

Ode on the War Between France and England

J. David Markham

While on a trip to Dinard, France, I found this document in a book and print shop. It is signed by the author (see the image of the first page) and is a classic representation of the strength of feelings as the Peace of Amiens fell apart. Most of France—and Continental Europe—believed that England had the primary responsibility for ending the peace.



In 1801, England found herself alone at war with France, as her allies had made an admittedly uneasy peace with the Treaty of Lunéville, signed on 9 February 1801. Both England and France were weary of war (as was all of Europe), and when the government of England changed to one led by Henry Addington, who was more accommodating toward Napoleon, peace finally seemed possible. The treaty was negotiated in Amiens, France, with Napoleon's brother, Joseph, representing the French Republic. Joseph had signed the Peace of Lunéville as well. The treaty was ratified on 25 March 1802, but trouble soon began. The treaty required the British to withdraw from the island of Malta, and they ultimately refused to do so, despite being given several favorable options by Napoleon. War again loomed, and on 18 May 1803 Great Britain declared war on France, beginning the War of the Third Coalition.

General Guillaume-Mathieu Dumas (1753-1837) was a French nobleman who got his start as an aide-de-camp to General Rochambeau, who led French ground forces in support of the American War of Independence. As a noble he fell in and out of favor for a number of years, both serving in government and serving time in exile. When Napoleon became First Consul in 1799, he recalled Dumas to service and he commanded the Army of the Reserve at Dijon. After Napoleon's 1814 abdication he served the king, but upon Napoleon's return he helped organize the National Guard. He remained active in the military and politics until his death.²

Bernadette Workman translated this document for me. Among other things, she also did the translation work for my book on Napoleon's military bulletins and the laws of the 100 days.

The engraving from my collection is dated February 12, 1802. It is typical of British imagery of Bonaparte during the period leading up to and during the Peace of Amiens.

² Six, Georges, *Dictionnaire Biographique des Généraux & Amiraux Français de la Révolution et de L'Empire (1792-1814)*. Préface par le Commandant André Lasseray. 2V. Paris: Librairie Historique et Nobiliaire, 1934 (Réimpression Photo-lithographique, 1971. Paris: Gaston Saffroy, 1971). I, 393-94.

*pour M. Espé, instituteur, Membre de la Société des Sciences
et des arts de Grenoble, de l'avis de l'auteur*



SUR LA GUERRE

ENTRE

LA FRANCE ET L'ANGLETERRE;

O D E

DÉDIÉE au Général MATHIEU DUMAS,

Membre du Sénat Conservateur.

LD

*Grenoble
an II*

25 juin 1803

DE la sanguinaire Bellone
Va-t-on déployer l'étendart ?
Le peuple s'émeut, l'airain tonne,
Le fer brille de toute part...
Ces Guerriers dont l'œil étincelle,
Ces chars que la fureur atelle,
Où courent-ils porter la mort ?
Qui souffle le feu de la guerre?...
Quel Démon fatal à la terre
Préside et commande à son sort ?

A

(2)

Anglais jaloux, Anglais perfide,
C'est toi qui brises les traités;
Ton ambition parricide
Provoque les hostilités.
Pour toi la Paix n'a point de charmes,
L'humanité n'a point de larmes
Qui touchent ton cœur sans pitié;
De l'olivier frappé du glaive,
A peine un rejetton s'élève
Que dans le sang tu l'as noyé!

En vain Neptune de ses ondes
Offre à tous l'immense trésor,
Seul du commerce des deux mondes
Tu veux ravir le sceptre d'or.
Quoi! ton avide politique
De la prospérité publique
Tarirait par-tout les canaux;
Et les Nations avilies
Verraient tes flottes ennemies
Fermer les mers à leurs vaisseaux!

Non... que les vagues orageuses
Engloutissent ton pavillon!
Que dans tes Chambres orgueilleuses
La Discorde jette un tison!

(3)

Que l'Irlande désespérée ,
De ses ports nous ouvrant l'entrée
S'arme contre ses oppresseurs !
Que les Indes qu'ils font esclaves ,
Que Thétis exempte d'entraves ,
Bénissent leurs Libérateurs !

