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# NAPOLEON

*The True Story of the Life & Time  
of Napoleon Bonaparte the Emperor of France*

LIAM DALE



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## NAPOLEON



Since the beginning of time there have always been leaders to emerge from the masses, and a few rise to such prominence, that long after they have departed the battlefield of life, their memory is preserved down through the ages, for each new generation to discover. One of the most famous amongst these heroes of history is Napoleon, who is to this day still known the whole world over, and whether his name is uttered with reverence due to the great man's undoubted military genius, or suggestively, with an attempt at a French accent, the image of a diminutive, rather rotund figure in a sweeping grey coat and fancy hat will most probably spring to mind. Yet finding the man behind the myth is a more difficult task altogether. Many thousands of books have been written about Napoleon, but as is so often the case with historic icons, opinion varies considerably.

On the one hand Napoleon can be considered a truehearted and patriotic revolutionary with a tantalizingly tactical brain, exceptional leadership qualities, a mastery of combat skills, an ability to organize and finance better than any Government administrator, and a natural affinity for military strategy, that was, quite literally, beyond compare.

Then on the other hand, some would, quite justifiably, brand Napoleon a bully and a tyrant, who possessed a ruthless and cynical desire for power and violence, along with an inflated ego that colored judgement and persuaded him that he could do no wrong, as seems to be wont of just about every military dictator, before Napoleon, or, for that matter, since.

Either way, there is no denying that Napoleon Bonaparte was (and still is) a giant figure in the history books. And, for those of you who know a little about him and are willing to challenge the usage of the word “giant”, then drop anchor at once. For, Napoleon was *not* a short man, as history would have us believe. When he died, the official measurement of his height was 5 foot 2 inches – but this was taken in French measurements. On the Imperial scale, widely used throughout the world, that measurement comes out as 5 foot 7 inches. Rather than being short, this numerical anomaly made Napoleon taller than your average Frenchman of the period. Another reason why Napoleon is often perceived as a vertically challenged leader is due to a nickname given to him, “*Le Petit Caporal*”. Anyone with a smattering of French will tell you that “Petit” means little, in the French language, but this interpretation was in fact an affectionate term reflecting Napoleon’s camaraderie with his ordinary foot soldiers, and his lack of pretensions with his fighting men.

REGARDLESS OF WHICH version of Napoleon is to be believed, evil dictator or inspiring military leader, or perhaps more likely, somewhere between the two, this journal will look at his truly fascinating and eventful life, following his progress from the wildy beautiful Island of Corsica to his coronation as the Emperor of France and final defeat at the Battle of Waterloo.

BUT WE’RE GETTING AHEAD of ourselves, something that our history journal subject was very good at.

NAPOLEON WAS EVIDENTLY SO eager to get into this world and start living it his way, that his mother, [Letizia](#), gave birth to him immediately after returning from Mass, on a downstairs’ sofa, before she could even reach her bed. This auspicious day was the 15th of August, in the year 1769. Napoleon Bonaparte was born in the town of Ajaccio, on the island of [Corsica](#), which is located west of Italy, southeast of France and north of the island of Sardinia. It’s the fourth largest island in the Mediterranean Sea and in the year of Napoleon’s birth it was taken over by France and claimed as a “French Region”. Originally it had been ruled by the city of Genoa, in Italy.