



*January-February
2018 Newsletter
Part 1*

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**Our 2018 Conference
will be in Colonial
Williamsburg, Virginia
September 28-30.**

**We're going back in time.
Join us for dinners in historic
taverns, great talks, a tour of
Yorktown, & much more.**

**We will be based at the
Williamsburg Woodlands
Hotel, but other hotel choices
are available.**

**Check
napoleonichistoricalsociety.org
for updates.**



GIRODET'S NAPOLEON

Anne-Louis Girodet de Roucy-Trioson did this portrait of Napoleon with a sculpted look. I missed it when it was sold at Christies' London branch last June. He did it in black and white chalk, and grey and brown wash. It's on paper, 14¼ by 10½ inches, and signed and dated 'GTR.1812.' at its lower left. It went for \$13,900 (including buyer's premium).

Girodet (1767-1824) made a number of portraits of Napoleon, some monumental, some drawn like this one.

Girodet, as a pupil of Jacques-Louis David, learned to do the great dramatic paintings. You probably know him for his *Oath of the Horatii*, or *Ossian receiving the ghosts of the fallen French Heroes*, or the *Revolt in Cairo*. His theat-

rical style was much admired.

His portraits are just as interesting, especially as he did many Bonapartes. He did at least one without ever seeing his subject, as when he painted Napoleon's father.

By 1812, his powers were waning. His habit of working at night was taking a toll on his constitution. Let's hope the other excesses that were also blamed were more fun. At a sale of his effects after his death, some of his drawings realized enormous prices.



Above is his portrait of Josephine's daughter, Hortense. We forget now what a big deal Hortense was during the Empire. Girodet painted this sometime between 1805 and 1809. The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam has it now.

With fall of Napoleon, the Bourbons were the ones supporting artists. Louis XVIII commissioned this portrait, dated to 1816. He wanted something to buttress the embarrassing lack of heroic figures in the Bourbon line-up. This one, at left, was ideal. It's of a royalist martyr, Jacques Cathelineau, a leader of the Vendée revolt.

No matter Girodet never saw Cathelineau. Maybe that, and his decline, is the reason it doesn't seem as inspired as the picture of Hortense. Perhaps Girodet just did better with pretty girls. This painting is now in the museum of the Vendean revolt in Cholet.

10 INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT NAPOLEON

by Shannon Selin

There's no shortage of Napoleon Bonaparte facts. Here are 10 you may not be aware of. They struck me as interesting when I was researching *Napoleon in America*.*

1. Napoleon couldn't carry a tune.

Louis-Joseph Marchand, Napoleon's valet from 1814 to 1821, wrote:

*[T]he Emperor, should he start to sing, which he sometimes did while thinking of something else...was rarely in tune and would repeat the same words for 15 minutes.*¹

Betsy Balcombe, whom Napoleon befriended when he was in exile on St. Helena, described how he regaled her with "Vive Henri Quatre."

*He began to hum the air, became abstracted, and, leaving his seat, marched round the room, keeping time to the song he was singing... In fact Napoleon's voice was most unmusical, nor do I think he had any ear for music; for neither on this occasion, nor in any of his subsequent attempts at singing, could I ever discover what tune it was he was executing.*²

2. Napoleon loved licorice.

Louis Constant Wairy, Napoleon's valet from 1800 to 1814, notes that every morning, after Napoleon finished washing, shaving and

dressings, "his handkerchief, his snuffbox, and a little shell box filled with licorice flavored with aniseed and cut very fine, were handed to him."³

Betsy Balcombe attributed Napoleon's rather discolored teeth to "his constant habit of eating liquorice, of which he always kept a supply in his waistcoat pocket."⁴

According to Hortense Bertrand, the daughter of General Henri Bertrand and his wife Fanny, Napoleon carried a mixture of licorice-powder and brown sugar in his pockets as a remedy for indigestion.⁵ He also used it as a remedy for colds.



Hortense Bertrand

When Napoleon was dying, he wanted to drink only licorice-flavoured water.

*He asked me for a small bottle and some licorice, poured a small quantity, and told me to fill it with water, adding that in the future he wished to have no other beverage but that.*⁶

3. Napoleon cheated at cards.

Napoleon hated to lose at cards, chess or any other game, and took pains to avoid doing so. Laure Junot wrote:

*It was usually the most laughable thing in the world to see him play at any game whatever: he, whose quick perception and prompt judgment immediately seized on and mastered everything else which came in his way, was, curiously enough, never able to understand the manoeuvres of any game, however simple. Thus, his only resource was to cheat.*⁷

French diplomat Louis Antoine Fauvelet de Bourienne, Napoleon's one-time private secretary, observed:

*In general he was not fond of cards; but if he did play, Vingt-et-un was his favorite game, because it is more rapid than many others, and because, in short, it afforded him an opportunity of cheating. For example, he would ask for a card; if it proved a bad one he would say nothing, but lay it down on the table and wait till the dealer had drawn his. If the dealer produced a good card, then Bonaparte would throw aside his hand, without showing it, and give up his stake. If, on the contrary, the dealer's card made him exceed twenty-one, Bonaparte also threw his cards aside without showing them, and asked for the payment of his stake. He was much diverted by these little tricks, especially when they were played off undetected; and I confess that even then we were courteous enough to humour him, and wink at his cheating.*⁸

Napoleon's mother Letizia would call him on such stunts, as noted in this description of evenings during Napoleon's exile on Elba:

When Napoleon was losing at cards

* *Napoleon in America* is the title of Shannon's excellent historical novel. This article was taken from Shannon's blog shannonselin.com, where you will find many other excellent articles.



Betsy Balcombe

he cheated without scruple, and all submitted with such grace as they could muster, except the stern Corsican lady, who in her decided tone would say, 'Napoleon, you are cheating.' To this he would reply: 'Madame, you are rich, you can afford to lose, but I am poor and must win.'⁹

The young Betsy Balcombe also challenged Napoleon during a game of whist:

*Peeping under his cards as they were dealt to him, he endeavoured whenever he got an important one, to draw off my attention, and then slyly held it up for my sister to see. I soon discovered this, and calling him to order, told him he was cheating, and that if he continued to do so, I would not play. At last he revoked intentionally, and at the end of the game tried to mix the cards together to prevent his being discovered, but I started up, and seizing hold of his hands, I pointed out to him and the others what he had done. He laughed until the tears ran out of his eyes, and declared he had played fair.'*¹⁰

4. Napoleon liked snuff.

This was commented on by many observers, though they differed as to whether Napoleon was a prodigious snuff-taker or simply a sloppy one.

