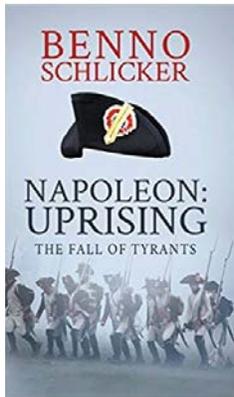


## The Napoleon Series Reviews

Schlicker, Benno. *Napoleon: Uprising, The Fall of Tyrants*. London (UK): Austin Macauley, 2018. 310 p. ISBN# 9781788237550. Paperback. £10.99.



Napoleon once remarked, "What a novel my life has been!" The first in a proposed series of novels covering Napoleon's life by teacher of History and English at Concordia College in South Australia Benno Schlicker, *Fall of Tyrants* covers the years 1778 to the end of 1789, with brief leaps forward to 1791 and 1825 and backward to 1769. The prologues describe Napoleon in exile on St. Helena and Napoleon's father's involvement in Pasquale Paoli's fight against French occupiers before Napoleon's birth. Schlicker begins his main tale on Napoleon's birthday in 1778 on Corsica and ends, essentially, on Corsica as well. We see a young Napoleon, already fascinated with the military, and are introduced to his family and life on the island of Napoleon's birth, Corsica.

The story continues through Napoleon's schooling in France and life in French military academies as an impoverished, provincial outsider, the butt of jokes by his more noble fellow students, with a funny accent and an even funnier name. Napoleon's early years as a new officer in an artillery regiment and his introduction to politics on Corsica and in France in the early days of the French Revolution are also covered. Detailing and foreshadowing Napoleon's growth and later involvement in both fields. The unrest of the Revolution offends Napoleon's sense of order, but the Revolution also opens up new opportunity for young men to advance themselves.

While Napoleon learns the ins and out of becoming a military officer, he also has to navigate the shoals of revolutionary politics. At one point Napoleon cleverly uses military tactics to forestall a riot without unnecessary taking of lives. On Corsica, on leave from his regiment, Napoleon enters into the rough and tumble of Corsican politics, opposing the current French administration on the island. Napoleon even rescues an accomplice's wife, a former love interest of his, from an impregnable fortress on the island.

Unlike Max Gallo's somewhat recent fictional biography of Napoleon, which was largely based on and followed Napoleon's correspondence, Schlicker tries to elucidate Napoleon's inner life, a bold move for any novelist. To try to understand the inner workings of Napoleon's mind is a formidable task. Schlicker, unlike Gallo, also mixes fictional characters with historical personages, who are a part of Napoleon's story. Schlicker also deviates to Versailles and elsewhere, when necessary, to give the reader needed background to events outside of Napoleon's immediate circumstances, but which will greatly affect his life.

Reviewed by [Tom Holmberg](#)

Placed on the Napoleon Series: November 2018