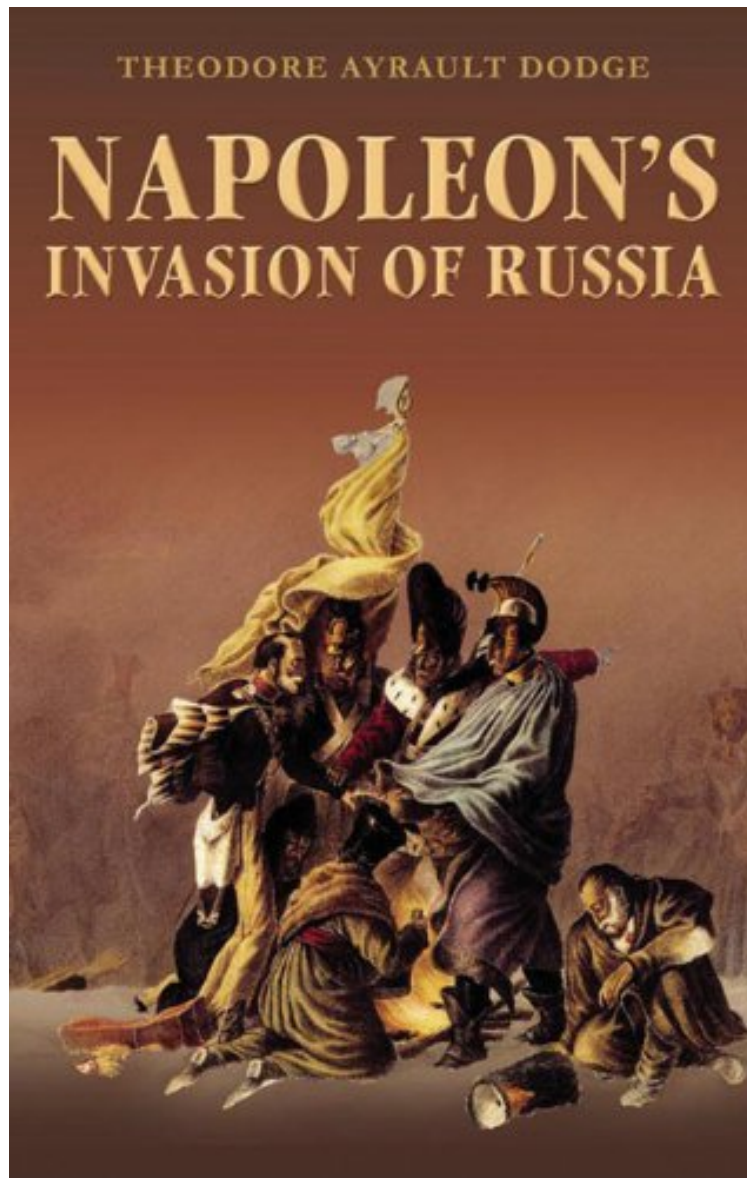


(Mobile ebook) Napoleon's Invasion of Russia

Napoleon's Invasion of Russia

Theodore Ayrault Dodge

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Theodore Ayrault Dodge : Napoleon's Invasion of Russia before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Napoleon's Invasion of Russia:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A fine piece of historical writing from one of the 19th C's greatestBy Avon Napoleonic FellowshipThe heart of this book is Dodge's analysis of the actions and mistakes of the key `actors', chiefly focussed on Napoleon. Each stage and phase of the campaign is described in detail, principally from the French

perspective. This is complemented by numerous quotes and Dodge's insightful analysis and critique. Detailed line drawings of generals and figures from specific military units, so often seen in books published in the late 19th and early 20th century, are dotted throughout the text. These are fine pieces in themselves, add a nice touch and break up the blocks of text nicely. As one would expect from a book that covers the entire campaign, the battles and actions are described in strategic rather than tactical terms, with only the main movements or actions mentioned. For example, his description of the great battle of Borodino describes the movements and actions of divisions and corps rather than those of brigades or units. The grand tactical view of the battle does not make it any the less compelling to read, with Dodge painting a fine word picture of the colossus struggle. "This massing of men and the tremendous array of guns opened the way for frightful losses" (p. 157). Contrary to many authors and commentators, Dodge's conclusion about the battle, and particularly Napoleon's decision not to use the Guard, is that it was justified at the time based on what Napoleon knew of the situation, but, with the benefit of hindsight and knowledge not known to Napoleon, was incorrect (pp. 166-171). Pleasingly, the book features numerous, detailed maps. While these are not as clear as those we have come to expect in more recent publications, they complement the text well. All of the towns that Dodge mentions are either indicated on a map or clearly evident from the location of forces indicated on the maps. That said, it takes some effort to track the movements of the formations and this would have been greatly enhanced by the addition of arrows and the like on each map, rather than simply towns, roads and rivers. One can hardly criticise the book for this though and I am pleased that the publishers have reproduced it in the original format with original maps. The book concludes with a reproduction of Napoleon's 29th bulletin in full. As Dodge notes, "whatever its prevarications, in view of the fact that those were not the days of special war correspondents and telegraphs, and compared with the reports of other unsuccessful campaigns by the commanding generals, it will hold its own". It is salutary reading and is a fine way to conclude what is a fine book.

Widely regarded as one of America's greatest historians, Dodge's work on Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812 is without parallel for scholarship or psychological sophistication. Beginning with Napoleon's doomed march on Russia, Dodge examines Napoleon's state of mind and the factors behind his decisions using personal letters and genuine reports. How could Napoleon, a proficient strategist, have led his army into such an atrocious situation and underestimated the severity of the Russian winter? In one of the most imposing invasions ever attempted? Napoleon could draw upon 600,000 men and 250,000 horses – the Grande Armée's success seemed inevitable. Few could imagine that only 100,000 would reach Moscow and all without having achieved the decisive battle that Napoleon sought. Dodge sheds new light on Napoleon's character as a soldier by focusing on his personal matters and behavior, putting aside his political concerns. The narrative provides the perfect introduction for those who want to learn more about Napoleon and the disastrous winter of 1812, as well as for the more seasoned Napoleonic scholar.

A fine piece of historical writing from one of the 19th C's greatest. - Avon Napoleonic Fellowship
About the Author Theodore Ayrault Dodge is regarded as one of America's greatest historians.