. 46-47.

[12] Ibid., p. 64.

the Bourbons.[13]

Sir Walter Scott, a leading literary figure in early nineteenth century England, was also interested in Napoleon's career and maintains that Paris was the center of a conspiracy for the return of Bonaparte but that its ramifications extended throughout France. The republicans and the Bonapartists had joined together to bring about the fall of the Bourbons. First, they had reduced the army to a point that was dangerously low and which was also to stir up discontent among those officers and men that were dismissed. Another device used by these plotters was the practice of sending men to the land sales and having them spread the rumors that it was not safe to buy or to own national land.[14]

Scott asserts that the plot against Louis XVIII consisted of two enterprises. The first was to be achieved by the landing of Napoleon in France when the good will of the soldiers and the fear and suspicions spread widely against the Bourbons were to insure him of a good reception. The second branch of the conspiracy involved a march on Paris by the army of the Northeast and capture the royal family so as to give the new government a hostage. Fortunately, however, the second part was soon uncovered and thus failed to materialize.[15]

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[13] Ibid., pp. 62-63.

[14] Sir Walter Scott, The Life of Napoleon Buonaparte, Emperor of the French With a Preliminary View of the French Revolution (London, 1828), III, pp. 194-199.

[15] Ibid., p. 201.

Napoleon's reception, maintains Scott, was quite exuberant but this was only to be expected for the approach to Paris was through territory that had always been favorable to Napoleon. Then too, this was the area in which the Campaign of 1814 had been fought and Bonaparte had promised state aid to repair the damage. It was, moreover, noticeable that only the peasants and the rabble cheered him. The merchants and upper classes merely stood by without expressing their sentiments; they were stunned.[16]

John Lockhart also views the Hundred Days as a well-planned conspiracy and maintains that plans for a return to France were being made soon after Napoleon's arrival at Elba. Just how many were actively engaged in this plot and their indentity remains a secret but that they were numerous there can be little doubt. In France itself the chiefs of police and of the post office had been replaced but subordinate officials were essentially unchanged and there is considerable proof that they were actively employed in the conspiracy. These minor officials were not, however, the only governmental figures involved in the plot: Marshall Soult, the Bourbon Commander-in-Chief of the Army, and many other high army officers were also concerned. Soult's aid was of particular importance for he stationed his troops in a manner contrary to the interest of his royal master and in a fashion which proved that he anticipated

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[16] Ibid., pp. 202-203.

Napoleon's return.[17]

Napoleon, according to Lockhart, was not idle during his stay at Elba and made skillful use of his resources. In the autumn he granted leaves to about two hundred of his guardsmen. These men scattered over France singing praises of the Emperor and while they were probably not aware of the mission that they were performing, nevertheless, they were doing their Emperor a most valuable service. They were, asserts Lockhart, preparing the minds of Frenchmen for the return of Napoleon. The rumor spread that he would return in the spring of the coming year, and ". . . he was toasted among the soldiery, and elsewhere also, under the soubriquet of Corporal Violet."[18]

On March 1, 1815, Napoleon again landed on French soil and then proceeded on his way to Paris. Lockhart, like Scott, asserts that the line of advance was through territory that had always been quite favorable to Napoleon but even then the enthusiasm was not overwhelming. The army was the chief advocate of the restoration of the Empire; Napoleon met force after force and each in turn wavered, then deserted the Bourbons to support their Emperor. The way had been prepared for him by his supporters. In Paris they propagandized the populace with ideas that Napoleon had changed; he had learned his lesson and wanted to return, not

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[17] J. G. Lockhart, Esq. The History of Napoleon Bonaparte (New York, 1900), II, p. 258.

[18] Ibid., p. 258.

as a despot, but as first citizen of the nation. His talents would now be devoted to the true welfare of the people of France. Rumors were also spread that Austria, England and Russia knew of his return and fully approved; they would not hazard another war for the benefit of the Bourbons.[19] In spite of all these efforts, Lockhart maintains that the people were not really aroused and quotes Napoleon himself as explaining the success of his return thus: ". . . it is disinterested people who have brought me back to my capital. It is the subaltern and the soldiers that have done it all. I owe everything to the people and to the army."[20]

Lockhart sees nothing unusual in Napoleon's journey from the sea to Paris. It was not a remarkable adventure but another part of the well planned conspiracy. Reconquest of France without firing a shot was not an august accomplishment for, after all, the army desired Napoleon's return and was itself deeply involved in the plans. Lockhart makes these statements, as did his contemporaries, without any evidence to support his thesis. This is a practice that is too often prevalent in their writings concerning the Hundred Days.

The Tory writers were concerned to a considerable degree with Napoleon's motives and purposes. Miss Williams was certain that the populace was not fooled by Napoleon's

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[19] Ibid., pp. 265-266.

[20] Ibid., p. 267.

". . . smiling ways and show of penitence."[21] They knew that the constitution makers were wasting their time and that as soon as Bonaparte had gathered the reigns of state into his hands and his power was firmly secure, he would abolish the constitution and send his republican ministers off to ". . . work his Elban iron mines. . . ."[22] Napoleon, she held, did not disappoint this judgement; he was not long in throwing off the veil of the democrat and assuming the robes of the emperor. He refused to debate with the framers of the constitution and at length retired to the Elysee, surrounded by his trusted army, and drew up an Acte Additional to the constitution.[23]

Miss Williams also asserts that in promugulating his Acte Additional Napoleon again exhibited his despotic nature. An election was held but in effect it was nothing more than an imperial mandate. Bonaparte was now exposed and could no longer give the appearance of a democrat. The people as a whole were greatly disheartened and she declares that all were commonly agreed that Bonaparte was the most daring of impostors. He not only made claims for his democratic intentions but also maintained that he had made an agreement with the allies and he asserted that he had returned with their approval and that he was to receive his wife and son. He went even further and advanced the argument

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[21] Ibid., p. 89.

[22] Williams, p. 89.

[23] Ibid., pp. 109-110.

that if he had deceived the people of France by minimizing the chances of a renewal of the wars that it was only because he himself had been betrayed by the allies; yet after such acts of irresponsibility, after such despotism, he expected the people of France to fall down and worship him and his constitution.[24]

Helen Williams declares that Napoleon's Elban experience had not really changed him but that he was still the desport, the coward, he had always been. The Hundred Days was merely a continuation of his first reign. If, she maintains, he had really had the interest of France at heart then he could have performed, perhaps, the most unselfish act ever committed by a monarch; he could have abdicated. This proposition was whispered to him on the Field of May, a public gathering held to approve the Acte Additional. His country, she argued, would certainly, in the end, be defeated. He might win a few battles but his destiny was not to retain the throne of France. Surely a person with Napoleon's foresight could not fail to see this. He could have left the country admist the cheers of his countrymen and ". . . this last scene of his public existence would have shone like a track of unsullied light, along a dark and stormy horizon."[25] But, proclaims Miss Williams, Napoleon did not have the qualities necessary to perform such a noble act. He had only his selfish interest at

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[24] Ibid., pp. 120-122.

[25] Ibid., p. 165.

heart and so failed to take advantage of this opportunity.[26]

Scott is not so harsh in his judgement of Napoleon on matters concerning his reign during the Hundred Days. Scott doubted Napoleon's sincerity in stating his intentions to reign as a monarch.[27] Bonaparte soon revealed his real plans for after he had decreed freedom of the press he suppressed a number of papers that dared attack him. The matter of a constitution would also indicate that he had changed little for he merely decreed an Acte Additional. He disregarded the avowed purpose of the meeting of the Field of May to approve the new constitution and, too, the people did not share in its elaboration.[28]

Lockhart likewise attempts to prove that Napoleon was motivated by a lust of power and that his actions did not take the welfare of France into consideration but only his own well-being. In decrees issued soon after his landing on French soil he had declared that a constitution would be drawn up and that he would obey it yet he soon proclaimed an Acte Additional.[29] Lockhart also argues that Napoleon had no real justification, except to soothe his pride, for the return and, one by one, attacks Napoleon's reasons for

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[26]Ibid., pp. 164-165.

[27]Scott feels that most of Napoleon's acts during this period were to conciliate the English; but quickly adds that the British were not so easily duped.

[28]Scott, pp. 218-226.