Constant wrote:

*It has been said that His Majesty took a great deal of tobacco, and that in order to be able to take it more quickly and frequently, he put it in a waistcoat pocket lined with skin for this purpose; these are so many errors; the Emperor never put tobacco in anything but his snuff-boxes, and though he consumed a great deal, he took but very little. He brought his pinch to his nostrils as if simply to smell it, and then he let it fall. It is true that the place where he had been was often covered with it; but his handkerchiefs, incontrovertible witnesses in such matters, were scarcely soiled... He often contented himself with putting an open snuff-box under his nose to breathe the odor of the tobacco it contained... His snuff was raped very large and was usually composed of several kinds of tobacco mixed together. Sometimes he amused himself by feeding it to the gazelles he had at Saint-Cloud. They were very fond of it.'*¹¹

The Count de Las Cases, one of Napoleon's companions on St. Helena, said:

*The Emperor, it is well known, was in the habit of taking snuff almost every minute: this was a sort of a mania which seized him chiefly during intervals of abstraction. His snuff-box was speedily emptied; but he still continued to thrust his fingers into it, or to raise it to his nose, particularly when he was himself speaking.'*¹²

5. Napoleon loved long, hot baths.

Again, this was something frequently commented on. In Bourienne's words:

*His partiality for the bath he mistook for a necessity. He would usually remain in the bath two hours, during which time I used to read to him extracts from the journals and pamphlets of the day, for he was anxious to hear and know all that was going on. While in the bath, he was continually turning on the warm water, to raise the temperature, so that I was sometimes enveloped in such a dense vapor that I could not see to read, and was obliged to open the door.'*¹³

6. Napoleon had beautiful hands.

Napoleon was proud of his hands, and he took great care of his fingernails. Betsy Balcombe wrote:

*His hand was the fattest and prettiest in the world; his knuckles dimpled like those of a baby, his fingers taper and beautifully formed, and his nails perfect.'*¹⁴

Napoleon's valet Louis Étienne Saint-Denis thought Napoleon's hands "were of the most perfect model; they resembled the beautiful



Louis-Joseph Marchand

*hands of a woman.”*¹⁵

Saint-Denis also noted that Napoleon never wore gloves unless he was going out on horseback, and even then he was more likely to put them in his pocket than on his hands.

Even Germaine de Staël, a notable opponent of Napoleon, commented: *I recollect once being told very gravely by a member of the Institute, a counsellor of state, that Bonaparte's nails were perfectly well made. Another time a courtier exclaimed, 'The first consul's hand is beautiful!'*¹⁶

7. Napoleon couldn't stand the smell of paint.

Napoleon had an acute sense of smell, and one of the things that bothered him was paint. When he learned that Longwood House, to which he was to move on St. Helena, smelled strongly of paint: *He walked up and down the lawn, gesticulating in the wildest manner. His rage was so great that it almost choked him. He declared that the smell of paint was so obnoxious to him that he would never inhabit a house where it existed.*¹⁷

Las Cases corroborates this story



Laure Junot

and adds:

*In the Imperial palaces, care had been taken never to expose him to it. In his different journeys, the slightest smell of paint frequently rendered it necessary to change the apartments that had been prepared for him; and on board of the Northumberland [the British vessel that took Napoleon to St. Helena] the paint of the ship had made him very ill.... [At Longwood] the smell of the paint was certainly very slight; but it was too much for the Emperor.*¹⁸

8. Napoleon was superstitious.

Napoleon was superstitious and he did not like people who regarded superstition as a weakness. He used to say that none but fools affected to despise it.¹⁹

A Corsican through and through, Napoleon believed in omens, demons and the concept of luck. He disliked Fridays and the number 13. He considered December 2, the day of his coronation in 1804 and of his victory at the Battle of Austerlitz in 1805, one of his lucky days. Upon the occurrence of remarkable incidents, either good or bad, he habitually crossed himself.

9. Napoleon liked to pinch people.

Constant writes:

*M. de Bourrienne, whose excellent Memoirs I have read with the greatest pleasure, says somewhere that the Emperor in his moments of good humour would pinch his intimates by the tip of the ear; I have my own experience that he pinched the whole of it, and often both ears at once; and that with a master hand.*²⁰

[H]e squeezed very roughly... he pinched hardest when he was in the best humor. Sometimes, as



Louis Étienne Saint-Denis
aka Mamlouk Ali

*I was entering his room to dress him, he would rush at me like a madman, and while saluting me with his favorite greeting: 'Eh bien, monsieur le drôle?' would pinch both ears at once in a way to make me cry out; it was not even rare for him to add to these soft caresses one or two slaps very well laid on; I was sure then of finding him in a charming humor all the rest of the day, and full of benevolence. Roustan, and even Marshal Berthier, Prince de Neufchâtel, received their own good share of these imperial marks of affection; I have frequently seen them with their cheeks all red and their eyes almost weeping.*²¹

Laure Junot adds,
When Bonaparte indulged in rail-lery he did not use the weapon with a very light hand; and those he loved best often smarted under the blow. Though Junot was a particular favorite of his during the consulate and the first years of the empire, yet he frequently selected him as the object of some coarse joke; and



Louis Constant Wairy

*if accompanied by a pinch of the ear, so severe as to draw blood, the favour was complete.*²²

Even the young were not spared. Betsy Balcombe describes how, playing blind man's bluff, *The Emperor commenced by creeping stealthily up to me, and giving my nose a very sharp twinge; I knew it was he both from the act itself and from his footstep.*²³

Betsy also writes that Napoleon handled the Montholons' six-week old baby (Lili) *"so awkwardly, that we were in a state of terror lest he should let it fall. He occasionally diverted himself by pinching the little creature's nose and chin, until it cried."*²⁴

10. Napoleon never felt his heart beat.

According to Constant:

*A very remarkable peculiarity is that the Emperor never felt his heart beat. He has often said so both to M. Corvisart [Napoleon's doctor] and to me, and more than once he had us pass our hands over his breast, so that we could make trial of this singular exception; we never felt any pulsation.*²⁵

