

The Last Days of Napoleon on St Helena: An Intimate Portrait of the Emperor's Downfall

Napoleon Bonaparte, the charismatic French emperor who conquered much of Europe, spent his final years in exile on the remote island of St Helena. His downfall was a dramatic and tragic event, and the last days of his life were filled with both physical and emotional suffering.



Terrible Exile: The Last Days of Napoleon on St Helena

by Brian Unwin

★★★★☆ 4.1 out of 5

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Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
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Arrival on St Helena

Napoleon arrived on St Helena on October 15, 1815, after being defeated at the Battle of Waterloo. He was accompanied by a small group of loyal followers, including his generals Bertrand and Montholon. The British government had chosen St Helena as his place of exile because it was a remote and isolated island, far from any potential escape routes.

Longwood House

Napoleon was initially housed in a small cottage called The Briars. However, in December 1815, he moved to Longwood House, which would be his home for the rest of his life. Longwood House was a large and comfortable mansion, but it was also isolated and exposed to the elements. Napoleon often complained about the dampness and cold, and he suffered from a variety of illnesses during his time there.

Relationship with Hudson Lowe

Napoleon's relationship with the British governor of St Helena, Sir Hudson Lowe, was strained from the beginning. Lowe was a strict and unyielding man, and he was determined to prevent Napoleon from escaping. He imposed a number of restrictions on Napoleon's movements and activities, which the Emperor found increasingly frustrating.

Decline and Death

As the years passed, Napoleon's health declined. He suffered from a variety of ailments, including stomach cancer and liver disease. He also became increasingly depressed and withdrawn. By the end of his life, he was a shadow of his former self, both physically and mentally.

Napoleon died on May 5, 1821, at the age of 51. His death was a major event in European history, and it marked the end of an era. He was buried on St Helena, but his remains were later returned to France in 1840.

Legacy

Napoleon's exile on St Helena is a fascinating chapter in history. It provides an intimate portrait of a great man's decline and eventual demise. It is also a reminder of the power of fate and the fragility of human life.

Additional Information

- Napoleon's tomb is located in the Invalides in Paris.
- St Helena is now a British Overseas Territory.
- Longwood House is now a museum dedicated to Napoleon.
- There are a number of books and documentaries about Napoleon's exile on St Helena.



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