[29]Lockhart, pp. 279-280.

the breaching of the treaty of Fountainbleau. Napoleon, he asserts, attempted to divert disaster by defending his actions and in a letter to the Congress of Vienna he pointed out that his wife and child had been detained by the court of Austria. With this affair, Lockhart says, the king of Austria could have nothing to do. Secondly, Napoleon argued, his pension had not been paid; a legitimate reason, but had he complained to the Congress of Vienna there would have been a redress.[30] Thirdly, Napoleon declared that he had been recalled by the voice of the French nation. To this Lockhart replies that it was not the French people that recalled him but that his successful return was ". . . in consequence of the treason of the army, and the intrigues of a faction, in contrast to the wishes of the nation as a whole."[31]

Lockhart maintains that Napoleon was resorting to all sorts of devices to satisfy the people of France and to divert their eyes from the threat of war. He granted freedom to the press and abolished Negro slavery and the slave trade. Lockhart feels that the latter measure, especially, was merely a means of deception:

> Who could seriously believe that at that moment of tumult, ere France was even in semblence entirely his, and while all Europe was arming against him, he had leisure for the affairs of Negroes?

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[30] Ibid., p. 258: This, Lockhart admitted, was undoubtedly known to the Congress. Here he relates that : "Sir Neil Campbell early suspected that some evil was hatching and repeatedly remarked on the absurdity of withholding Napoleon's pension, thereby tempting him, as it were, to violence."

[31] Ibid., pp. 272-273.

The people as a whole, he maintains, quickly saw through such measures and instead of fixing their eyes on ". . . the distant horizon watched even more closely the foreground."[32]

Lockhart has little to say of the military campaign of 1815, but does feel that Napoleon had no other alternative but to advance to meet the enemy. The affairs in France were such that he could not afford to conduct another defensive battle for ". . . the fatal example of 1814 was too near. . . ."[33] Only by a brilliant campaign, as of old, could he hope to retain his position and consolidate his power. He must advance to meet Wellington and Blücher in Belgium.[34]

Most of Lockhart's analysis of the battles is devoted to praise of the allied commanders; Wellington's position at Waterloo, the target of considerable criticism, he feels was excellent.[35] To the British as a whole he offers this message:

> It is to be hoped that the British nation will continue to see, and to reverence, in the contest and in its results, the immeasurable advantages which the sober strength of a free, but fixed constitution possesses over the mad energies of anarchy on the one hand, and on the other, over all that despotic selfishness can effect, even under the guidance of the most consummate genius.[36]

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[32] Ibid., p. 278.

[33] Ibid., p. 282.

[34] Ibid., p. 282.

[35] Ibid., p. 289.

[36] Ibid., p. 330.

Miss Williams is concerned with the Battle of Waterloo only as it reveals the true nature of Bonaparte. Napoleon, she asserts, should have perished on that battlefield but he was too much of a coward to die such an honorable death.[37] Instead, he returned, or rather fled, to Paris and started plans to dissolve the Assembly. Luckily Lafayette discovered the plot and warned the members of the Chambers. They resisted Napoleon, foiled his plans and forced him to abdicate for a second time thus ridding of the ". . . parasite who had long sucked the blood of her youth and suppressed the freedom of her people."[38]

FACTORS CONCERNING NAPOLEONIC LITERATURE DURING THIS PERIOD

The authors concerned with Napoleon's Hundred Days during this period were not professional historians but were individuals pursuing a literary career. Miss Williams began writing quite early when at the age of twenty her Edwin and Eltruda, a legendary tale, was published. Lockhart was editor of the Quarterly Review and Sir Walter Scott was, of course, one of the most widely known novelists of his day. History in England was considered for a long period of time as a branch of the belle-letters. It was the occupation of the gentlemen of leisure, dignified statesmen, the clergy or the literary worker. The universities continued

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[37] Williams, p. 180.

[38] Ibid., pp. 189-190.

to cultivate the classics while instruction in history was almost nonexistent.[39]

Certain common tendencies may be ascertained in these early accounts of Napoleon's Hundred Days. The Napoleonic wars had stirred up a feeling of national awareness and this is evident in the literature concerning Napoleon's return. Lockhart, for example, is noticeably outspoken in his acclaim of the perfection and genius of British institutions. He states that Napoleon's Acte Additional contained all the elements necessary for a good and wise government: it provided for a constitutional monarchy, a hereditary peerage, and in general all the qualities of the British government.[40] This feeling of Anglo-Saxon superiority is also expounded by Captain Robert Batty, a professional soldier who wrote a short account of the Campaign of 1815. He feels that only the British could have withstood the terrific onslaught at Waterloo. No other troops, not even the French, possessed the cool courage and steady endurance of the English soldiers.[41]

There was also the tendency to exalt the general role of the English in the Napoleonic wars. They were solely responsible for the defeat of Napoleon and England was the restorer

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[39]J. W. Thompson, A History of Historical Writing (New York, 1942), II, p. 280.

[40]Lockhart, pp. 280-281.

[41]Robert Batty, A Sketch of the Late Campaign in The Netherlands, (London, 1815), p. 23.

of peace, the liberator of conquered nations. The Prussians had helped at Waterloo but had only appeared when the French were on the brink of destruction.[42]

The social unrest of the period immediately following the peace settlement in 1815 no doubt contributed to the hostility to Napoleon. The words Napoleon, Jacobin, and republican were synomous; they all stood for radicals who would do away with the existing order of things but these English writers being, for the most part, members of the upper and middle classes were shocked by this attack and desired to preserve the status quo.[43]

The extreme prejudice towards Napoleon was only the natural result of the long period of conflict. There had been many in England who had at first welcomed the French Revolution but as anarchy developed they had come to despise the upheaval. When Napoleon came upon the scene they were ready to embrace him but he appeared to them to be lustful for power and they turned from him too. English sons had been lost fighting him and many of the living had been victims of his acts in one way or another. This situation had been intensified by the accounts in the newspapers which denounced him as a tyrant and by the caricaturists who pictured him as a hideous animal. England had learned to hate him and now that he was no longer a threat English

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[42] John Booth, The Battle of Waterloo (London, 1816), p. 43.

[43] J. W. Thompson, II, p. 281.

writers could not easily for get the fear to which they had been subjected.

It is for these reasons that the English writers between 1815 and 1830 were so bitter towards Napoleon's Hundred Days. This hostility was accentuated by events in England during the same period and there was the ever present fear in the minds of the English ruling class that a revolution similar to that of 1789 would occur in Britain and cost them their positions. The English riots in the years immediately after 1815 raised the specter of the storming of the Bastille and Napoleon was the heir of '89.

CHAPTER II

THE NAPOLEONIC LEGEND, 1827-1840

English historiography in the years between 1827 and 1840 retained the characteristics of the preceeding period but a most striking development rears its head in the reaction against the earlier "Tory" literature on Napoleon. This "revolt" was closely connected with the politics of the day and charges are now definitely made that opponents' accounts are mere fabrications with the purpose of glorifying or slandering parties. The conflict is well illustrated by an article appearing in the Quarterly Review which quoted Hazlitt as asserting that ". . . a Tory is not a man, but a beast . . ." [1] and continuing his assult states that they are styed in prejudices and mistake truth and falsehood as something to buy and sell. The Tories trample on ". . . the plea of humanity and lives like a caterpillar on the decay of public good. . . ." Hazlitt derives particular delight in assulting the Duke of Wellington and proclaiming that he was ". . . glad the Duke is not an Englishman."[2]

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[1] "Hazlitt's Sketches of Public Characters", The Quarterly Review, XXII (1820), p. 161.

[2] Ibid., p. 162: Hazlitt's statement concerning the Duke of Wellington arises from the fact that he was born in Ireland.

This conflict is further illustrated by an article appearing in the Whig organ, The Edinburgh Review. In reviewing Contemporary History, a work by a prominent Tory politician Sir John Walsh, it maintains that he is not properly equipped to attempt the writing of such an account: ". . . the writer . . . has entered on a task for which he has no appropriate qualification; --not the judgement--not the fairness."[3] In this same article the Tories are accused of mal-administration. Walsh's charge that the Whigs are radicals brought the answer that ". . . a wise statesman, and a just historian, ought to see further into things than the Whipper-in for a party. . . ."[4]

The "Whig" writers, like their predecessors were literary people and not historians, express the liberal philosophy of the time by declaring that government has responsibility for the public good. They have lost much of their fear of the masses and assert that the Congress of Vienna--the British representatives, Tories--were not justified in declaring Napoleon an outlaw.

Romanticism is another noticeable element in the appraisals of Napoleon's Hundred Days during this period and the Whigs pictured Napoleon as returning admist the acclamation of the French people and as being sincere in his assertions that he intended to serve as a constitutional monarch; they

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[3] "Chapters of Contemporary History", The Edinburgh Review, LXIII. (1836), p. 246.

