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Napoleon

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NAPOLEON
an exhibit in support of
The Napoleon Exhibition
at the State Museum

Main Lobby
Thomas Cooper Library
University of South Carolina
November-December 2006
During the late summer and fall of 2006, the South Carolina State Museum is hosting a major traveling exhibition on Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821), general, First Consul, and then Emperor of France (1804-1815). The exhibit at the museum runs through January 1, 2007.

This small exhibit of books and other items about Napoleon has been mounted at the suggestion of museum staff. The South Carolina College library was actively collecting books throughout the years when Napoleon was Emperor and in the years after his defeat at the Battle of Waterloo. Many of the items on display were bought on publication for the college library as new works illustrating current world affairs. Others come from a group of books about Napoleon donated by Mrs. Donald Saunders and from the Alfred Chapin Rogers Collection.

The most spectacular work in the South Carolina College library relating to Napoleon is not displayed here. This is the illustrated Description de l’Egypte, in 22 volumes (Paris, 1809-1828), initially “publié par les ordres de Sa Majesté l’empereur Napoléon le Grand,” with later volumes “publié par ordre du Gouvernement.” This great book, based on the researches of the savants who accompanied Napoleon’s army in 1797, documented the architectural achievements of ancient Egypt. The huge illustrated volumes, the largest books in the library’s special collections, are much too big for these display cases; the atlas volumes measure when opened over three-and-a-half feet by five feet.

CASE 1: FROM CORSICA TO CONSUL
*Napoleon’s Corsica*
Boswell, James, 1740-1795. An account of Corsica, the journal of a tour to that island; and memoirs of Pascal Paoli... illustrated with a new and accurate map of Corsica. Glasgow: Printed by R. and A. Foulis for E. and C. Dilly, 1768. Napoleon was born in 1769 at Ajaccio on the island of Corsica. It was only in 1768-69 that Corsica came under French control. Napoleon’s father (who at first supported Paoli’s
struggle for an independent Corsica and then switched to supporting the French) got his son a nomination to a French military academy. Boswell, as a Scot, identified with Paoli’s bid for independence.


* British Reaction to the Napoleonic Threat, I Sarratt, J. H., *Life of Buonaparte, in which the atrocious deeds, which he has perpetrated, in order to attain his elevated station, are faithfully recorded; by which means every Briton will be enabled to judge of the disposition of his threatening foe; and have a faint idea of the desolation which awaits this country, should his menaces ever be realized.* London: Tegg and Castleman [etc.], 1803. *Alfred Chapin Rogers Collection.*

As Napoleon gained military control, not only over France, but also Spain and Italy, Britain (“perfidious Albion”) remained the primary obstacle to his expanding power. The long subtitle of this book (published during a brief period in which the two countries were officially at peace) shows British reaction.

* British Reaction to the Napoleonic Threat, II “Caledonia's address to Bonaparte, by W.W.,” *The Anti-Gallican, or, Standard of British loyalty, religion and liberty.* Vol. 1 (1804): 298. G. Ross Roy Collection of Robert Burns & Scottish Poetry. This song is of course a reworking of Robert Burns’s poem “A man’s a man for a’ that.”

**CASE 2: EGYPT AND ITALY**

* Napoleon’s Invasion of Egypt Walsh, Thomas, *Journal of the late campaign in Egypt: including descriptions of that country, and of Gibraltar, Minorca, Malta, Marmorice, and Macri.* London: Cadell and W. Davies, 1803.

In July 1798, Napoleon successfully invaded
Egypt with 35,000 troops, to threaten British communications with India. One lasting result of the invasion was research by French scholars into Egyptian antiquities.

* Contemporary British Scepticism about Napoleon's Ambitions


* The Battle of Marengo

Berthier, Louis Alexandre, 1752-1815. *Relation de la bataille de Marengo, gagnée le 15 pralril an 8, par Napolèon Bonaparte, sur les Autrichiens...* Paris, de l'imprimerie impériale, 1805. Napoleon's victory over the Austrian army at Marengo, on June 14th, 1800, consolidated not only his hold over northern Italy, but also his supremacy within France.

**CASE 3: THE EMPEROR (AND RUSSIA)**

* The Code Napoleon in South Carolina


* Bound with the Imperial Arms: A Book Dedicated to Napoleon as Emperor

Alfred Chapin Rogers Collection. After a period ruling under the republican title First Consul, Napoleon had crowned himself Emperor in December 1804. In 1809, after thirteen years of marriage, he divorced Josephine, to marry Marie Louise of Austria, in the successful quest for a male heir.

* Napoleon's Invasion of Russia, 1812
Labaume, Eugène, 1783-1849. A circumstantial narrative of the campaign in Russia, ... with plans of the battles of the Moskwa and Malo-Jaroslavitz. Philadelphia: Conrad, 1815. In June 1812, as the French were losing control in Spain, Napoleon switched fronts to lead an invasion of Russia. His army was initially successful, reaching as far a Moscow. The Russian Emperor refused to capitulate, and Napoleon had to retreat through the winter to Paris, with heavy losses.

* Napoleon's Abdication as Emperor, 1814
Fain, Agathon Jean François, Baron, 1778-1837. The manuscript of 1814. A history of events which led to the abdication of Napoleon. Written at the command of the emperor. London: H. Colburn, 1823. Despite repeated defeats of single armies, Napoleon could not ultimately withstand the combined attacks of the other European powers, and in April 1814, he abdicated as Emperor, and went into exile on the island of Elba.

CASE 4: WATERLOO AND AFTER

* Napoleon's Return
Jones, George, 1786-1869, illustrator, Waterloo. London: J. Booth, 1816-1817. Less than a year after his abdication, in March 1815, Napoleon returned to France, seizing power in Paris, but meeting final defeat by the combined British and Prussian armies under Wellington and Blucher on June 18, 1815, at the Battle of Waterloo, in what is now Belgium.

* A Panorama of the Battle-field
Delbare, F.-Th. (François-Thomas), 1770-1855. Relation circonstanciée de la dernière campagne
de Buonaparte, terminée par la bataille de Mont-Saint-Jean, dite de Waterloo ou de la Belle-Alliance. Paris: Dentu, 1816.

* A Map of Waterloo

* Napoleon on St. Helena
* Description of the peristrephic panorama . . . : illustrative of the principle events that have occurred to Buonaparte commencing with the battle of Waterloo the 18th of June 1815 and ending with the funeral procession at St. Helena.* 15th ed. Brighton: Printed by Phillips and Patching, 1827. *Samuel D. Langtree American Pamphlets collection.* A woodcut of the British warship HMS Bellerophon, which took Napoleon into exile, after his defeat at Waterloo.

* A Final Assessment of Napoleon