Footnotes

- ^{1.} Louis-Joseph Marchand, In Napoleon's Shadow (San Francisco, 1998), p. 88.
- ^{2.} Lucia Elizabeth Balcombe Abell, Recollections of the Emperor Napoleon, during the First Three Years of His Captivity on the Island of St. Helena (London, 1844), pp. 25-26.
- ^{3.} Louis Constant Wairy, Memoirs of Constant on the Private Life of Napoleon, his Family and his Court, translated by Elizabeth Gilbert Martin (New York, 1907), Vol. I, p. 331.
- ^{4.} Abell, Recollections of the Emperor Napoleon, p. 22.
- ^{5.} Lees Knowles, A Gift of Napoleon (London, 1921), p. 18.
- ^{6.} Marchand, In Napoleon's Shadow, p. 636.
- ^{7.} Laure Junot Abrantès, Memoirs of the Duchess D'Abrantès (New York, 1832), p. 208.
- ^{8.} Louis Antoine Fauvelet de Bourienne, Private Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte (Philadelphia, 1831), Vol. I, p. 219.
- ^{9.} Norwood Young, Napoleon in Exile: Elba (London, 1914), p. 233.
- ^{10.} Abell, Recollections of the Emperor Napoleon, p. 49.
- ^{11.} Constant Wairy, Memoirs of Constant on the Private Life of Napoleon, his Family and his Court, Vol. II, p. 10.
- ^{12.} Emmanuel-August-Dieudonné de Las Cases, Mémorial de Sainte Hélène: Journal of the Private Life and Conversations of the Emperor Napoleon at Saint Helena (London, 1823), Vol. II, p. 232.
- ^{13.} Bourienne, Private Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte, Vol. I, p. 269.
- ^{14.} Abell, Recollections of the Emperor Napoleon, p. 41.
- ^{15.} Louis Étienne Saint-Denis, Napoleon from the Tuileries to St.

Helena, translated by Frank Hunter Potter (New York and London, 1922), p. 277.

- ^{16.} Anne-Louise-Germaine de Staël, Ten Years' Exile (London, 1821), p. 60.
- ^{17.} Abell, Recollections of the Emperor Napoleon, p. 90.
- ^{18.} Las Cases, Mémorial de Sainte Hélène, Vol. I, pp. 14-16.
- ^{19.} Armand Augustin Louis de Caulaincourt, Napoleon and His Times (Philadelphia, 1838), Vol. I, p. 173.
- ^{20.} Constant Wairy, Memoirs of Constant on the Private Life of Napoleon, his Family and his Court, Vol. I, p. 210.
- ^{21.} Ibid., pp. 335-336.
- ^{22.} Laure Junot Abrantès, Memoirs of the Duchess D'Abrantès, p. 54.
- ^{23.} Abell, Recollections of the Emperor Napoleon, pp. 73-74.
- ^{24.} Ibid., pp. 100-101.
- ^{25.} Constant Wairy, Memoirs of Constant on the Private Life of Napoleon, his Family and his Court, Vol. 1, p. 319.



Letizia Bonaparte

THE REDISCOVERY OF LAS CASES

In December 1816, Emmanuel, comte de Las Cases, was deported from Saint Helena. Sir Hudson Lowe had kicked him out for infringing his regulations. Las Cases was a difficult character, and it was hard not to provoke Lowe. In 1823 Las Cases began to publish his *Memorial of Saint Helena*. It was a publishing success, and Las Cases made a fortune from it.

It is a record of his almost daily conversations with Napoleon during their imprisonment. Las Cases was not taking dictation from Napoleon, so we have always hoped he completed his account later that night from memory and notes.

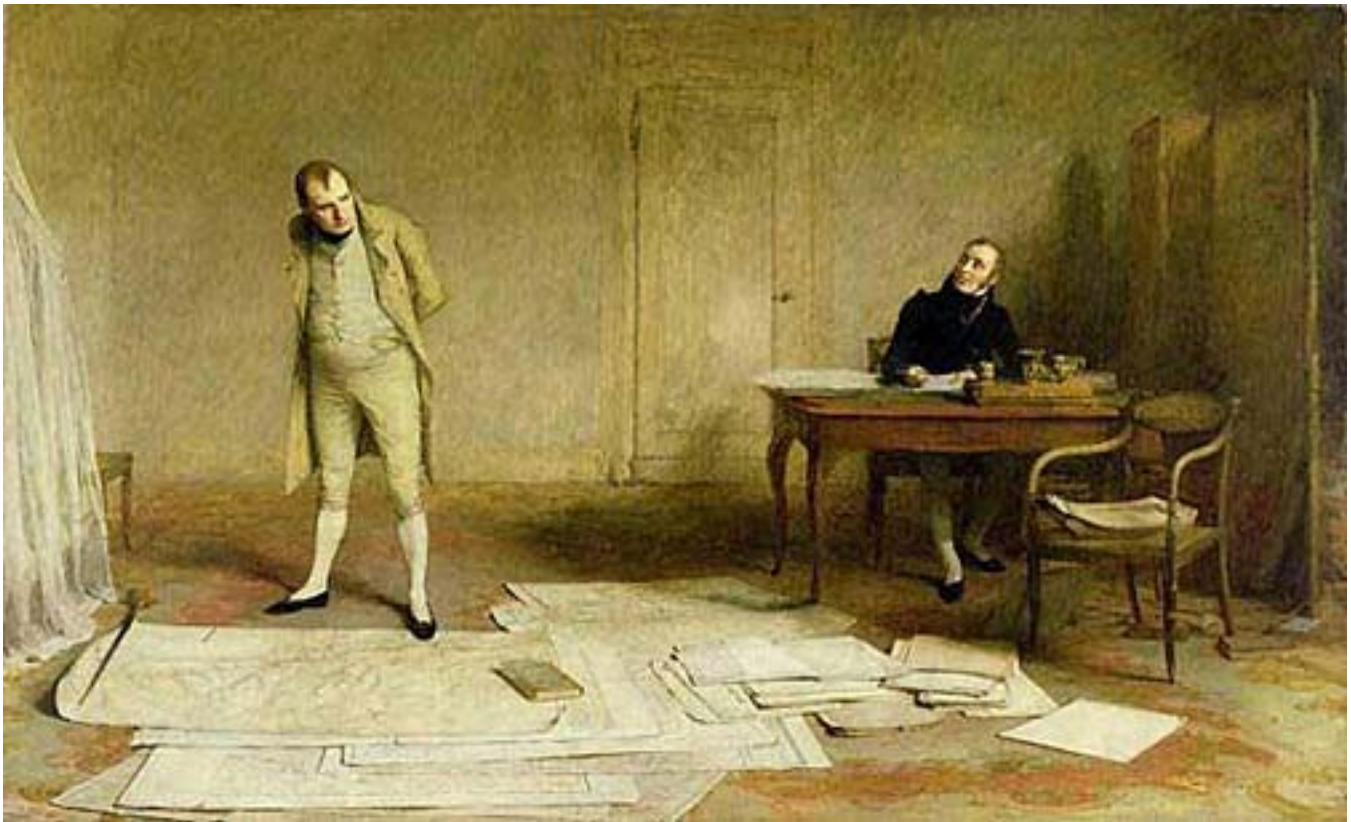
Historians long ago learned to treat the *Memorial* with great caution. Las Cases was prone to insert his own thoughts, of which he had many, and to color Napoleon's words with his bias. In some cases, he misstated or fabricated facts.