[4] Ibid., pp. 260-262.

practically ignored or rationalized certain of his actions that would indicate that he was not altruistic as they would have us believe. Emotions rule over reason in these authors' evaluations. This is especially evident in William H. Ireland's position concerning the Acte Additional when he asserts, in his biography of Napoleon, that it met with acclamation for people had faith in Napoleon and knew that he would not betray them, therefore, he was more ". . . honored and lauded . . ." than ever. His conduct during this period was admirable and he behaved in a manner to deserve the acclaim of the population since the constitution, by which Napoleon would abide, was one that expressed the wishes of the people.[5] This controversial position Ireland proclaims as fact, apparently needing no further confirmation.

In spite of their justifications of Napoleon these authors still display an intense British nationalism. They are convinced of the superiority of British institutions and are strong advocates of the doctrine of Anglo-Saxon superiority. This attitude is strikingly illustrated by George Bussey, a literary folklorist, when he asserts that the French troops at Waterloo were ". . . evidently no match in steady endurance, impertuable valor, and discipline . . ." to the English soldiers.[6] Bussey, of course, ignores the fact that the majority of Wellington's army was German.

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[5]William H. Ireland, The Life of Napoleon Bonaparte (London, 1828), IV, p. 279.

[6]George M. Bussey, History of Napoleon (London, 1840), p. 527.

Napoleon himself had a great deal to do with the shaping of the Napoleonic Legend. There can be little doubt that the Memorial, dictated by Napoleon on St. Helena, exerted considerable influence upon the writers of this era. The arguments they present are practically those of the Emperor. In fact, Napoleon himself hardly presents a more favorable account of the Hundred Days.

Among the outstanding authors of the period, William Hazlitt was the most prominent. Hazlitt was born April 10, 1778, at Maidstone. He was educated chiefly in his father's house and early letters indicate that he was a precocious child. The son of a Unitarian Minister who had studied under Adam Smith, he grew up in the sturdiest nonconformity and the ". . . passion for civil liberty was as much the substance of his nature as the celtic grace of his speech."[7] Hazlitt was especially noted as an essayist and as a literary critic. He was interested in philosophy, politics, and literature and produced works in each of these fields. He was a liberal, reflecting ideas in advance of his time and is reported to have been the most hated man in England.[8]

Another significant writer interpreting the Hundred Days was Richard Henry Horne. He was born in London on January 1,

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[7]Leslie Stephens, "William H. Hazlitt", Dictionary of National Biography XXV, p. 318.

[8]Ibid., pp. 317-323.

1803 and was educated at Sandhurst with ideas about entering the services of the East India Company. Receiving no appointment, however, this incurable romantic became a midshipman in the Mexican Navy and fought in the war against Spain. Horne was the author of a considerable number of books and poems but was also active in politics. In about 1841 he was employed by the government of England to report on children and young workers in mines and factories.[9]

WHIG VIEWS OF NAPOLEON

William Hazlitt repeats essentially the same ideas as his Tory predecessors but uses them to justify Napoleon's actions. He maintians that Napoleon's position at Elba was unhappy. He had trusted the allies to fulfill the provisions of the treaty of Fountainbleau but as adherence to these provisions were not respected, his circumstances grew steadily worse and he was in great danger of removal or assassination. The failure of the Bourbons to pay his pension was a source of great embarrassment to Napoleon and there was also the threat that he would be removed from Elba to St. Helena, an action that would was advocated by the Duke of Wellington. In view of these failures to fulfill the provisions of the treaty, Hazlitt maintians that Napoleon had good cause to return to France or indeed to take any other action that he

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[9]Emily Tennyson Beal, "Richard Henry Horne", The Dictionary of National Biography, XXVII, pp. 358-359: This emotional report was supposed to have inspired Horne's friend, Elizabeth Browning, to write "Cry of the Children".

desired: "He was free of this treaty which had been so openly flaunted by the Allied Powers."[10]

Hazlitt asserts that France was in a stupor; the country had to allow the Bourbons to rest ". . . like a toad or ugly nightmare on its breast stifling and sucking up the breath of independence."[11] Only a touch, however, was necessary to wake the nation from this trance and Bonaparte executed that touch. The return from Elba was a ". . . blow in the face of tyranny and hypocrisy, the noblest that was ever struck . . ."[12] and France was once more ready to take up the course of her deliverer. Hazlitt then denounced the Congress of Vienna as a group that ". . . bartered the independence of states and affected to dispose of human nature with an air of easy indifference."[13]

Hazlitt declares that Napoleon's return was acclaimed by practically the whole of France. To charges that only the army supported Napoleon, Hazlitt answers that these arguments are merely fabrications. For Napoleon had often travelled several hours ahead of the army, without any guard. An army, asserts Hazlitt, is not against a government unless this government has been imposed by foreigners by whom they

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[10] William Hazlitt, A History of Napoleon Bonaparte, (New York, 1907), IV, pp. 197-198.

[11] Ibid., p. 199.

[12] Ibid., p. 199.

[13] Ibid., p. 199: This attitude reflects the British reaction against interferring in the affairs of small liberal states and the end of the Quadruple Alliance.

have been "foiled"; and in this case the sentiments of the army and the people must be supposed to go hand in hand yet the Bourbons had been restored by the allies contrary to the desires of the French nation. Hazlitt dismisses the argument that the Bourbons were popular because they symbolized peoples wishes for peace. He asserts that ". . . if peace is to be purchased at that price it may always be obtained by setting your enemies on the throne, for they will hardly make war upon themselves."[14] Napoleon's return was, he maintains, not the product of a conspiracy but the reaction to the Bourbon restoration and misrule and the love of the people for their Emperor. Only Napoleon could have carried through such a venture; he alone had the confidence, the adoration and the respect of the people which would enable such a bold move to succeed.[15]

Richard Henry Horne was greatly influenced by Hazlitt and is given to quoting him frequently and at length. Refering to Napoleon's financial difficulties he notes that the Emperor became so embarrassed for money that he resorted to extreme measures to raise additional funds: He tried to impose a tax upon the islanders, he cut the allowances of his followers, reduced the wages of his miners, sold provisions laid up for the garrison and finally had to even sell a train of brass artillery to the Duke of Tuscany. In even stronger

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[14] Ibid., p. 199.

[15] Ibid., p. 199.

terms he thus points to the dishonorable failure of the French government to fulfill its commitments as justification for Napoleon's return to France.[16]

Horne maintains that other actions of the allies also gave Napoleon cause to leave Elba. There were several schemes, all known to the Allied Powers, designed to remove him permanently as a threat to Europe; one was to remove him to the island of St. Helena and another was to assassinate him. With each passing day the chances for the success of either scheme grew for Napoleon's financial difficulties would soon make it impossible for him to continue to maintain an army of sufficient strength to protect himself. Eventually he would have no protection at all, unless he attempted a return to France.[17]

For Horne the return was not the result of a conspiracy but its success was the product of France's love for Napoleon. He resolved to return to France without any pre-arrangements or overtures from political friends or conspirators in France. No preparations had been made for his landing or his journey to Paris but he found his subjects ready to clasp him to their breast. As he advanced the population flocked to him and offered to accompany him to Paris and help him regain his throne. Napoleon still felt anxious, however, for the sympathy of the people was not enough; he required the support

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[16]Richard H. Horne, The History of Napoleon, (London, 1840), II, pp. 351-355.

[17]Ibid., p. 351.

of the army. His fears proved groundless, the army loved him as did the people and Napoleon was able to march to Paris without firing a shot.[18]

At this point Horne charges that "Party writers" had a great deal to do with making Europe believe that Napoleon had regained power by ". . . brute force and his ascendancy over the minds of the soldiery."[19] These reports, he asserts, served the purpose of the time but history has another story to record: "He was not only the Emperor of the army but of the citizens, the people, the peasantry, the masses of men."[20]

That these Whig writers shared the same general pattern can be seen in the work of the most romantic of their number, George Bussey. He also attempts to defend Napoleon's return to France and states that the failure of the Bourbons to pay his pension provided obstacles that were insurmountable. His position grew intolerable for there were plans to transport him to England. These circumstances had greatly influenced him in deciding to risk his future in a return to his country.[21]

Bussey cannot believe that Napoleon's successful return was the result of a conspiracy, but does admit that there were extensive, undirected intrigues under way with the object of

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[18] Ibid., p. 362.

[19] Ibid., p. 362.

[20] Ibid., p. 362.

