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Soldiers, Citizens and Civilians

**Experiences and Perceptions of the
Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars,
1790–1820**

Edited by

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Foreword to the Series

Rafe Blaufarb, Alan Forrest and Karen Hagemann

The century from 1750 to 1850 was a seminal period of change, not just in Europe but across the globe. The political landscape was transformed by a series of revolutions fought in the name of liberty – most notably in America and France, of course, but elsewhere, too: in Geneva and the Netherlands during the eighteenth century and across much of mainland Europe by 1848. Nor was such change confined to the European world. New ideas of freedom, equality and human rights were carried to the furthest outposts of empire, to Egypt, India and the Caribbean, which saw the creation in 1801 of the first black republic in Haiti, the former French colony of Saint-Domingue. And in the early part of the nineteenth century they continued to inspire anti-colonial and liberation movements throughout Central and Latin America.

If political and social institutions were transformed by revolution in these years, so, too, was warfare. During the quarter-century of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, in particular, Europe was faced with the prospect of ‘total’ war, on a scale unprecedented before the twentieth century. Military hardware, it is true, evolved only gradually, and battles were not necessarily any bloodier than they had been during the Seven Years War. But in other ways these can legitimately be described as the first modern wars, fought by mass armies mobilized by national and patriotic propaganda, leading to the displacement of millions of people throughout Europe and beyond, as soldiers, prisoners of war, civilians and refugees. For those who lived through the period these wars would be a formative experience that shaped the ambitions and the identities of a generation.

The aims of the series are necessarily ambitious. In its various volumes, whether single-authored monographs or themed collections, it seeks to extend the scope of more traditional historiography. It will study warfare during this formative century not just in Europe, but in the Americas, in colonial societies, and across the world. It will analyse the construction of identities and power relations by integrating the principal categories of difference, most notably class and religion, generation and gender, race and ethnicity. It will adopt a multi-faceted

approach to the period, and turn to methods of political, cultural, social and military history, and of art history, in order to develop a challenging and multi-disciplinary analysis. Finally, it will examine elements of comparison and transfer and so tease out the complexities of regional, national and global history.

Acknowledgements

This book is the result of a workshop hosted by the Anglo-German research group 'Nations, Borders, Identities: The Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars in European Experiences and Memories' (NBI) and the German Historical Institute, London (GHI). The workshop held at the GHI in London on 24 and 25 February 2006 was organized by Karen Hagemann (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) and Ruth Leiserowitz (Berlin School for Comparative European History), in co-operation with the GHI. It built upon discussions held at previous NBI workshops, in November 2004 at the Military Research Centre, Potsdam, and in November 2005 at the European Academy, Berlin. At the London workshop seventeen participants from seven countries presented papers relating to the experiences and perceptions of soldiers and civilians in different European countries. For this volume the editors selected nine papers to be rewritten for publication, and invited two scholars to write new papers for the book on significant topics absent from the workshop. The Arts and Humanities Research Council, the GHI, and the German Research Foundation generously funded the workshop. The editors would like to thank all the participants in the workshop for their stimulating presentations and contributions to discussion, the authors for their willingness to co-operate so fully in the rewriting and editing of the essays, and the three foundations for making both the event and the resulting book possible.

*Chapel Hill and York,
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