So writers using his work, like Shannon Selin in the previous article, have learned to evaluate him every time they use him, seek corroboration, and judge his credibility on a case by case basis. For it's hard to give up on Las Cases. Too many of our favorite sayings of Napoleon come from the *Memorial*.

A sensational find.

The *Memorial's* journey to the publisher was not uninterrupted. When Las Cases reached England from Saint Helena, his papers were confiscated. They included a manuscript ready for publication, which Las Cases called, "Napoleon's Memoirs." It cost Las Cases considerable time and trouble before he could get it back, in September 1821. By the time it was published, Las Cases's book had grown massively as he found more and more to add. But what did he add, and was it any good?

We could not check the original, as that wasn't available. It has taken



St Helena 1816: Napoleon dictating to Count Las Cases the Account of his campaigns, painted by William Quiller Orchardson in 1892. It is now in the Napoleon room of the Lady Lever Art Gallery, in Liverpool, England.

But is this merely the picture Las Cases wanted us to see?

two centuries for it to be rediscovered. Thanks to the superb work of Peter Hicks of the *Fondation Napoléon*, we can consult it now.

It turns out that Lord Bathurst, the Secretary of War and Colonies, and the minister responsible for Saint Helena, had a copy made of the manuscript in 1817, before it was returned to Las Cases. It filled four volumes. But they lay hidden amongst the Bathurst family papers. In 1923, the papers were transferred to the predecessor of the British Library. The acquisition was announced, and the catalogue entries made, but the significance was missed.

Peter Hicks was doing some research at the British Library in London on Sir Hudson Lowe. He had the wits to recognize that these four volumes were a true copy of Las Cases's original manuscript. He called in fellow historians, Thierry Lentz, Chantal Prévot, and François Houdecek, to assess the discovery.

A new Memorial of Saint Helena.

Las Cases's artistic licence had always been known. He elaborated on and improved his material to increase sales, to exaggerate his own importance, to settle old scores, perhaps even for political

reasons.

But now we have the text which was actually written on Saint Helena. This crack team of four historians have tried to determine which parts of the printed Memorial came from notes made on the spot, and which were Las Cases's own work. Now we can separate Napoleon from Las Cases. The historians have tried to evaluate the authenticity of the long quotations attributed to Napoleon.

It's clear that Napoleon welcomed the participation of Las Cases in his effort to present the face he wanted the world to see. It's equally clear that Las Cases's own "elabora-



Las Cases, too good to be true?

tions" run into hundreds of pages.

Las Cases's genius has been unappreciated until now. He was able to take a few phrases jotted down at the dinner table, and expand them into brilliant passages. In the original manuscript, the great maxims attributed to Napoleon are just not there. Were they really Las Cases's work?

We also lose the famous boast, "My life, what a novel!"

"I am the Messiah of the Revolution, doesn't appear either."

Napoleon may not have said of Marshal Lannes, "I found him a pygmy, I lost him a giant."

So we do lose many old favorites. Not lost really, we just have to accept that they may be too good to be true, coming from a tainted source. As compensation, we are assured that there are fresh anecdotes of Napoleon that we have not heard before.

Best of all, we are much closer to the facts, to Napoleon's actual words. We can look forward to better history. The "rediscovered manuscript" has been published in France. I hope the English language version gets to us soon. Meanwhile, I can have something very enjoyable, the chance to praise superb work by these fine historians at the *Fondation Napoléon*.

THE MARQUIS DE SADE SAVED FOR THE NATION

In December, the government of France intervened to stop a manuscript being sold at auction, declaring it a national treasure. Officials ordered Aguttes, a Paris auction house, to withdraw from sale the Marquis de Sade's manuscript, *120 Days of Sodom*. This was part of a vast sale of historic documents formerly owned by French investment firm Aristophil. *120 Days of Sodom* was expected to go for up to \$7.35 million.

When he wrote the novel, Sade was imprisoned in the Bastille, and forbidden paper. So he wrote it on a roll made up from bits of parchment friends smuggled into the prison. Sade wrote it in just 37 days in 1785.

The Paris prison was stormed at the beginning of the French revolution, on 14 July 1789. Sade may have had a role in that famous event. He had been in the habit of yelling from his window at passers-by that the prisoners within were being tortured and murdered. In fact there only eight prisoners inside, and they were not being particularly mistreated, but Sade's provocations may have helped to stir up the people.

He was taken by surprise when he was freed. He was hauled out of his cell without a chance to pack. The manuscript was left behind. Sade believed it had been lost to looters. He wept "tears of blood" over his lost masterpiece.

The long scroll of paper stayed safe in its hiding place in the walls of his cell. Someone with a sharp eye for pornography found it, perhaps when the Bastille was demolished soon after. Decades later, the unfin-

ished manuscript was returned to Sade. It had to remain unpublished until the early 20th century. Now France's ministry of culture had promised to buy it "at international market rates."

Sade would have been amused by the French Republic buying his pornography. What did they get?

120 Days of Sodom.

"It's a book written on a 12-metre long roll which if it's rolled up tightly can be hidden in your hand,"

said auctioneer Claude Aguttes. "Sade used to hide it every night behind a stone in the Bastille."

The novel tells the story of four libertines, a duke, a bishop, a judge and a banker, who lock themselves away in a castle with an entourage including two harems of teenage boys and girls. Four ageing prostitutes act as storytellers, each telling of 150 'passions' or perversions over the course of a month. The libertines enact the passions, and as these become more violent, the



A roll of Sade.

narrative builds to a murderous climax.

Sade takes risks.

Sade enjoyed a rare stretch of freedom. "Citizen Sade" actually managed to get elected to the National Convention in 1790. He joined the most radical political faction, though his aristocratic background was very embarrassing.

He risked publicly criticizing Robespierre. He was lucky to survive the Reign of Terror.

In 1791, Sade published another novel, *Justine*, which was his great success. But it turned out to be another rash move, because Napoleon described it as the "most abominable book ever engendered."

Napoleon's literary opinions mattered after his ascent to power.

In 1801, Sade was in prison again. Even then, the insanity plea worked. Sade served his time in the more congenial Charenton insane asylum. He didn't live long enough to outlast Napoleon, dying in 1814.

Later writers have found considerable merit in *120 Days of Sodom*. Camille Paglia considered the work a "satirical response to Jean-Jacques Rousseau."