Déjà vengeant la foi trahie ,
Les Cieux, de leurs justes fléaux ,
Dans Malthe qu'il tient asservie ,
Frappent l'usurpateur des eaux.
Déjà résonne la trompette...
Un cri menaçant se répète :
Des mers périsse le tyran !...
Tremble, sacrilège Angleterre ,
Guillaume franchit la barrière
Que nous oppose l'Océan.

Sur les rivages Britanniques ,
Français, livre au feu dévorant
Tes vaisseaux, tes barques civiques
A l'exemple du conquérant.
Que sert une retraite aux braves ,
Que sur leurs bords, aux champs Bataves
L'Anglais a vu se signaler ;
Et que la vaste Germanie ,

A 2

(4)

L'Europe même réunie,
Ne sauraient faire reculer !

D'un fort qui semble inaccessible,
Ainsi d'imprudens Bataillons
Insultent la Troupe paisible
Qui campe sous ses bastions.
Elle s'indigne de l'offense...
Le fort, malgré sa résistance,
Cède aux assauts victorieux...
Brûlant de la soif du carnage,
Le vainqueur lave son outrage
Dans le sang des audacieux.

Tels, à l'honneur non moins sensibles,
Tu verras, coupable Albion,
Dans ton sein les Français terribles,
Porter la désolation.
J'atteste, l'Europe allarmée,
Que si ma Patrie est armée,
Si des flots de sang vont couler,
Les Français ne sont point comptables
De ces victimes innombrables
Que Bellone doit immoler.

Veillé-je ! France ! est-ce un prodige
Que m'offre ton aspect guerrier ?

(5)

Ton sol, ce n'est point un prestige ;
Paraît le camp du monde entier !
Tes enfans nombreux, intrépides,
Suivis d'instrumens homicides,
Sement l'espoir ou la terreur..
Français, fiers amans des batailles,
Assez et trop de funérailles
Ont illustré votre valeur.

Cependant ils couvrent la plaine ;
Leur marche retentit au loin,
Depuis le Pô jusqu'à la Seine,
Des bords du Var aux bords du Rhin.
Retiens ces lions redoutables,
Suspends ces apprêts formidables,
~~CONSUL, arbitre des combats :~~
De sang la terre encore est teinte ;...
Mais déjà, répandant la crainte,
Sur Hanovre ils tournent leurs pas.

Quel Dieu calmera les tempêtes
Que soulève Eole en courroux ?
Quel Dieu préservera nos têtes
Des foudres qui grondent sur nous ?
Malheur à ceux qui, dans leur haine,
Sur les maux de l'espèce humaine,

(6)

Ne se sont attristés jamais !
Lauriers séducteurs de la gloire ,
Héros , garants de la victoire ,
Souffrez que j'implore la Paix.

Naguères, ô Vierge céleste,
Mon luth célébrait tes douceurs (1) ;
Pendant ton absence funeste
Il sera mouillé de mes pleurs.
Ah ! reviens consoler la terre.
A ton aspect si l'Angleterre
Deux fois détourne ses regards ,
Plus de trêve , plus de clémence ,
Moi-même appelant la vengeance ,
J'embouche le clairon de Mars.

*Par LAURENCE, ex - Legisteur ,
Membre de plusieurs Sociétés savantes
et littéraires.*

(1) Le citoyen Laurence est auteur de l'Ode intitulée :
Le Temps ramenant la Paix. V. le *Moniteur universel* ,
1.^{er} vendémiaire , après le traité d'Amiens. Le Lycée de
Grenoble arrêta qu'elle serait imprimée, etc. , et qu'il en
serait fait hommage à Bonaparte , etc.

A GRENOBLE, chez J. ALLIER, Imprimeur.

*For Mr. Espié, teacher, Member of the Society of the Arts and Sciences
Of Grenoble, from the author*

ON THE WAR

Between

FRANCE AND ENGLAND;

O D E

Dedicated to General Mathieu DUMAS,

Member of the Conservative Senate.

