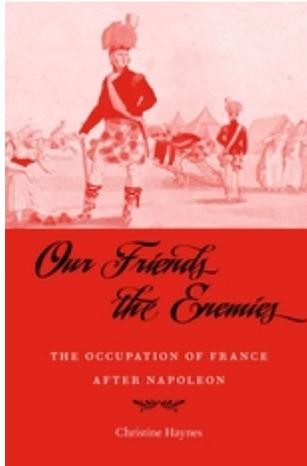


The Napoleon Series Reviews

Haynes, Christine. *Our Friends the Enemies: The Occupation of France after Napoleon*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018. 404 pages. ISBN# 9780674972315. Hardcover. \$39.95/£28.95



When the Allies defeated Napoleon at Waterloo, after some political wrangling, they instituted an "occupation of guarantee" with 150,000 troops, commanded by the Duke of Wellington, paid for by the people of France. The Allies had claimed during hostilities to be making war on Napoleon, not the people of France, but it was the people of France who were going to pay for their occupation. In addition to the requisitions for the occupying troops (requisitions for the troops in the vicinity of Paris amounted to 600,000 francs per day and one estimate of the total cost of the occupation was 2.5 million francs per day), France was responsible to pay 700 million francs in reparations, as well as paying claims by foreign nationals. The government also undertook to compensate civilians for damages that occurred during the occupation. The occupation of the northeastern departments of France lasted three years (it had originally been projected that the troops would remain for five years). Unlike the reparations imposed on Germany after WW1, "the reparations paid by the French after the Napoleonic wars were the largest ever paid in full." (p.222)

In negotiations over the final treaty the French used the Allies' claim to be making war on Napoleon, not the French people, to get the terms eased. Nevertheless, the total cost of the occupation and indemnification by one estimate was 1.4 billion francs, another estimated the cost as 2,4 billion francs. Expenses for the occupying troops covered a wide range of items beyond subsistence and housing. The annual expense for bedding in Valenciennes, paid by the French, amounted to 50,000 francs. In Wissembourg each foreign officer was to be provided with some 70 household items, including foot warmers and salad colanders. Feeding and stabling the occupation's 50,000 horses became a major burden on every locality, especially during the poor harvests of 1816 and 1817 (due to volcanic activity 1816 was known as "The Year without Summer"). The occupiers and occupied even disputed who had possession of the valuable manure produced by the animals.

Occupation and reconstruction following wars has previously been studied as a late nineteenth and twentieth century subject. Haynes sets the beginning of this process earlier, in the post-Napoleonic occupation of France. "...[T]he Allies adopted a multilateral, positivist and pacific strategy for reintegrating the French people into the international community." (p. 4) Haynes admits, despite Wellington's order reminding the

Allied troops that the French were now their allies, that as like the aftermath of most wars, "Long after the transition from military invasion to peacekeeping operation at the end of 1815, occupying troops continued to behave as 'enemies,' plundering, insulting, attacking, and raping French inhabitants." (p.5) But there was also collaboration and cultural exchanges, which also occurs during occupations.

Throughout the occupation the French population complained of "vexations," "abuses," and "excesses." Allied "excesses" created a fear in the French government of violent retribution by the populace, and, indeed, acts of violence occurred right up to the withdrawal of the troops. Oddly, one source of concern by the government was occupation troops insulting the French king and praising Napoleon or singing revolutionary songs. Incidents of "excess" included rapes, which were accounted as "outrages," "assaults," "violences," etc. For Parisians, the removal of cultural objects - paintings, sculptures, libraries, antiquities, etc. - from the Louvre and other institutions was a form of "rape." The Allies had conceded French possession of these works in 1814 and in 1815 some Allied leaders at first admitted the difference between works ceded by treaty and those taken by conquest, but when the Prussians began to re-expropriate works of art the rest of the Allies soon jumped on the bandwagon.

