

Napoleon's Purgatory

The Unseen Humanity of the "Corsican Ogre" in Fatal Exile (with an introduction by J. David Markham)

Thomas M. Barden

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Summary

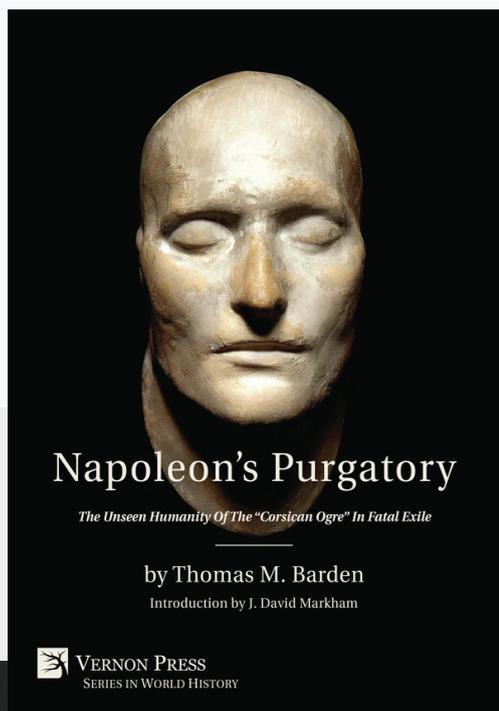
Napoleon's Purgatory is a work portraying the human side of Napoleon as revealed by those who shared his exile on the island of St. Helena. Through the diaries and journals of the Emperor's servants, generals, and companions come the stories of Napoleon's tender love for children, his captivating sense of humor, his eternal love for Josephine, and his agonizing death. Napoleon Bonaparte was sent by the British to the remote island of St. Helena where he could not escape. What followed were six excruciating years of loneliness and depression, mixed with frolicking play with the island's children, a battle of wills with his British captor, an exploration of his lapsed Catholic faith, and the complex relationship with the members of his entourage. This time in exile was akin to time served in Purgatory for Napoleon. His humanity, suffering, joy in the laughter of children, and longing for Josephine are captured vividly in this work through the detailed use of primary sources written by those who were there. While many considered Napoleon Bonaparte the "Corsican Ogre" for the wars he waged across Europe, he was anything but during his exile on St. Helena.

About the author

Thomas M. Barden is a historian and Napoleonic scholar who has spent the last 20 years researching and lecturing on the exile of the great French general and emperor to the island of St. Helena. He is a fellow of the International Napoleonic Society and teaches history at the high school and university levels in upstate New York. Mr. Barden and his wife reside in the Finger Lakes region of the state with their two children.

Introduction by

J. David Markham is an internationally recognized Napoleonic historian and author. He has been featured on programs on Napoleon Bonaparte and Julius Caesar on the Discovery, History, Learning, Military History and Smithsonian Channels. He also served as the resident historian for the Napoleon 101 podcast, which attracted over 30,000 listeners for each of the 55 episodes. He has written numerous books, including *Napoleon for Dummies*, *Napoleon's Road to Glory: Triumphs, Defeats and Immortality*, *Imperial Glory: The Bulletins of Napoleon's Grande Armée 1805-1814*, *Napoleon and Dr. Verling on St. Helena*, and *The Road to St. Helena: Napoleon After Waterloo*. David is President of the International Napoleonic Society and President Emeritus of the Napoleonic Historical Society. In 2014 he was inducted into the French Republic's prestigious *Ordre des Palmes Académiques* (Order of the French Academic Palms), France's highest civilian-only award, at the grade of Knight (Chevalier). David has also received awards from France, Poland, Italy, Germany, the USA (Bronze Star, Viet Nam) and the INS. David lives with his wife, Edna, and their cat, Stanley, in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.



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