[21] Bussey, pp. 480-486.

preparing the public mind for ". . . the great explosion in favor of the Exile of Elba."[22] Although Napoleon had nothing to do with these activities his return was expected and he was everywhere toasted under the names ". . . Corporal Violet and Jean d l 'Epee. . . ."[23] A violet was worn as a symbol of fraternity by the commingled parties who, for patriotism, now agreed to put aside their differences. Such was the results of Bourbon misrule in 1814. "It would have been treason toward themselves", maintains Bussey, "for a people, who had witnessed the energy and partaken the glory of Napoleon's reign, to have submitted such degrading subjection."[24] There was, Bussey asserts, no other conspiracy for the restoration of the Emperor than that produced by ". . . disgust and despair on the one hand and of hope on the other. . . ."[25]

Everywhere, Bussey proclaims, Napoleon was hailed by the people of France: they welcomed their ". . . restored champion as one restored from the dead to save the nation from slavery. The nation expected him to raise it from despair and lead it to the ultimate of its hopes and wishes."[26]

The Whig writers also disagree with the Tories in analyzing Napoleon's political conduct during the Hundred Days.

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[22] Ibid., p. 487.

[23] Ibid., p. 487.

[24] Ibid., p. 487.

[25] Ibid., p. 488.

[26] Ibid., p. 296.

Hazlitt is fulsome in praises of Napoleon's efforts to rule France as a constitutional monarch but condemns the party leaders for their lack of cooperation. He asserts that ". . . if the return from Elba was the triumph of common sense and natural feeling, the whole of the Hundred Days afterwards may be described as the triumph of trifling and cross-purposes."[27] The leaders of the various factions realized that the coming struggle would decide whether governments were of divine or human origin but even so they refused to cooperate and defeat the enemy armies that were advancing on France. They were anxious to give their advice to Napoleon but would not compromise and this meant, in reality, that they would not make any forceful resistance to the allies.[28] Only Carnot possessed the intergity and energy to put aside personal views and strive for the common cause.[29] In spite of all these complications Napoleon ". . . submitted to the bit and stayed pretty well within the limits of the constitution."[30]

Horne agrees that Napoleon returned to France with the intention of reigning as a constitutional monarch. His language "breathed a spirit of liberty"[31] which everywhere

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[27]Hazlitt, p. 218.

[28]Ibid., pp. 218-219.

[29]Ibid., p. 227.

[30]Ibid., p. 225.

[31]Horne, p. 363.

inspired hopw and confidence. His first acts, he held, supported his words. He removed thr restrictions of the press and proceeded to appoint Carnot as Minister of the Interior and Benjamin Constant as Councillor of State;[32] appointments indicating that Napoleon was about to become a constitutional sovereign.[33] Horne felt that there is no reason to believe that Napoleon was insincere in this desire while there is evidence to suppose that he would have yielded to circumstances and governed according to the laws had not the allies forced him into war.[34] "It is quite unfair", Horne asserts, "to judge Napoleon by the faulty political measures which he pursued under his present situation, in all the din and hurry of preparing for a decisive struggle."[35] He wanted the cooperation of the legislature in preparing for war but could not wait for their discussion of the constitution; therefore, he took matters into his own hand, withdrew to the Elysee Palace and drew up the Acte Additional to the constitution of the Empire.[36]

Napoleon's actions at this junction, Horne observes, satisfied no party but its authorship was not its most objectionable feature. What contributed to the alienation of the

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[32]Carnot and Constant were two old republicans who had long opposed Napoleon.

[33]Ibid., p. 363.

[34]Ibid., p. 371.

[35]Ibid., p. 371.

[36]Ibid., p. 371.

republicans was the provision for a hereditary peerage. Of this Horne is most critical: ". . . to crown the wonderful effort of democracy, which had restored him to the throne, Napoleon would have imposed on France the most formidable of aristocracies, by creating a hereditary legislature."[37] Horne finds it hard to believe that Napoleon could have entertained such an idea; he knew that the French demanded equality above everything else and now he was making an accident of birth a route to political power! This feature of the Acte Additional, Horne maintains, had an adverse effect upon public opinion toward Napoleon. The author gives no definite reason for this action but takes great care to point out the resemblance of this document to the English constitution. He would have us believe that this is a move by Bonaparte to conciliate the English and to convince them of his good intentions for if he could win their favor other members of the alliance would hardly dare to attack him.[38]

Bussey continues the argument for Napoleon's unselfish purposes. He had given proof of his good intentions by decreeing freedom of the press, abolition of the slave trade and by promoting popular education throughout his dominions.[39] The people saw in these and earlier measures that Napoleon had truly changed; that his political views had been enlarged

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[37] Ibid., p. 372.

[38] Ibid., p. 372.

[39] Bussey, p. 514.

by adversity and that he was now looking for support from the masses and not the privileged orders. The favored groups had not hesitated to betray him in his moment of greatest need and, Bussey asserts, he had returned ". . . cured of his restless ambitions and resolved to make France the freest of the free. . . ."[40]

But, Bussey declares, Napoleon was not to succeed in his noble aspirations for he had made many enemies and they were determined to thwart him. His dismissal of the legislative body had never been forgotten and there were many, those whom the Emperor had in the past called "ideologists", who were determined to be avenged. These greedy men, Bussey holds, forgot that they were inexorably tied to Napoleon, that if his government should fall, their own plans would also fail. Nevertheless they opposed his programs, greatly hindered his preparation of a constitution and his attempts to arm the nation.[41]

With those who maintained that the constitution of Louis XVIII and Napoleon were practically the same Bussey violently disagrees. Louis XVIII, he argues, conferred on the people a certain amount of freedom as a royal favor but Napoleon acknowledged the right of the people to accept his Acte Additional or to demand a new contract. This right to accept or reject was most important for what Louis XIII had

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[40] Ibid., p. 503.

[41] Ibid., p. 514.

granted he could withdraw at his pleasure but Napoleon had signed a compact with the people and would be obliged to guarantee these rights to every citizen.[42]

The Whig writers were concerned with the effect of the approaching hostilities upon the popularity of Napoleon and Hazlitt asserts that this threat did not turn France against him. Despite the lack of cooperation by factional leaders the Emperor retained the devotion of the people: soldiers returned to the ranks of the army without coercion; arms manufacture was doubled; the Emperor was given large amounts of money by private citizens. After parades or other public gatherings he would often turn over to the treasurer as much as eighty or one hundred thousand francs handed to him by private citizens: "The good will of the people was his most valuable asset."[43]

Hazlitt maintains that the Campaign of 1815 was lost because the French marshals lacked the self-reliance and fortitude needed to meet the challenges they faced at Ligny and Waterloo. He is especially critical of Grouchy and states that Napoleon would have been victorious in the end if Grouchy had followed the orders of his superior. Hazlitt, who is said to have remained intoxicated for several days after hearing of Napoleon's defeat, describes it as ". . . the greatest and most fatal in its consequences that was ever fought in

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[42] Ibid., p. 518.

[43] Hazlitt, pp. 234-237.

the world."[44] He also states that the loss was not only a defeat of the French but of the common cause of mankind.[45]

Horne also defends Napoleon against the charge that his return had embroiled the French people in another war. In fact he presents the rather strained argument that Napoleon's course had actually prevented war since the proprietors of the national domain, forming four-fifths of the French land owners, would have been compelled to defend themselves against the nobles. Other groups would also have been forced to declare against their persecutors. Napoleon had returned to deliver France from that coming civil war and it was as a deliverer that he was received.[46]

Napoleon had, in fact, tremendous power at his disposal, Horne maintains, but ". . . the good-will of the people was his greatest resource."[47] This is evident in the high degree of confidence that the leader enjoyed among the large capitalists and, like Hazlitt, he notes the large amounts of money that he was given at public gatherings. Horne, reflecting the general antipathy to republicanism, notes that Napoleon's ultimate source of power--the working classes--he would not call into action. Had he called these people, who were so willing to serve him, he would have turned France into one great camp and might have set the allied powers at defiance,

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[44] Ibid., p. 235.

[45] Ibid., pp. 274-275.

[46] Horne, p. 366.

