

Chapter 17 - France Part 2



Napoleon Bonaparte

Early Life

- 1769 - Born in Corsica
- 1784 - October 30 - Napoleon entered École Militaire in Paris.
- 1785 - September 1 - Napoleon graduated from École Militaire and commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant of Artillery.

1789 - French Revolution begins and French Revolutionary Wars begin

- The French Revolutionary Wars were a series of major conflicts fought between the French Revolutionary government and several European states who challenged this new government
- Much of the nobility made a swift departure! This included most military officers. The void allowed a person such as Napoleon to move up in the ranks
- During French Revolution, Napoleon rose in military ranks - was made a Brigadier General at young age of 25
- Married Josephine
- Reign of Terror progressed
- When Robespierre was guillotined, Napoleon was put on house arrest because he was a friend of Robespierre's brother - Napoleon acquitted
- France was being attacked on all sides - Distinguished himself in Italy and Egypt

From Directorate to Consulate to Empire

- Trouble was occurring because there was no executive branch - no one was in charge
- Napoleon returned to France where he staged a coup d'état to take over the French government
- 1802 - Made himself First Consul for life with full power
- 1804 - Declared France an Empire on 18 May 1804
- 1803 - Louisiana Purchase - sold America the large chunk of land in the middle of the present day US
- Crowned himself Emperor Napoleon I at Notre-Dame Cathedral on 2 December 1804 while Pope looked on (Reminiscent of Charlemagne)
- Lived in Tuileries Palace
- Wrote Napoleonic Code

Napoleonic Wars

- The period of European history from 1799 to 1815 is generally known as the **Napoleonic Age**.
- Napoleon gained power not only in France, but directly and indirectly throughout much of continental Europe.
- **Battle of Trafalgar** - a naval defeat to the British under the command of Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson (Brilliant!)
- His navy was not good - Robert Fulton who invented the steamboat offered it to him first - he did not take it
- **Battle of Austerlitz** - a great victory against Austro-Prussia army
- **Peninsular Wars** between France and Britain and allies for control of Iberian Peninsula

Napoleon married Marie-Louise, an Austrian Archduchess, with the aim of ensuring a more stable alliance with Austria and of providing the Emperor with an heir (something his first wife, Josephine, had failed to do).

Invasion of Russia - a disaster in 1812 - considered his biggest mistake ever

- Captured Moscow - Russians abandoned the city & burnt it to the ground
- Disastrous "Great Retreat from Moscow"
- The book *War and Peace* by Leo Tolstoy is about this time period

Exiled

- At age 45, he was forced to abdicate and was exiled to **Island of Elba**
- Less than a year later, he escaped Elba and returned to power, but was defeated at the **Battle of Waterloo** in June 1815.
- Napoleon spent the last six years of his life under British supervision on the **Island of Saint Helena**.