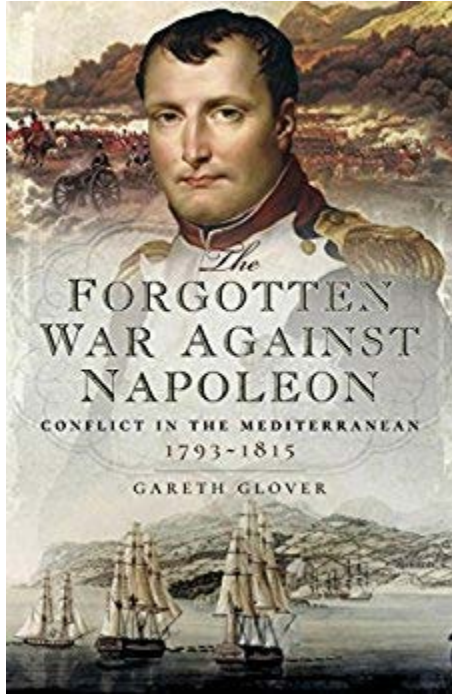


The Napoleon Series Reviews

Glover, Gareth. *The Forgotten War against Napoleon: Conflict in the Mediterranean 1793 – 1815*. Barnsley (UK): Pen & Sword, 2017. 283 pages. ISBN: 97814738333957 £25 / \$50.



For many students of the Napoleonic Wars, events in and around the Mediterranean Sea have been overshadowed by the major battles and campaigns that took place in central and eastern Europe. Yet for the British much of their direct military opposition to the French Revolution and the early days of the Napoleonic Empire was in the Mediterranean. It was only after Napoleon's invasion of Spain and Portugal in 1808 did the British focus switch to the mainland of Europe. But even then, they kept a sizeable portion of their forces in the Mediterranean.

Because the focus of the book is on the events that occurred on and around the Mediterranean Sea, naturally much of it is about naval battles, operations, and raids. However, Mr. Glover does not ignore the land side of the story either. There is also information on joint operations against strategic fortresses, sieges, and battles on the lands that bordered the great sea.

The Forgotten War has 56 chapters covering the major events that occurred between 1793 – 1815. Some of these include:

Siege of Toulon 1793

The Capture of Corsica in 1794

British leaving the Mediterranean in 1796 – 1797

The French expedition to Egypt (8 chapters)

The Peace of Amiens

Trafalgar

Maida 1806

Operations in the Adriatic in 1808 – 1809

Operations along the East Coast of Spain

In addition to the topics above, *The Forgotten War* also looks at little known events, such as:

The British expeditions to the Dardanelles and Egypt in 1807

The attempt by the British to “rescue” the Pope from Napoleon and move him to Sicily in 1808

The intrigues of the Kingdom of Naples which was in exile in Sicily

Operations during the One Hundred Days

The Forgotten War is a bit of a hybrid. It is definitely a history of the region during those turbulent years. Yet because of the way it is written, it is also an encyclopedia. Each chapter is about a specific event or year (during the quieter times) and thus they resemble encyclopedia articles. Although each chapter builds on the events discussed in the previous chapter, it stands alone and is very similar to an encyclopedia article. There you will find a discussion about the battle, campaign, raid, or political event that occurred, the background that led up to it, the major individuals and forces on both sides involved, and the outcome.

Although much of the book is about the British – French conflict, *The Forgotten War* also is about the other major actors on the scene: the Spanish (who were allies of the French for many years, the Ottomans, the Austrians, the Russians, and a host of smaller states, some of which came into existence and then disappeared during those years.

The topics in *The Forgotten War* cover virtually all of the Mediterranean Sea from the Straits to Gibraltar to the shores of the Levant. . . an area of 2.5 million square kilometers. Because of the vast distances maps are crucial to understanding the events that occurred there. Mr. Glover understood that and proves 33 maps that range from a general map of the Mediterranean Sea showing the countries and cities as they were named in 1810 to detailed plans of battle and sieges. One of my biggest complaints about books is that many times the maps are not placed in the vicinity of the topic it is illustrating. *The Forgotten War* has avoided this flaw and its maps are appropriately placed.

The Forgotten War is destined to become the go to reference book on Napoleonic conflicts in the Mediterranean. Although the chapters are concise due to the vastness of the topic, there is enough details to answer most questions for someone looking for background information. However, unlike many reference books, it is a quick enjoyable read! Highly recommended.

Reviewed by [Robert Burnham](#)

Placed on the Napoleon Series: December 2017