Another view of the roll.

The Aristophil scandal.

We mentioned Aristophil as the former owner of the manuscript. Aristophil was an investment fund specializing in literary treasures. It has appeared in this newsletter before, with accusations that it was bidding up the market for manuscripts such as Napoleon's wedding certificate to unrealistic heights.

In 2015, the French police denounced the company as a huge pyramid scheme. They claimed that its founder, Gerard Lhéritier, was

running a Ponzi scheme no better than Wall Street fraudster, Bernard Madoff. The French courts ordered the seizure of the 130,000 historic documents which Aristophil had bought for its investors.

Lhéritier is still being investigated by judges. His lawyer has rebutted any comparisons. "Madoff" and Ponzi sold thin air, but Aristophil sold authentic manuscripts. Everybody is talking about the Aristophil 'scam' but at the same time they say it's the most prestigious collection

in the world."

He is correct that Aristophil at least left some valuable assets. But in the case of *120 Days of Sodom*, the numbers raise some questions. Lhéritier bought *120 Days of Sodom* for \$7.5 million in 2014. He sold it on to Aristophil for \$15.3 million, insisting that its true worth at auction would now be around \$21.4 million. The auctioneer suggested \$7.35 million as his guide. We'll see what the French government thinks a fair value.

A VAN EYCK & A SCOTTISH LOOTER

The wars in Europe transformed the British art market. During the French Revolution many aristocratic art collections were broken up as their owners were either impoverished or were guillotined.

Napoleon's campaigns also shook loose many Old Masters. The art he demanded as spoils of war went to the Louvre. The art his generals seized went mostly to French collections. But in many European cities, especially Italian, entire collections were liquidated to raise funds, sometimes by their owners, sometimes by someone else.

London emerged as the centre for the international art market in conflict art. The work of some of the most famous artists were soon been offered for sale. Paintings by Rubens, Titian, Caravaggio, and many more, were now on view in London. Such artists had been known mostly through prints. The real thing stunned Britons. The influential art critic William Hazlitt wrote that when he saw the works, "a new heaven and a new Earth stood before me."

One example of such a masterpiece arriving in London is the Arnolfini Portrait, aka the Arnolfini Wedding. It was painted by Jan van Eyck in the Netherlands in 1434. An oil painted on an oak panel, it is a full-length double portrait. The subjects are thought to be the Italian merchant Giovanni di Nicolao Arnolfini and his wife, perhaps in their home in the Belgian city of Bruges.

Now it is one of the treasures of London's National Gallery. How did it get there?

The Provenance.

In 1816, the painting was in London, the property of Colonel James Hay, a Scottish soldier. He had worked his way up the officer ranks of the 16th Light Dragoons until he became its Lieutenant-colonel on 18 February, 1813. The 16th, and Hay, had served in the Peninsular campaigns from the very early on. The 16th earned the repu-

tation of being one of the better, if not the best, British cavalry regiment. Hay had been so seriously injured at Waterloo that he was not removed from the field for eight days. He was now a famous soldier.

He claimed he had purchased the painting from the owner of the Brussels lodging house where he recovered from his Waterloo wound. He fell in love with it, and persuaded



the owner to sell. It makes sense, doesn't it, that a Belgian painting would turn up in Brussels?

Despite his love for it, Hay used Sir Thomas Lawrence to approach the Prince Regent (later George IV) with an offer to sell it. The Prince had it on approval for two years at Carlton House, but he returned it in 1818. George always had a problem paying his bills.

Around 1828, Hay entrusted it to the care of a friend. He didn't see that friend for the next thirteen years to reclaim it. Eventually it was publicly exhibited in 1841. The brand new National Gallery paid £600 for it the following year.

Suspicions.

There's another provenance for the painting. Van Eyck dated it 1434. Presumably it was then owned by the Arnolfinis. By 1516 it had passed to Don Diego de Guevara, a Spanish courtier of the Habsburgs. He lived most of his life in the Netherlands, and may have known the Arnolfinis. Guevara died in Brussels in 1520.

We know in 1516 Guevara gave the painting to Habsburg Archduchess Margaret of Austria, Regent of the Netherlands. In 1530 it was inherited by Margaret's niece, Mary of Hungary. In 1556 Mary went to live in Spain. It was inherited by Philip II of Spain. In 1599 we know it was in the Alcazar Palace in Madrid. It is very likely that Velázquez knew the painting, which some think influenced his *Las Meninas*.

The Alcazar was rebuilt in the eighteenth century as the Royal

Palace of Madrid. The painting remained in the royal collection, and by 1794 had been moved to the Palacio Nuevo. Many of these paintings passed into the hands of Joseph Bonaparte during his time as King of Spain. A great collector himself, Joseph took the best of the Spanish Royal Collection with him when he was forced to leave Madrid.

Vitoria.

In 1813, they were still in Joseph's baggage at the Battle of Vitoria. The French army was routed, and Joseph forced to flee. His baggage was looted by the Anglo-Portuguese troops. They were mostly interested in food and gold, but their enthusiasm for the task made it one of the most uproarious parties the British army ever had.

One prize was Joseph's silver chamberpot, which fell into the hands of the 18th Hussars, who have treasured it thereafter, using it as a loving cup in their mess.

Wellington was furious. For a start, troops who should have pursuing the beaten French were looting instead. He singled out the 18th Hussars in particular for his censure. He was also dismayed that he had almost captured the French military treasury, but it had slipped away from him. He was desperately short of ready cash, and all that specie disappeared into the backpacks of lucky soldiers and camp-followers.

For the more perceptive looters, paintings appeared nicely portable.

Soon they were turning up in the markets held in the army's camps. Many were recovered at Wellington's command. He offered to return this royal treasure to Ferdinand IV, the rightful King of Spain. Ferdinand was a thug, though a royal one, and had no interest in art, not even the treasures of his ancestors. On the other hand, he was obliged to reward Wellington, his savior. Giving Wellington the recovered paintings probably seemed a clever move. You can see some today in Apsley House, Wellington's London house. I imagine in Madrid today they are still irritated by such foolish largesse.

More relevant to the story is that Hay and the 16th Light Dragoons were also present at Vitoria. It seems the 18th Hussars were not the only cavalymen to pick up some loot. Hay may have found this painting himself, or he may have bought it up for a song in the trading in the camps afterwards. He was clever enough to keep it.

Given that the painting had spent so long in Brussels, it was an inspired move by Hay to claim he found it there. Hay was a good soldier, and just another Scot looking out for the main chance. Can we blame him?

