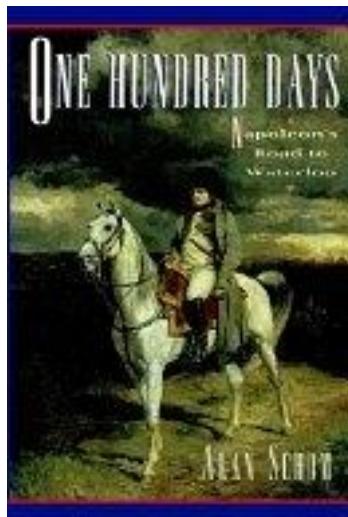


One Hundred Days



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On February 26, 1815, Napoleon, exiled Emperor of France--now dressed in a simple green uniform as Colonel of the Grenadiers--stepped aboard the brig *L'Inconstant* to the wildly enthusiastic cheers of his Elban subjects. Three days later, having barely avoided a British warship and a French naval vessel loyal to the Crown, the *L'Inconstant* traded the white flag of Elba for the French Tricolor as the rocky coast of the Cap d'Antibes came into view. With his return to French soil, accompanied only by a small force of one thousand men, Napoleon had set into motion the momentous events that would, over the next one hundred days, propel Europe once again into total war, ending only with the routing at Waterloo of the seemingly invincible Grande Armee, and Napoleon's final exile on St. Helena.

In *One Hundred Days*, Alan Schom offers us an epic tale of intrigue, high drama, and ultimate tragedy. By turns harrowing and exhilarating--and always charged with an undercurrent of impending doom--*One Hundred Days* is nothing less than the

definitive account of Napoleon's final campaign, told with the characteristic panache of one of our premier narrative historians. Landing unopposed near Cannes, Napoleon and his tiny army began their march through a hostile countryside impoverished by years of war, famine, and conscription. But gradually, thanks mainly to the Emperor's legendary charisma, thousands of men joined his ranks, swelling the force to nearly 20,000 soldiers. By the time these impressive columns reached Paris, Louis XVIII had fled the city and only crowds and parades remained to greet Napoleon's seemingly inevitable return to power. But fate was against him this time: the allies, stunned by what appeared to be a remarkable reversal of fortune, were already on the move. All roads now led to Waterloo. Besides being a lively and detailed look at Napoleon's final months as one of the most feared--and revered--men in Europe, *One Hundred Days* also offers vivid portraits of the many complex and fascinating personalities who surrounded him.

Schom has mined a rich trove of little-known diaries, memoirs, military dispatches, and letters to allow this diverse cast of characters, whenever possible, to speak for themselves. He brings to life in compelling fashion all of Napoleon's generals, his enemies, his ministers, even the common soldiers who fought in the apocalyptic showdown in Belgium. And, of course, there is the omnipresent, titanic figure of Napoleon himself, readying the invasion, mustering troops, and, amid the frenzy and confusion of the final battle, coming to the agonizing realization that all was over.

"We have taken Napoleon's hat," wrote Metternich to his daughter a few days after Waterloo, "It is to be hoped that we will now end in capturing the man himself." Within a month, the defeated Emperor was aboard the English frigate *Bellerophon* bound for exile, and thus dropped, in Marshal Ney's words, "the final curtain of the Napoleonade." More than an account of one of the formative events in modern European history, this book adds a human dimension to a story that has, over the years, assumed mythic proportions.

作者介绍:

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