From the sanguinary Bellone
Will the Standard be deployed?
The nation stirs, the cannon thunders,
The iron shines on all sides...
These Warriors whose eyes sparkle,
These chariots harnessed by fury,
Where do they run to bring death?
Who fans the fires of war?
What Demon, deadly to this earth
Presides and orders its fate?

Envious English, perfidious English,
It is you who break the treaties;
Your parricide ambition
Provokes hostilities.
For you, Peace has no charm,
Humanity has no tears
With which to touch your pitiless heart;
From the olive branch stricken by the sword,
No sooner a sprout rises
Than in the blood you drown it.

In vain Neptune thru its waves
Offers to all the immense treasure,
Alone, of the trade of both worlds
You want to seize the gold scepter.
What! Your greedy politics
Of public prosperity

Would dry up all channels,
And the disgraced Nations
Would see your enemy fleets
Close the seas to their vessels!

No...may the stormy waves
Engulf your flag!
And in your arrogant Chambers
May discord throw some embers!
May desperate Ireland,
Opening to us her ports
Arm herself against her oppressors!
May India by them enslaved,
May Thétis unshackled
Bless their Liberators!

Already avenging the faith betrayed,
The Heavens, in their just calamities,
In enslaved Malthe,
Strike the waters usurper.
Already the trumpet resounds...
A menacing cry repeats itself:
Perish, tyrant of the seas!...
Tremble, sacrilegious England,
William reaches the barrier
The ocean had become.

Upon the British shores,
Frenchmen, engage upon the devouring fire
Your vessels, your civic barges
In the example of the conqueror.
What use is a retreat for the brave,
If on the edges of the Batavian battlefield
The English distinguished themselves;
And that the vast Germany,
Even all of Europe united
Could not repulse!

From a seemingly inaccessible fort,
Then some imprudent Batallions
Insult the peaceful Troop
Camped under its bastions.
The troop is shocked by the offense...
The fort, in spite of its resistance,
Surrenders under the victorious assaults...

Burning with the thirst for carnage,
The victor washes its outrage
In the blood of the audacious.

Just as, no less sensitive to honor,
You will see, culpable Albion,
In your midst, the terrible French
Bring desolation.
I attest, Europe alarmed,
That if my fatherland is armed,
If torrents of blood are going to flow,
The French are not responsible
For these innumerable victims
That Bellone must slay.

I watch! France! Is it a prodigy
That your warring aspect offers me?
Your soil, it is not a prestige,
Appears to be the camp of the world!
Your many children, fearless,
Followed by murderous implements,
Sow hope or terror...
Frenchmen, proud lovers of battles,
Enough and too many funerals
Have illustrated your valor.

Meanwhile they cover the plain;
Their march resounds afar,
From the Pô to the Seine,
From the banks of the Var to the banks of the Rhine.
Detain these redoubtable lions,
Suspend these formidable preparations,
Consul, arbitrator of combats:
Of blood the soil still is stained;...
But already, spreading fear,
On Hanover they turn their steps.

What God will calm the storms
Raised by the wrath of Eole?
What God will save our heads
From the thunder rumbling upon us?
Woe to those who, in their hatred,
Upon the ills of mankind
Never saddened themselves!
Laurels seducers of glory,

Heroes, guarantor of victory,
Suffer that I implore peace.

Not long ago, ô heavenly Virgin,
My lute celebrated your peacefulness (1);
During your deadly absence
It will be wet with my tears.
Ah! Come back and console the earth.
Upon seeing you if England
Twice turns away her eyes
No more truce, no more mercy,
Myself calling for vengeance,
I sound the bugle of Mars.

*By LAURENCE, ex-Legislator,
Member of several learned and literary Societies.*

(1) Citizen Laurence is the author of the Ode titled: *Le Temps ramenant la Paix*. [Time restoring Peace] V. The Universal Monitor, 1st vendemiaire, after the Amiens treaty. The Grenoble High School declared that it would be printed, etc., and that it would do homage to Bonaparte, etc.

At GRENOBLE, at J. ALLIER, Printer