If not for Hay, the Arnolfini portrait would ended upon the walls of Apsley House. Or perhaps it would hang in the Prado in Madrid, which has more than enough Flemish masterpieces as it is. Hay was merely doing his bit to redistribute art to where it was most appreciated.

IN CLAUSEWITZ'S SHADOW

There were three early interpreters of strategy who witnessed Napoleon's rise and fall. They were Clausewitz, Jomini, and Rühle. Their writings set the pattern for later works on strategy. Well, the first two did, as Rühle has been forgotten.

The three authors had a remarkable amount in common. All three were born within fifteen months of each other. All three came from fairly humble origins. All three were born to large families with numerous children. All three became soldiers. Rühle and Clausewitz had to leave home to become officer cadets for sheer economic necessity, as the army then fed, clothed and educated them. Jomini was different in that regard. He could have afforded to be a civilian, as his family preferred, but he chose a military career. All three changed sides at some stage in the Napoleonic Wars, though for different reasons.

Rühle in Prussian Service.

Johann Jacob Otto August Rühle von Lilienstern was born in Berlin in 1780. His father was a Hessian lieutenant in Prussian service. His mother was a native Prussian.

Rühle was Clausewitz's senior by a mere two months. Both boys were sent to the *Kadettenhaus* (the Prussian cadet corps) in Berlin at the age of 13. Both were in the same promotion, the first one, to Scharnhorst's newly founded Academy for Officers in Berlin. They competed for the top marks in their year. Clausewitz won, but barely.

Scharnhorst took Clausewitz under his wing. Fatefully, it was another lecturer, Massenbach, who



A lithograph of Rühle.

became Rühle's mentor. In 1795, Rühle became an ensign in the Guards Regiment. So did Heinrich von Kleist, later more famous for his writing. They were close friends thereafter. Unlike Kleist, Rühle made the army his career,

Massenbach assured his admission to the newly formed General Quartermaster's Staff in 1804. He was under Massenbach's command in the campaign of 1806. For Massenbach it was a disaster. He had been praised for his reforms of the Prussian staff, but in the field the staff-work was very bad. Massenbach was chief of staff to Prince Hohenlohe, over whom he soon obtained a dominating influence. The afternoon before the Battle of Jena, 13 October 1806, Massenbach convinced Hohenlohe there was no need to drive Suchet's division off the height to the west of Jena, which at that moment was very possible. During the night, Napoleon massed his forces on that key height. The result was a Prussian

debacle the next day.

The Prussians tried to get away, but on 28 October at Prenzlau, Massenbach was completely fooled by the French claims that the Prussians were surrounded and badly outnumbered. So he convinced Prince Hohenlohe that surrender was the only option. But escape may have been possible.

There were suggestions that Massenbach was a traitor. His court-martial was only avoided by Prince Hohenlohe taking upon himself, as commander-in-chief, complete responsibility. With his mentor in disgrace, Rühle's career was in trouble.

The Saxon years.

Jena lay within the Duchy of Saxe-Weimar, and Rühle seems to have taken lodgings in Weimar after the battle. Had he been wounded or captured? I must admit I don't know. He wrote an eye-witness account of the campaign.

Duke Charles Augustus of Saxe-Weimar had also taken part in it. He hired Rühle as tutor to his second son, the teenage Prince Bernhard. After the Peace of Tilsit, Rühle received permission to serve in the Weimar army. The Prussian army was being reduced, and he had little chance of getting a good post now.

In Weimar service, Rühle rose to the rank of major. He was also chamberlain and the governor of the prince. Rühle made the most of his opportunities. He had time for writing, founding a journal devoted to political and military matters which he called *Pallas* after the Greek goddess of war, Pallas Athena. Rühle enjoyed the intellec-

tual life of Weimar, then the cultural centre of Germany, enlivened by Goethe, Schiller, and other writers.

At some point, both Rühle and Prince Bernhard moved to Dresden. Prince Bernhard was assigned to a Royal Saxon regiment which was stationed there. It helped that Dresden was then the most enjoyable city in Germany.

Rühle was still in an intellectual center, for Kleist too moved to Dresden, and he was now the great writer of German romantic literature. Kleist started the journal *Phöbus* in 1808. The close friendship between Kleist and Rühle is documented by numerous letters. Rühle supported Kleist by helping to finance the publication of *Phöbus*. Kleist dedicated an essay to Rühle on finding the safe way to happiness, even among the greatest tribulations of life. That is rather sad, given what happened to Kleist later.

In 1808, Rühle married Henriette, in Dresden. She was 19 but already a widow. The marriage was childless, but they later adopted a girl, Jenny.

In 1809, Prince Bernhard, aged 17, was off to war with the Saxon contingent in Napoleon's Grande Armée. Rühle accompanied him, as guardian and the keeper of the war diary. The campaign culminated in Napoleon's victory at Wagram. Rühle later published an eyewitness account of the campaign.

In 1811, Prince Bernhard no longer needed a tutor, and Rühle lost his job. He gave lectures on war in Dresden. He requested a post as teacher at the Prussian General War School, but was rejected. He tried his hand at farming, unsuccessfully, using up his small fortune.

Misfortune struck in other ways.

Kleist had returned in Berlin in 1810. In 1811, he chose a suitable end for a poet, committing suicide together with a female friend.

Rühle was rescued when the world changed with Napoleon's catastrophic defeat in Russia. Prussia was soon at war again.

A Prussian soldier again.

In 1813 Rühle volunteered for Blücher's general staff. He wrote a Military Catechism (or handbook). He worked closely with Scharnhorst, Gneisenau, and Müffling, and he was back in the heart of the Prussian general staff. But a throat disease forced him to take a prolonged sick leave.

It was probably during this sick leave that Rühle wrote a short treatise criticizing Kant's work, *Eternal Peace*. It was originally titled, *An Apology of War*, but when he republished it a year later, he changed the title to *Vom Kriege* (On War). Clausewitz later took the title for his own more substantial work.

In September 1813, Rühle rejoined Blücher's headquarters. He assisted in co-ordinating the movements of the allied armies before the Battle of Leipzig. He was praised for



Nemesis in the form of Clausewitz.

his successful shuttle diplomacy between the Prussian, Russian, and Austrian headquarters. He may have used his old contacts in persuading the Saxon army to defect and join the allied coalition.

Rühle again fell ill, and he wasn't able to continue with the army. But he was promoted to the Prussian rank of Colonel, and made Commissar General for military procurement and recruitment. He worked out of Frankfurt am Main. He was summoned to the Congress of Vienna, and was far from the campaign that led to Waterloo. Clausewitz fought in that campaign. So did Rühle's former pupil, Prince Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar, who made quite a name for himself.