[47] Horne has adopted this quotation, as he frequently does, from William Hazlitt.

but this he would not do for he ". . . would not be king of the mob."[48]

Horne was greatly concerned with the Campaign of 1815 and like Hazlitt places the blame for Napoleon's defeat upon Grouchy and Ney. He attributed the drubbing administered the Prussians to the skilful disposition of the French troops.[49] He holds that party attitudes has caused previous English historians to exaggerate the number of French troops at Waterloo and especially accuses Sir Walter Scott and John G. Lockhart of this practice. Horne, with characteristic nationalism, maintains that the character of the English soldiers was the prime reason that the French did not overrun the English positions. They possessed grand self-command and unflinching courage. Napoleon recognized and praised them for this, although it was his ruin. The battle was, Horne admits, a draw and would have ended as such had not the Prussians arrived, so that victory must be attributed to them and not especially to Wellington.[50]

Concerned with the stature of Napoleon, Horne maintains that the devotion of the French people proves what a great man he was. As an illustration he points to the words of a soldier wounded near the heart: ". . . an inch deeper and you will find the Emperor . . ."[51] and, adds Horne:

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[48] Ibid., p. 374.

[49] Ibid., p. 389.

[50] Ibid., pp. 393-415.

[51] Ibid., p. 417.

> No man who was not humane and noble was **ever loved** to this degree by large masses of his fellow-beings. In all such instances--they are very few--the instincts of human nature are infalliable. Brilliant talents, alone, never secure a deep and general love.[52]

A COMPARISON OF WHIG AND TORY WRITERS, 1815-1840

The decline of the Whig school in the early 1840's marks the end of an era in the literature of Napoleon's Hundred Days and from this point on a movement towards greater objectivity in this area is noticeable. Among the Whig and Tory schools writing roughly between the years 1815 and 1840, although there are conflicting views concerning Napoleon, the techniques of English historiography are quite similar. Both schools are in step with the romantic movement of the time. This is the age of Bryon, Keats, Shelly, and Sir Walter Scott and the authors concerned with the Hundred Days, likewise, allow their emotions considerable lattitude. Although the Tories are hostile to Napoleon while the Whigs come to his defense, nevertheless, in both cases the social and political prejudices or values of the writers determine their conclusions. There are no attempts to recognize these biases and to hold them in check.

Both schools reflect the influence of party loyalties. The Tories are concerned with defending the position taken by the government during the Hundred Days and continue to proclaim the glory won at Waterloo. The Whigs, however,

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[52] Ibid., p. 417.

are attempting to show that this war was, in fact, an act of tyranny and are determined to set the record straight from their own point of view. Horne, for example, asserts in the preface of his book that Tory writers have grossly misrepresented the nature of affairs and that the purpose of his history is to present what really happened without prejudice.

Another point of similarity is found in the nationalism of both groups. The Tory school is the most vigorous in this respect displaying enthusiasm for Wellington and vindicating England's participation in the bloody Campaign of 1815. The Whig group, while detesting the part of England in the overthrow of Napoleon, also exhibits a degree of national pride. Even the liberal Hazlitt joins with the Tories in asserting the superiority of Anglo-Saxons and British institutions.

While these two schools display some similar tendencies the Whigs alone reflect the new liberalism. The Tory school was convinced that the English society was perfect in every respect. They were horrified at the reforms that were sweeping England, a situation which led Scott to declare in 1830 that ". . . England is no longer a place for an honest man . . . ."[53] For the Whigs school, however, there were numerous ills in English political and social life that needed reform. We find them warning against the threat of tyranny and, in the case of Hazlitt, admonishing the government for its

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[53]Brandes, IV, p. 124.

failure to act for the well-being of the masses.[54]

This was, indeed, a dark era in the historiography of the literature on Napoleon's Hundred Days. This area of interest attracted only amateur historians with a literary bent, while university professors were concerned with earlier periods of history. Steeped in prejudice, allowing their emotions to dominate their decisions and often lacking diligence in research, the works of these authors are entirely undependable in their lack of objectivity.

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[54]The Whigs, however, were not consistent in this and at times display their disgust with the masses. They even take great delight, as noted above, in proclaiming that Napoleon would not ". . . be king of the mob."

CHAPTER III

TOWARD A MORE OBJECTIVE HISTORY

The last decades of the nineteenth century and the first fourteen years of the twentieth saw the decline of many of the elements which had for so long hampered an objective approach to Napoleon's Hundred Days. The modified attitude towards Napoleon is reflected in the change in English historiography which may be said to have occurred in the years between 1859 and 1867--the years between Macauley's death and the appointment of Bishop William Stubbs to the Chair of Modern History of Oxford.[1] The commission of Bishop Stubbs to this position was unprecedented for he was the first trained historian to be named to this post and he proved to be a strong advocate of a more scientific approach to history.[2] From Oxford the movement spread to Cambridge and thus the two major universities in England became centers for the training of historians. The Cambridge and Oxford "schools" are often referred to but these names signify at most that the need for a more scientific and objective history was at last felt. They did not exist as organized

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[1]Thompson, II, pp. 310-311.

[2]G. P. Gooch, History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century (London, 1913), pp. 317-323.

philosophical bodies of historical thought. In this sense the Oxford school began with Stubbs and the Cambridge school with Seeley.[3]

The prefatory note of the first issue of the English Historical Review (1886) declared that ". . . the object of history is to discover and set forth facts. . . ."[4] Edward A. Freeman also voices this opinion when in his Methods of Historical Study, a series of lectures delivered at Oxford, he asserts that a historian must go ". . . to the law and to the testimony, to the charter and to the chronicle, to the abiding records of each succeeding age . . ."[5] and should also direct others to these sources. This, Freeman states, will allow a historian to build on a firm foundation and that once this foundation has been laid on the "rock of original research" a superstructure could be erected that would withstand a great many controversies.[6]

Freeman also felt that it would be wise for the historian to make use of other branches of learning, for ". . . any knowledge which deals in any way with the affairs of men . . ."[7] may be most valuable to the historian. But, he warns, the

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[3]Thompson, pp. 310-311.

[4]Fritz Stern, The Varieties of History from Voltaire to the Present (New York, 1957), p. 176.

[5]Edward A. Freeman, The Methods of Historical Study (London, 1886), p. 16.

[6]Ibid., p. 16.

[7]Ibid., p. 42.

historian must make a distinction between branches of knowledge which will help him incidentally and other branches which stand in more direct connection with his own subject.[8] One of these related fields upon which he places most emphasis was philology. The historian was not, however, to pursue this in the same manner as does the philologist, for he is interested in all languages. The historian should be concerned only with mastering the languages of his particular area of study.[9]

Freeman also maintains that the reader of history should never find himself in any position of greater difficulty than that in which he can say ". . . I shall fully understand this saying as soon as I find out the meaning of this particular word that puzzles me."[10] In other words, history should be written in a style that conveys meaning, even to the unlearned. He should, nevertheless, avoid making the mistake of so many past historians; that of sacrificing accuracy for color. "Style then and form are not to be scorned; a narrative that is true and dull is better than one that is false and lively; but best of all is the narrative of accuracy of matter with vigour and eloquence of style."[11]

Freeman warns against "unhappy delusions" in the study of history and maintians that the best guard against this

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[8] Ibid., pp. 42-45.

[9] Ibid., p. 64.

[10] Ibid., p. 97.

[11] Ibid., p. 104.

consists of the ". . . sound study of history, the careful weighing of evidence and the thorough sifting of knowledge."[12]

The use of documents became a more common practice. Earlier writers had prided themselves on being familiar with most of the works on Napoleon but were now frequently replaced by those who began to cite documents. This trend was greatly facilitated by Napoleon III's collection of Napoleon's correspondence in a series of volumes.

R. G. Collingwood, Professor of Philosophy at Oxford and a practicing historian, in discussing the development of history in England maintains that this was a period of progress in the methods of writing history:

> They (historians) began to think of it as the proper field for a dispassionate and truly scientific study, from which partisan spirit, praise and blame, should be banished. They began to criticize Gibbon not for having taken sides against Christianity in particular but for having taken sides at all; Macaulay not for being a Whig historian but for being a party historian. This was the period of Stubbs and Maitland, the period when English historians first mastered the objective scientific critical methods of the great Germans, and learnt to study facts in all their detail with a proper apparatus of scholarship.[13]

The authors interested in Napoleon's Hundred Days during this period are not all trained historians and do not show the same degree of objectivity but there are now a respectable number concerning themselves with the study of

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[12] Ibid., p. 260.

[13] R. G. Collingwood, The Idea of History (New York, 1946), pp. 146-147.

Napoleon's second reign. Recent history, moreover, now became an area worthy of the attention of professors and there developed under the influence of the new historical method a number of noteworthy students of the Napoleonic period.