In the countryside in the occupied departments the initial reaction was fear and/or despair. Many fled or hid; the Allies found whole villages deserted. As the occupation continued the populace returned. When the interactions between occupier and occupied led to complaints on either side, the French complain to their government or Allied officials. The occupying troops complained to the French government or Allied officials regarding the French. Some of the French did more than complain, acts of resistance continued, and in many cases grew as the occupation went on. By 1816 it was decided that justice would be administered by officials of the offenders own nation. The Allies however felt the French courts were too lenient to resisters, compared to the punishment meted out to troops who violated laws. But that military justice was more rigorous than civilian should not come as a surprise.

While resistance persisted, accommodation and collaboration also characterized the occupation of guarantee. Royalist officials and many members of the elite welcomed the occupiers; others tolerated them. As is common in all occupations fraternization was not uncommon. Allied troops and French citizens interacted in formal and informal settings, including so-called "horizontal collaboration." Some soldiers, both officers and men, took advantage of local women, deserting them when their stay in France ended. Others chose to marry their lovers despite policies to prevent it. Some allied soldiers decided to remain in France, the Russians in particular. Preferring life as an émigré in France to returning home and continuing their military careers. The French government decided that foreign soldiers remaining in France after the evacuation should be considered as asylum seekers.

Haynes emphasizes that over the 36 months of the occupation of guarantee both the French and the Allies managed often "not just to accommodate but even to appreciate each other.... promot[ing] international understanding and reconciliation." (p.165) If the Napoleonic Wars symbolized the triumph of nationalism, the post-war period can be said to see a resurgence of cosmopolitanism. Cossacks and Highlanders especially drew the interest of the French, influencing fashions and the arts in unexpected ways. The invasion of foreign troops was followed by an invasion of foreign tourists who had been cut off from the Continent for so long. In 1816, the Times warned that "the emigration from England to France continues to be indeed alarming." (p. 178) Cosmopolitanism became so prevalent that it invoked a reaction, termed *étrangomanie* by the French. The battle between the cosmopolitanists and the opponents of xenomania was symbolized by the battle over the *montagnes russes*, the newly invented roller coasters which briefly became the rage in France, spawning songs, plays and prints.

Under the yes and encouragement of the Allies the French legislature passed a number of reforms, to the electoral system, to military recruitment and promotion, and the press; reforms Wellington would later call "Jacobin." The new regime also revived a freer degree of public political activity. All of these reforms were moderately liberal and for that reason persisted even when the regime changed. But the birth of the Restoration also led to the birth of Bonapartism. Popular mobilization against foreign invasion brought about an alliance of the opposition parties, the Jacobins and the Bonapartists. While the Allies had initially spurred the resurgence of liberalism, and eventually backlash in France and Europe moved governments to the Right.

Haynes history ends with the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, which marked the ultimate end to the Napoleonic Wars. Here France and the Allies finalized an end to the occupation of guarantee. Before the Allies left France though, the French still had pay for the reconstruction of the fortresses in Belgium along the French border and pay the war claims of individuals and other groups (one such claim submitted dated to the reign of France's Henry IV). More than 135,000 claims totaling more than 1.6 billion francs were filed. Eventually these were reduced to a total of 320 million francs (the Allies weren't particularly strict about claims not being paid directly to themselves). Aix-la-Chapelle was a miniature Congress of Vienna with much entertainments and amusements for the attendees. Metternich claimed he never saw a "prettier little conference." Among the matters of business attended to was a secret codicil requiring each of the powers to maintain a force of 60,000 men. France was returned to the family of nations. As the Allies evacuated, the territories through which they passed got a little taste of what France had undergone for three years.

Our Friends the Enemies concentrates on the three years of occupation, using primary sources of all types, from police reports to song lyrics to prints. Haynes explores both the occupier and occupied, concentrating not only on the elites but the soldiers and civilians

affected. The book first covers the early "state of war" that existed immediately following the end of hostilities. Then Haynes examines how the occupation promoted accommodation between the French and the occupiers. Finally the reconstruction of France, socially, politically, and economically, following the quarter century upheaval of Revolution and war is examined. This is the type of book that particularly appeals to me, deeply researched and filled with new, in-depth detail. Highly recommended.

Reviewed by [Tom Holmberg](#)

Placed on the Napoleon Series: February 2019