The Berlin years.

With peace, the competition for the top jobs was fierce. In 1815, Rühle was given the Military History Department of the Prussian General Staff. In 1816, he became Colonel in the Great General Staff. In 1817/18, he published his two volume *Handbuch für den Offizier*, on which more later.

For a little more than a year, he was Chief of the General Staff, from November 1819 to January 1821. While the German General Staff was to become very famous, it was a generation later that Moltke made it so. Rühle seems to have been a filler between the longer terms of Grolman and Müffling. But at least Clausewitz never got that job.

After that, Rühle wrote and taught. His publications are not always easy to find, as he often published his work with just the abbreviation R.v.L. Sometimes he wrote only to supplement his income. Some of it was hack work, making up atlases and wall maps.

In 1835 he was promoted to lieutenant general. In 1837 he became Director of the *Allgemeine Kriegsschule*, the Prussian War Academy. Clausewitz had already held that post.

Rühle wasn't just a military intellectual. In 1846 he became an honorary member of the Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences. He was considered an expert on old German paintings and amassed a good collection. He died in 1847, aged 67.

His book.

Rühle and Clausewitz knew each other well. For much of their lives they had shared the same experiences. They competed for the same jobs. As each of them wrote their great work, the other had been near. Clausewitz died leaving his work incomplete, but his brilliant wife finished it off for him.

Rühle definitely knew Jomini, as he published Jomini's first article. Clausewitz, who knew French, must have read Jomini's earlier work, such as the article in Rühle's journal. Jomini's German was rudimentary, so he must have struggled to read *On War*, but we know that he did, because he claimed Clausewitz had stolen some of his ideas.

So how did Rühle's book differ from Clausewitz's. The two had many ideas in common. After all, both were prominent in Prussia's community of military intellectuals. Both had studied under Scharnhorst.

They agreed that war was political in nature, not a controversial idea in their circle. War was a *Zweikampf*, translated literally a "two-struggle." In English, this is usually described as a duel. Clausewitz made these ideas famous in his book *On War*.

Rühle elaborated on this point in his second volume of *Handbuch für den Offizier*. He stressed that war in general, and any operations that were part of it, were subordinate to a higher purpose. For a war that would always be a political purpose. This may be his greatest insight. It's laid out in the following passage.

"Operations only serve to make possible the final purpose of the war. Whatever is achieved in these individual operations is not the ultimate purpose in itself, but only a means or a step towards the final purpose, a condition for the possibility of the realization of attaining this final purpose. If the success of these operations does not lead to the realization of the political purposes, if indeed they clash with them, or do not further their attainment, they are pointless, however brilliant and exemplary their achievement may [otherwise] have been..."

Some say that the aim of war is victory. Others say it is peace. Even others say it is the defense ... or the conquest of large pieces of land. In some cases any of these definitions may be right. In general, however, one is as unsatisfactory as the other, for otherwise each of these [three definitions] would have to state the same. Victory, however, is not always the necessary condition of conquest or of peace, and peace is not always the necessary result of victory and conquest... To the contrary, victory and conquest are often causes of the continuation, the renewal and the multiplication of war. Often, peace comes because none of the warring parties was able to defeat the other, and often war is not made in order to establish peace."

In a footnote he explained further. *"Each war has an outstanding or a main purpose, which, however, according to the opinion of some, is not always peace. Peace can be seen merely as the end-state of war. The obstacle which in war obstructs the attainment of the main purpose is the enemy, and it has to be cleared out of the way. In the best case this may lead to victory, but for this reason alone, victory is not the main purpose of the war, but only a subordinate purpose within war. If somebody concludes a peace without attaining the main purpose, that which was supposed to be attained by the war, he can be called the defeated party, however many battles he may have won, even if he has won all of them."*

In this passage, Rühle is clearly thinking of Napoleon. He thought Napoleon wasn't interested in peace, but only armistices. Napoleon, as a military sovereign, needed war to justify his rule.

As the 19th century went on, a cult of the decisive battle grew. Jomini and Clausewitz were quoted on the importance and means of achieving this. In Clausewitz's case, this was sometimes a misreading of what he was saying, but it's easy to find what you want in obscure and translated philosophical writing.

Rühle was unimpressed by Napoleon's big battles. He did not miss the point of Napoleon's defeat, that winning battles was not the same as winning the war. The quest for a decisive victory could mean losing a war. Some 19th century generals forgot that.

Rühle noted that *das Gefecht*, the engagement, a generic term which includes anything from a skirmish to a major battle, did not necessarily have to aim for "victory." He

conceded that both sides ceaselessly aimed to win at the highest military level and to bring about a glorious end to the war, but he stressed that all military action must be subordinate to *Zweck*, a higher political purpose, that would vary according to the particular nature of each war.

I feel wiser when I can sprinkle in a few German terms. I couldn't find a translation of Rühle in print today. Clausewitz and Jomini have completely eclipsed him, and even Jomini is fading now. In part this because of Rühle's title. A *Handbuch* or field manual doesn't really sell the idea of strategy.

Clausewitz was wise to grab the *On Strategy* title.

The handbook format didn't help to keep the book in the public view. As the practise of war changed, much of Rühle's book became less relevant to later generations.

It has to be admitted that both authors frequently had similar ideas, Rühle was published first, but Clausewitz just said them better. Much of that is due to Marie von Clausewitz, who prepared *On War* for publication. Thanks to her, pundits talk of Clausewitz, not Rühle.

Sources.

As I said, you won't find Rühle in print today. Most of what I have written comes from an article by Beatrice Heuser, "Who Won at Waterloo? Rühle von Lilienstern, Jomini, Clausewitz, and the Decisive Battle." You'll find it in the *British Journal for Military History*, Volume 1, Issue 3, June 2015.

There's a more background in Beatrice Heuser's *The Strategy Makers: Thoughts on War and Society* from Machiavelli to Clausewitz (Santa Monica, CA: Greenwood/Praeger, 2010).

But overall, Rühle is forgotten.



The stronghold of military theorists, the Allgemeine Kriegsschule, the Prussian War Academy, in Berlin, where both Rühle and Clausewitz taught and wrote their books.

GROS AT WORK

When Gros exhibited his painting of *Napoleon on the Battlefield of Eylau* at the Paris Salon of 1808, it so impressed Napoleon that at the artists' awards ceremony he presented Gros with his own cross of the Légion d'honneur.

Gros's masterpiece was his entry to a competition launched by Vivant Denon on 7 March, 1807, just a month after the battle itself. Denon's requirements for entries were very detailed, including the moment to be depicted, the number of figures, the bodies of the dead, and above all, the large format. Gros followed these instructions to

the letter.