The new historical approach is clearly reflected in the conclusions of the "objective" writers. They are still concerned with the questions that occupied their predecessors but are much more careful in their assessment of reasons and blame. These authors view Napoleon's return as the inevitable results of Bourbon misrule which they feel explains Napoleon's welcome to France and not because of any magical powers that he possessed over the people or the army. Other questions are handled in a like manner; Napoleon is condemned here and praised there but this never reflects the extremes that it did earlier. At times the Napoleonic legend appears to break through; then again the smug British sense of superiority rears its head but these factors are generally hidden beneath the crust of self-control and discipline of the historians of this new age in English historiography.

THE OBJECTIVE "AMATEURS"

The years between 1840 and 1890 witnessed a decline in the interest in the Hundred Days as reflected in a general reduction in the number of works published concerning the career of Napoleon.[14] The 1890's, however, saw the rise of a renewed

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[14] The accounts between 1840 and 1890 follow no definite trend but represent the earlier positions of both the "Whig" and the "Tories" with most of the elements of these areas making an appearance.

concern with Bonaparte and his times.

While the influence of the new methodology was felt among the writers of this period some regarded history as their hobby rather than as a profession; and while they were relatively more objective they still retained some of the romantic and nationalistic traits of the earlier literary historians. Sabine Baring-Gould usually regarded as a novelist[15] was among the first of the "amateur" historians of this period to write of Napoleon's Hundred Days. He holds to the view that the Emperor's return was the fault of the Bourbons; their failure to pay his pension provided him with justification for leaving Elba. Baring-Gould admonishes the Bourbons for their stupidity, which he asserts ". . . is the badge of all the Bourbon tribe."[16] This breach of the treaty of Fountainbleau was not sanctioned by the allies for they all protested against such conduct which supplied Napoleon with a pretext to justify his return to France.[17]

Baring-Gould maintains that the threat of removal from Elba likewise prompted Napoleon to attempt a return to France. This removal would have upset all of his plans. Baring-Gould does not indicate specifically what plans Napoleon had but holds that Bonaparte would have attempted the return in any

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[15]M. Choate "Sabine Baring-Gould", Dictionary of National Biography, Supplementary Vol. IV, p. 64.

[16]S. Baring-Gould, The Life of Napoleon Bonaparte (London, 1897), p. 513.

[17]Ibid., p. 513.

case, regardless of his ability to justify such actions.[18]

Baring-Gould does not refer to Napoleon's return to France as the product of a widespread conspiracy but does feel that it was planned quite early after his exile to Elba and that a number of influential people knew and promoted this plot. Napoleon himself, he asserts, completely duped Campbell. Sir Niel suspected some plotting on Napoleon's part, but he did not anticipate that it would materialize so soon. He affected great friendship for Campbell and thus lulled him into a sense of false security and this was to provide time to make good his escape.[19]

Among the people working for the return of Napoleon none, maintains Baring-Gould, were more active than the members of his family. Madam Mére, his mother, Pauline Bonaparte, his sister and Joachim Murat, his brother-in-law and King of Naples were all involved and made most valuable contributions to the completion of Napoleon's plans. Pauline, Baring-Gould indicates, served as his chief messanger and made frequent trips to the continent working in this capacity. She possessed the usual Bonaparte power of attraction but everyone regarded her as a fool and so she escaped suspicion. Murat hesitated at first but Napoleon assured

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[18] Ibid., p. 513: Napoleon was evidently quite concerned with the rumor that he was to be removed and expressed his feelings to Niel Campbell, British representative on Elba. "I am a soldier. Let them assassinate me if they will. I will not be deported."

[19] Ibid., p. 516.

him that the ". . . lion was not dead, but only sleeping . . ."[20] and he, too, took up the cause for the return. Napoleon completed his plans in February and on the night of the 27th Pauline gave a ball for the purpose of diverting attention from this enterprise. Their calculations were correct; Napoleon slipped out, boarded the Inconstant and with his troops sailed for France.[21]

Baring-Gould maintains that Napoleon's march to Paris was triumphal: All along the road the Emperor was joined by soldiers, in detachments, in battalions, or in entire divisions, who tore the white cockade from their caps and mounted the tricolors. The Bourbons were abandoned by the entire army; nevertheless, except at Grenoble and Lyons, the people gave few or no signs of enthusiasm. Many fled from the line of march and the majority of those who remained gazed in "stupid bewilderment" and with "doubt of heart" as to where this new revolution would lead.[22]

Oscar Browning, basically an exponent of educational reforms,[23] also maintains that the violation of the Treaty of Fountainbleau was not only a crime but a tremendous blunder. He feels that it is possible that in any case Napoleon

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[20] Ibid., p. 516.

[21] Ibid., p. 517.

[22] Ibid., pp. 523-524.

[23] G. Lowes Dickinson, "Oscar Browning", Dictionary of National Biography, Supplementary Vol. IV, pp. 126-127.

would not have remained at Elba but his enemies were doing utmost to drive him from his place of refuge. The crimes that were committed against him, asserts Browning, were numerous; the King of France left him without money, the Emperor of Austria robbed him of his wife and child, Metternich employed a "ruffian" to debauch his wife, Castlereagh wished to transport him, Talleyrand to throw him into prison and perhaps to assassinate him. These actions naturally rendered his situation on Elba intolerable and they finally succeeded in driving him back to France.[24]

Browning describes the return from Elba as ". . . one of the most marvelous episodes in history. . . ."[25] He asserts that there had been no preparations made, no conspiracy brought about, no one was involved in the plot. The return took his former generals completely by surprise and their attempt to offer resistance proved fruitless. The action was arranged by Napoleon alone and it surprised Bonapartists as much as it did Bourbonists. It was a movement of the people, assisted by the army: France was irritated by the arrogance of the government, by the threats and the claims of the clergy and the nobles who treated her like a conquered country and thus the people followed the cockade of 1789. The people and the army joined together in a common action. The tremendous success of this move, Browning feels, should not diminish the credit due Napoleon and should be recognized as the

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[24]Oscar Browning, The Fall of Napoleon (London, 1907), pp. 154-155.

[25]Ibid., p. 182.

greatest tribute to his genius for it was he who foresaw the results and dared to take the risk of failure. Upon landing he was proven correct for he received the most impressive kind of "plebiscite" and was able to regain his crown with only four horses and eleven-hundred men. If sovereignty is based upon national will, Browning asserts, then Napoleon was justified in his claim to the French throne.[26]

Napoleon's situation in 1815 was quite different from that of his preceeding reign, Baring-Gould maintains, for the people were no longer willing to follow him blindly. He found that they were not so obedient and were determined that the Emperor should rule only as a constitutional monarch. Napoleon recognized this fact but felt perhaps that this mood would disappear in a year or two and that he would be able gradually to assume his former powers. He seemed perfectly happy but it is extremely doubtful, Baring-Gould asserts, that he would have remained in this mood. In any case the author feels that the allies made a mistake in interfering in French affairs in 1815.[27]

Browning applauds Napoleon's actions during the Hundred Days and declares that he was sincere in his expressed desire to become a constitutional monarch; he abdicated the dictatorship, offered representative government, established liberty of the press, the liberty of the tribune, and liberty of

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[26] Ibid., p. 182.

[27] Baring-Gould, pp. 529-530.

elections. In spite of these reforms, Browning admits, he was suspected by practically everyone; he was threatened abroad, abused by the press at home and found treason and laziness in the administration. This situation was detrimental to Napoleon for he deteriorated both morally and physically between the end of March and the end of May. He still possessed those qualities of genius that had so long served France but the subordinate qualities of will, decision and confidence were gone and he became subject to bodily ailments of a very painful nature.[28]

The Campaign of 1815 is of considerable interest to the authors of this period and William O'Connor Morris, a lawyer by profession,[29] is fulsome with praise of Napoleon's generalship during this expedition. He feels that public opinion made it necessary for Napoleon to wage an offensive war but even forced into such a plan he conducted a campaign without parallel in the history of the world. The Emperor was outnumbered by the allied forces almost two to one and were it not for the accidents in which ". . . fortune baffled their mighty adversary . . ."[30] Wellington and Blücher would have been defeated.[31]

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[28]Browning, p. 220: There has been some controversy concerning Napoleon's ailments during the Hundred Days. John Holland Rose presents a full treatment of this subject in the appendix of his biography of Napoleon.

[29]Robert Dunlap, "William O'Connor Morris", The Dictionary of National Biography, Supplementary Vol II, p. 655.

[30]William O'Connor Morris, Great Commanders of Modern Times and the Campaign of 1815 (London, 1891) p. 325.

[31]Ibid., pp. 318-325.

