

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910164080903321
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Titolo	War Drama of the Eagles : Napoleon's Standard-Bearers On The Battlefield In Victory And Defeat From Austerlitz To Waterloo
Pubbl/distr/stampa	San Francisco : , : Wagram Press, , 2011 ©2011
ISBN	9781908692917 190869291X
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (236 pages)
Altri autori (Persone)	PublishingPickle Partners
Disciplina	940.274
Soggetti	Napoleonic Wars, 1800-1815 Military history
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di contenuto	Title page -- PREFACE -- ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS -- ILLUSTRATIONS -- MAPS -- LIST OF AUTHORITIES -- CHAPTER I -- NAPOLEON ADOPTS THE EAGLE OF CAESAR -- CHAPTER II -- THE DAY OF THE PRESENTATION ON THE FIELD OF MARS -- CHAPTER III -- IN THE FIRST CAMPAIGN:--UNDER FIRE WITH MARSHAL NEY -- CHAPTER IV -- ON THE FIELD OF AUSTERLITZ -- CHAPTER V -- IN THE SECOND CAMPAIGN- JENA AND THE TRIUMPH OF BERLIN -- CHAPTER VI -- PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE-THE "EAGLE-GUARD " -- CHAPTER VII -- BEFORE THE ENEMY AT ASPERN AND WAGRAM -- CHAPTER VIII -- "THE EAGLE WITH THE GOLDEN WREATH" -- IN LONDON -- CHAPTER IX -- OTHER EAGLES IN ENGLAND FROM BATTLEFIELDS OF SPAIN -- CHAPTER X -- IN THE HOUR OF DARKEST DISASTER AFTER MOSCOW: HOW THE EAGLES FACED THEIR FATE -- CHAPTER XI -- THAT TERRIBLE MIDNIGHT AT THE INVALIDES -- CHAPTER XII -- THE EAGLES OF THE LAST ARMY -- CHAPTER XIV -- AFTER THE DOWNFALL.
Sommario/riassunto	The eagle of Napoleon was a potent symbol of military might, men fought and died to possess the "cou-cou" that his regiments carried into battle. It represented the fidelity of a regiment to the cause of the French Empire, and more particularly the attachment of the brave warriors who fought beneath it to the greatest general of the age. To

lose an eagle was to lose the honour of the regiment, a stain that could not be removed apart from rare cases of exceptional service. Edward Fraser chronicles the history of the Napoleonic eagle standard and the men who fought under them and against them until the final demise of the Napoleonic era after Waterloo in 1815. Napoleon was well aware of how to stimulate the esprit de corps of his armies with symbols and continuing his innovation of giving distinct standards to specific regiments and recording battle honours on them from his time with the army of Italy, he decided on giving each battalion or squadron an eagle based on his own imperial insignia. The eagle of the battalion was the rallying point for the men in adversity, and a stimulant on the attack guiding the men toward their objective. Napoleon's enemies knew the power and cachet of capturing such a standard and fought hard to capture them on battlefields ranging from Borodino outside Moscow to the hot plains outside Cadiz in Spain. Fraser was a prominent historian of the period having written a number of books on the great battle of Trafalgar and Wellington's soldiers in the Peninsula. This work was written just before the outbreak of the First World War, with the Entente Cordiale in place, and is therefore more balanced than some of the earlier English works on the period which tended to a more anti-French view. Illustrations - 10 - all included Maps - 7 - all included