26 artists submitted sketches, which were exhibited in the Louvre. Gros was won, and at the salon of the following year, he displayed his painting to great acclaim. In a way the painting was a collaboration between Denon and Gros.

In July of last year, Sotheby's the auctioneers displayed some of Gros's sketches in London. But these don't seem to be the ones that appeared in the Louvre for the competition, but preparatory studies.

On one side of a sheet of paper is a pen and brown ink sketch of

Napoleon and the figures grouped around him. There are some noticeable differences between it and the composition of the final painting. Napoleon's posture and expression are very different. In the sketch Napoleon's expression is grimmer. His hands are in his coat pockets, sensible on such a cold day. In the final version, the Emperor faces the wounded, and his arm is outstretched towards them. His expression shows more concern. The message is compassion. The Emperor sees the suffering, but it's not his fault.

On the reverse of the page is in



What you can see at the Louvre.



Above, the study, and below part of the finished canvas, to show the changes in composition.



pen and brown ink again, with some pencil work, and is filled with heads. These must be studies for the wounded and prisoners in the painting, though I tried in vain to find a match to any of the faces in the final version.

This sketch provides some insight on how Gros worked on his most important painting. But we don't

know whether they were made before or after the competition in the Louvre. Changes between studies and the final version are no surprise, but again we don't know whether Denon or even Napoleon inspired any of the changes. After all, both men were determined to present a certain image, and both

were very good with detail.

Gros's great painting is in the Louvre where he won the competition. It is 17 feet by 26 feet, as large as life, perhaps even larger. There's another version in the Toledo Museum of Art, closer, but only 3½ by 4¾ feet. The sketches are 9½ by 14 inches.



The reverse has these studies of heads.

Did Gros find some Russian prisoners to give the final version some authenticity?



PAULINE'S LAST VILLA

If real estate salespeople can be believed, this is the villa where Pauline Bonaparte sought refuge. This is the good Pauline we're talking about, the one who gave up all her selfish ways and showed herself more loyal than the rest of his family. She shared Napoleon's exile on Elba, consoling him by creating a court life, and giving him her money to finance the Hundred Days.

After Waterloo, she was sheltered by Pope Pius VII. But the Borghese Palace in Rome was miserable for her, partly because her husband, Prince Camillo Borghese, disowned her. Perhaps that had something to do with the Borghese diamonds

being found in Napoleon's carriage when it was captured after Waterloo.

So Pauline returned to where she had been happy, Lucca. Tuscany has always be welcoming to foreigners who can afford a good villa. She finally settled on an 18th century villa, formerly a hunting lodge, outside Lucca. She purchased the house furnished. She spent her later years there, until 1825.

But Pauline was dying of tuberculosis. She appealed to the Pope. Camillo had been living not far off, in Florence, with a mistress. The Pope bade the prince to reconcile with her for her final moments. Three months later she died in the Rome's great Palazzo Borghese.

Now her villa is up for sale for ten million dollars. It is a U-shaped house, with the bedrooms in the wings, and the public ones in the middle. The villa has passed through numerous owners, but has always being sold furnished. One owner was an Italian who outlived two wealthy American wives who paid for major renovations. But running out of wives, he was forced to sell in the 1960s to the family who are selling it now.

Despite the succession of owners, there are still reminders of Pauline. They say there are gilded frescoes in the Empire-style in the main salon, but unfortunately I have no pictures to see what they mean.



I suppose I should show some interiors. I don't know if anything we can see dates back to Pauline's time.



The main house has about 16,000 square feet, seven bedrooms, and ten bathrooms. The central section has a grand salon, a library, and a dining room. It also has a kitchen now. In Pauline's day that was in a different building, to avoid fire hazards, smells, and noisy cooks.

The garden is adorned with marble statues and fountains, but the 140 foot pool is later addition. The *limonaia*, a greenhouse for citrus plants, was renovated to be a substantial house in itself. There are numerous other out-buildings. The twelve acre grounds are surrounded by a stone wall. The villa is now really a suburban one. Through a towering gate, a short drive gets you to the heart of splendid Lucca.

It's admitted the house needs some work, but if you want to live like Pauline, get in touch with the Italian branch of Sotheby's International Realty.

At right, François Kinson's portrait of Pauline, done in 1808. It is now in Rome's Museo Napoleonico.



Several rooms still retain doors embellished with Pauline's monogram, an intertwined P and B, made of sterling silver. The room beyond is the library.



The villa from the other side.

Another of Pauline's homes.

If Pauline's your interest, and you want to see how she lived in her prime, you need to visit her Paris town house, the lovely Hôtel de Charost.

The bad news is that now the British ambassador lives there, and it's definitely not open to the public.

But Todd Fisher managed to get one of his tour groups inside a few years ago, so it's not impossible.

The good news is that when the British purchased the house from her in 1814, she also sold them the furnishings. Many of the public rooms have been left in the condition she liked.

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SOME EXCITE- MENT IN NAPLES

*Here is Vesuvius
exploding in 1794.
The excitement in 2018
will be EHQ Travel's
tour of southern Italy.
Our tour will go from
Palermo to Naples,
through the land of
Nelson & Murat.*

Why Palermo? It's a beautiful city where bluff King Ferdinand and Queen Maria Carolina hid when the French chased them out of Naples. They had the protection of Nelson and his fleet. Nelson spent his time wooing the queen's favorite, Emma Hamilton. They were the celebrities of their day.

After Palermo we'll drive north. We'll visit the battle-field of Maida, where a British landing smashed a small French army. There's Pizzo, where Murat met his gory end. We may pause for a Greek temple or two. Then the Bay of Naples, which the world then thought the most beautiful place in the world. There's the isle of Capri, now the resort for the wealthy, then the site of a daring French amphibious action. As we're so close, a visit to Pompeii. But it was the palaces of Naples that seduced Murat & Caroline with a dream of a kingdom in the sun, a dream that led them to betrayal and ruin.

Enjoy palaces, treachery, great food & wine. To be honest, we doubt we can get the volcano to explode while we're there. But otherwise, it's history and fun.

May 21-29, 2018

The small print: \$4400 per person double occupancy, which includes all ground transport, hotels, food, and entry fees. Unfortunately for those who want a single room there's a \$650 charge, and to reserve your trip you need to make a non-refundable \$500 deposit. We start at Palermo and end in Naples. For those interested, we may add an option to extend the tour to end in Rome. Call our Todd Fisher at 773 807 5178 to chat, or contact marengo@aol.com.

EHQ Tours, PO Box 1371, Deerfield IL 60015.