The first part of the Campaign of 1815, Morris declares, ends with the battles of Ligny and Quatre Bras. Napoleon's operations up until this time had been attended with marked success which easily might have been complete and decisive. Napoleon had selected, with perfect insight, the true point of attack, he had brought his army with admirable skill and secrecy to the Belgian frontier and aiming at the center of the allied line had advanced close to it almost without notice. On the sixteenth of June Napoleon had thrown his army against the Prussians. He had dispatched orders to Ney at Quatre Bras commanding D 'Erlon to attack Blücher's left flank, a movement that would have completely crushed the Prussians. Due to irresponsible action on the part of Ney, Morris claims, General D 'Erlon was recalled and so never completed this maneuver. D 'Erlon had, however, appeared close to the scene of battle and Napoleon, not knowing if he was friend or foe, had been forced to delay a crushing blow to the Prussian center. This mistake saved Blücher's army from complete annihilation.[32]

Morris maintains that Napoleon was in an excellent position even after the battles of Ligny and Quatre Bras but that the subsequent mistakes of his subordinates were to wipe out these advantages. The brunt of the blame for the defeat at Waterloo is placed on Marshal Grouchy. Morris describes Grouchy as ". . . the Emperor's evil genius on the great and terrrible day at Waterloo."[33] Grouchy, he notes, failed to

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[32] Ibid., pp. 332-333.

[33] Ibid., p. 360.

detain the Prussian army and so allowed them to come to the aid of Wellington. Napoleon was not to blame for this, he could no more foresee Grouchy's conduct than he could ". . . assume that Grouchy would be swallowed up, with his army, by an unexpected earthquake."[34]

Baring-Gould is not too greatly concerned with the battle of Waterloo, but does maintain that Napoleon failed less as a tactician than as a strategists in mistaking the whereabouts of the Prussians. He feels that if Blücher had not arrived to aid Wellington that there is but little doubt that Napoleon would have won at Waterloo.[35]

CRITICAL HISTORIANS

The works of the "professional historians" reflect the impact of the methods advocated by Freeman upon the writing of history. John R. Seeley, Professor of History at Cambridge and himself the founder of the "Cambridge school", asserts that it must have occurred to Napoleon very soon after his arrival in Elba that he could very well return to France. The domestic situation under the Bourbons was extremely unsettled and they were daily alienating more and more of their subjects. Disgraced, bewildered and alarmed at the same time, the French could think only with regret even of the reign of Napoleon and a new convulsion seemed manifestly imminent; Napoleon merely took advantage of this situation, therefore,

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[34] Ibid., p. 360.

[35] Baring-Gould, p. 541.

to return to France and claim the throne that awaited him.[36]

Seeley welcomed Bonaparte's return and feels that he was blessed by a majority of the people. He states that on the eighteenth of Brumaire[37] Napoleon had put down Jacobinism and given the nation order and repose. Napoleon was now summoned, in the name of independence, to protect the acquisitions of the revolution and to defend the national honor against the triumphant foreigner. "The Hundred Days", declares Seeley, "are the period of popular or democratic imperialism"[38] Seeley displays how thoroughly he has investigated this period when he reveals, what is now an accepted fact, that Benjamin Constant was the author of the Acte Additional.[39]

John Holland Rose, Professor of History at Cambridge and a foremost Napoleonic scholar,[40] also maintains that Napoleon had reasons for a return to France but expresses doubts as to just what really prompted this. He is most bitter in denouncing the detention of the King of Rome and describes it as a "heartless action" but holds that Maria Louisa would not have joined the Emperor even if she had been allowed to do so. He completely dismisses the pension argument as a reason that prompted Napoleon's return: ". . . to do so would be to credit

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[36]John R. Seeley, A Short History of Napoleon the First (London, 1890), pp. 217-219.

[37]The Coup d 'Etat of the 18th Brumaire (November 9, 1799) refers to Napoleon's overthrow of the Directory and the legislature.

[38]Seeley, p. 222.

[39]Ibid., p. 222.

[40]Bernadotte E. Schmitt, Some Historians of Modern Europe (Chicago, 1942), p. 267.

Napoleon with respectable bourgeois scruples by which he was never troubled."[41] Napoleon's motives for attempting to regain his throne, Rose asserts, were surely born of his pride and ambitions.[42]

Rose declares that Napoleon's return was not, as his contemporaries have stated, a miracle before which the voice of criticism must remain silent. The Bourbons had been restored by the princes of Europe and this imposition, along with the actions of the restored elements, aroused the sentiments of the nation. To Rose it is amazing that this ". . . house of cards . . ."[43] endured for even eleven months. The Bourbons had offended the most powerful French interests--the military and the agricultural groups by placing officers on half pay and by threatening to confiscate the national lands that had been sold during the course of the Revolution. Napoleon's return, therefore, provided these elements with a powerful instrument by which the Bourbons could be expelled.[44]

Herbert Fisher, Professor of History at Oxford,[45] likewise asserts that Napoleon was not brought over from Elba by a plot or conspiracy but came because he had correctly divined the situation in France. Fisher describes Napoleon's march

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[41]John Holland Rose, The Life of Napoleon I, Vol. II, (London, 1901), p. 401.

[42]Ibid., p. 401.

[43]Ibid., p. 409.

[44]Ibid., pp. 409-410.

[45]Word, A. W., et. al. The Cambridge Modern History Vol. IX, p. xxiii.

to the capital as one of the miracles of history: ". . . he fought no battles; he shed no blood; he was greeted by the peasantry all along the way as a savior and friend." He promised liberal reforms, not for the benefit of the peasants or soldiers but to make his return more acceptable to the lawyers and politicians of Paris. Fisher maintains that these reforms meant nothing to the peasants: "They did not care for liberties they wanted to retain their lands."[46]

Fisher holds that the overthrow of the Bourbons was not difficult for their support deserted them as soon as Bonaparte came into sight. This was not their fault, Fisher explains, for the "Pygmy" had been called upon to ". . . fill the shoes of a giant . . ."[47] and was unequal for the task. Louis XVIII declared that he was ready to die in defense of his country but upon the approach of Napoleon he took to his carriage and fled. "To a race which had drunk so seeply of military and civil glory, his rule must have been the beginning of the humdrum age."[48]

C. W. Oman, Professor of History at Oxford,[49] is also interested in Napoleon's reception by the French people but does not feel that he was as well received as did many of his contemporaries. He maintains that Napoleon quickly reconstituted his government upon arriving in Paris but that large

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[46]H. A. L. Fisher "The First Restoration", The Cambridge Modern History, Vol. IX, p. 573.

[47]Ibid., p. 574.

[48]Ibid., p. 575.

[49]Word, A. W., et. al., p. xix.

numbers of the population remained disaffected. This, he holds, was particularly true of southern France as is illustrated by an insurrection which broke out in the Vendée on May 15. This rebellion, though not especially serious, was troublesome and required the services of ten thousand soldiers to restore order. It was only in Eastern and Central France that Napoleon could be sure of support and carry out his decrees effectively.[50]

"The warmth with which the Emperor had been at first received", Oman asserts, "cooled down unmistakenly when it became known that his return meant war with all Europe."[51] Napoleon saw that he must put forth some program which would arouse enthusiasm; and he determined with little hesitation that this must take the form of an appeal to the liberal section of the nation. This plan was set forth in the Acte Additional but, Oman maintains, Napoleon did not intend that this should be the permanent constitution of France and asserts without further proof that Napoleon had later admitted as much.[52]

Norwood Young, a prolific writer in many areas of history, enters upon a new trend toward psychological analysis of Napoleon and public opinion in explaining the return to France and its success. Young states that had Napoleon been given his pension, his wife and child and complete security that he would still have entered upon his adventure. He, like

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[50]Oman, "The Hundred Days" Cambridge Modern History, Vol. IX, pp. 616-619.

[51]Ibid., p. 619.

[52]Ibid., pp. 619-620.

Rose, feels that the factors that prompted Napoleon to attempt to regain his crown were ambition and pride. He had been accused of cowardice and this was too much for his proud spirit. He had to redeem his honor, his vanity, by once more ruling France and disproving these charges. On the other hand, he had held the position as the most powerful ruler in Europe and could not accept a lesser status. The Corsican spirit of vendetta, which ends only in death, was, he held, embedded in Napoleon's character and his career could end only in complete triumph or utter defeat. There could be no third alternative.[53]

Young asserts that Napoleon had acquired a reputation for transcendent unconquerability, and that in the minds of the French people Napoleon's temporary defeats were merely a part of his plan as a step toward a greater triumph. This legendary prestige, he argues, was the real basis for Napoleon's successful return to France. Even if the people had desired resistance they would have hesitated for it would have seemed futile; they could not hope to oppose a man to whom, Young maintains, the popular mind even attributed power to control the winds and the seas.[54]

John Seeley argues that Napoleon welcomed the declaration of the Congress of Vienna that proscribed him. This gave him the opportunity that he needed so badly of posing as

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[53]Norwood Young, Napoleon in Exile: Elba (London, 1915), pp. 292-294.

[54]Ibid., p. 282.

the champion of an independent France. Napoleon, therefore, sought to take advantage of French patriotic feeling and instead of attempting to defend a far flung empire, he now proposed to defend only France.[55]

Rose contends that the proscription of Napoleon by the Congress of Vienna was not an act wholly unwarranted. Napoleon himself had been no less harsh in his own proscriptions. After all, their experiences with Napoleon had been clouded by almost constant warfare; his own past was his worse enemy. The allies were only trying to stop ". . . the flight of the eagles before it safely reached its nest in Paris and was again free to prey upon them."[56] Napoleon had not in the past given them any reason to trust him and so they did not believe him when he declared that he had been cured of his ambitions.[57]

Rose maintains that Napoleon's promise of a constitution had been held out as bait to the people of France and that they eagerly accepted the lure. This had proven, however, a source of disappointment for the only constitution they were to witness was one of Napoleon's own making. The Acte Additional was a source of discontentment which became evident when the chambers met for the first time with Napoleon's opponents elected to positions of importance within assemblies. Napoleon recognized the danger and warned the legislators not

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[55] Ibid., pp. 224-225.

[56] Rose, p. 411.

[57] Ibid., p. 411.

to ". . . imitate the Greeks of the late Empire by discussing abstract propositions while the battering ram thundered at their gates . . .",[58] but they choose to ignore this advice.[59]

The professional writers reveal considerble interest in the Campaign of 1815. Sir John Seeley asserts that of all the Napoleonic expeditions this proved by far the most rapid and decisive. Napoleon began brilliantly and succeeded in separating the two armies, defeating Blücher and forcing Wellington to retreat. But he soon revealed an unwonted indolence and inefficiency. First, he allowed the Prussians to escape after the battle of Ligny and then sent Marshal Grouchy with 33,000 men in the wrong direction in pursuit of them. It was this action that found Grouchy at Wavre on the day of the battle Waterloo fighting a useless battle with only one Prussian corps and thus allowing Blücher to keep his engagement with Wellington.[60]

Rose feels that Napoleon must assume responsibility for the failure of the Campaign of 1815. It is apparent that his main purpose was to prove Ney innocent of much of the abuse heaped upon him in regard to the battles of Ligny and Quatre Bras. Confusion, maintains Rose, was to be expected from the manner in which Ney had taken charge of his command; he did not know his staff officers and under the circumstances

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[58] Ibid., p. 416.

[59] Ibid., pp. 415-416.

[60] Ibid., pp. 227-228.

rightly played a cautious game.[61]

Rose notes that Napoleon engaged Blücher at Ligny and called upon Ney to send the corps of D 'Erlon to his assistance. D 'Erlon by chance received the orders first and proceeded to carry them out but when Ney considered these orders he sent a message to D 'Erlon ordering him to return at once. This maneuver resulted in confusion in headquarters for these strange eventualities Rose blames not only Ney but Napoleon as well. He argues that a marshal of the French army was not without fault when he corrected an order obviously based on misunderstanding.[62]

Rose give little credit to the story that Napoleon was ill during the Campaign of 1815 and states that he was in his ". . . usual health amidst the stern joys of war."[63] Napoleon throve on events which would completely exhaust an ordinary being and maintains that few trustworthy proofs are found of his supposed illness and many signs that indicate he still possessed the remarkable energies of old. "If he was suffering from these illnesses, they were assuredly of a highly intermittent nature."[64]

Rose asserts that the mistakes of the Campaign are not difficult to uncover. Napoleon had underestimated the

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[61] Rose, p. 425.

[62] Ibid., p. 438.

[63] Ibid., p. 448.

[64] Ibid., p. 448.

strength and the ability of the allies and even after he had defeated Blücher he failed to take necessary precautions immediately necessary to prevent a juncture of the allied forces; even when he began to take preventive measures he sent a commander with little imagination and experience to preform this most difficult of tasks. Napoleon was not alarmed when he saw Bülow's forces, he still felt that Grouchy had the situation under control. He had no reason for his optimism because it had been hours since he had communicated with Grouchy and then he had declared his intention to proceed to Wavre. Another reason for defeat was the weak link, Rose points out, in Napoleon's intellectual armor. Gifted with almost superhuman insight and energy he expected the same of his subordinates and he also possessed a contempt for the abilities of the opposing generals. These mistakes, small perhaps in themselves, added up to defeat at Waterloo and only after he had ruined himself and France, Rose maintains, did Napoleon recognize the abilities of the Duke of Wellington.[65]

Oman feels that Napoleon had under his command one of the best armies of his career. He asserts that Napoleon needed to gain three days in order to drive between the armies of Wellington and Blücher and that by brilliant maneuvering he was able to accomplish this. As a result the two allied generals were not able to concentrate their armies

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[65] Ibid., pp. 470-471.

soon enough to prevent Napoleon from separating them and that with this advantage Napoleon should have been successful in his attempt to "divide and conquer".[66]

But, like Rose, Oman maintains that Napoleon did not retain this advantage: He delayed in pursuit of Blücher after Ligny and also failed to press Wellington upon his retreat from Quatre Bras. As a result of these delays Napoleon soon lost most of the three days needed to insure success. Oman, too, defends Ney and Grouchy for their rule in this campaign and states that their mistakes were primarily due to Napoleon's faulty orders. At any rate these men were under a tremendous strain for defeat meant the end of their careers and probably spelled execution. They were definitely not at their best; bravery they displayed in abundance but good judgement was often lacking. The failure of the French army, Oman held, must therefore be attributed to the delays and miscalculations of Napoleon.[67]

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Literature concerning Napoleon's Hundred Days was, for the first fifteen years after the battle of Waterloo, predominantly hostile in dealing with his return from Elba and the subsequent events of his second reign. These Tory

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[66] Oman, pp. 624-626.

[67] Ibid., pp. 627-633.

writers, so named because of their party loyalties, viewed the return as the product of a conspiracy and contrary to the wishes of the French people. They felt that the population was forced to submit to the usurper because he had the support of the army. Napoleon's promises, they assert, were broken when he thought convenient and he reverted to his old dictatorial practices. The Tories question Napoleon's abilities as a general and continually state that Wellington was the more able of the two. The battle of Waterloo also reveals the true character of the Emperor and they hold that he was a coward because he abandoned his troops when disaster seemed inevitable; he should have perished on the battlefield.

The Tory school was followed by a "Whig" reaction which generally justified Napoleon's return and attacked Tory political policy of the period. The Whigs maintained that Napoleon had been driven from Elba by the allies and that the French people had welcomed his return. They held that the Emperor was sincere in his desire to rule as a constitutional monarch and that any evidence to the contrary was the result of necessity and not Napoleon's aspirations. This group was also concerned with the Campaign of 1815 and felt that the French defeat at Waterloo was largely the product of irresponsible actions on the part of his subordinates in no way reflected in Napoleon himself.

The years between 1840 and 1890 witnessed a decline in the interest of Napoleon's Hundred Days but the last decade of the nineteenth century saw again a revival of concern with this area. The historians of this period do not fall into

the neat pattern of the earlier writers but some generalizations can be made in their conclusions. They view the success of Napoleon's return as the product of his correct evaluation of the mind of the French people in the wake of the Bourbon restoration. There is also general agreement that the Emperor was not sincere in his assertion that he wanted only to rule as a constitutional monarch for they feel his actions were governed by necessity and not conviction. These writers also attempt to lay the responsibility for the defeat at Waterloo on the shoulders of Napoleon. They admit that his lieutenants made mistakes but assert that the errors of greatest consequence were those committed by the Emperor himself.

From our survey of the writings concerning Napoleon's Hundred Days we can conclude that Napoleonic literature from 1815 until about 1840 was influenced by party partisanship, romanticism and nationalism and that these elements hindered the presentation of an objective approach to this field of study. The writers of this period were mostly amateur historians. The last half of the nineteenth century and the first fourteen years of the twentieth century, however, saw the movement for a more scientific history begin and take long strides toward maturity. This movement is also reflected in the accounts of Napoleon's Hundred Days and historians in this period, while they were not all professional and trained in the new research methods, present a much more objective picture of events than did their predeccesors.

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