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Bonaparte lost an unbelievable number of men when he (and they) were forced to retreat from Russia. After he was back in France, forces allied against him arrived in Paris (during late March of 1814). Napoleon's throne, at the beautiful Chateau de Fontainebleau, would no longer be his since Napoleon was forced to sign a treaty ending his days as emperor. Instead of living at Fontainebleau, he was forced to abdicate (and was exiled to the island of Elba). Image depicting Napoleon's throne room online via the Library of Congress.

When his Russian objectives failed, Napoleon began a "Great Retreat" with ghastly results. It is believed his men suffered 275,000 casualties with 200,000 more captured.

When his troops crossed the Berezina River, in November, only 10,000 fit soldiers were left from his Grand Campaign.

Napoleon's brother, Joseph Bonaparte, fared equally poorly in Spain where Arthur Wellesley (the future Duke of Wellington) forced a French retreat over the Pyrenees. Joseph abdicated in 1813.

Although Napoleon's forces had small victories during 1813, the "Battle of the Nations" (fought at Leipzig in October of 1813) significantly dashed French dreams of empire-building. About 350,000 Allies forced 195,000 Frenchmen to retreat into France.

More battles followed, but the odds were now overwhelmingly against Napoleon. Allied forces entered Paris on 30 March 1814. Napoleon had no choice but to abdicate.

His beloved palace of Fontainebleau, where he'd spent happy days, became the scene of a Treaty which ended Napoleon's grandiose plans. The former emperor was exiled to the island of Elba, off the western coast of Italy.

Louis XVIII was restored to the French throne, and the other European monarchs finally breathed a sigh of relief that the "madman" was gone. No one would have believed Napoleon had he said: "I'll be back!"

Except...that is exactly what happened.

By the spring of 1815, the former emperor had escaped from Elba and was on his way to Paris. En route, he had little trouble reuniting with his former soldiers.

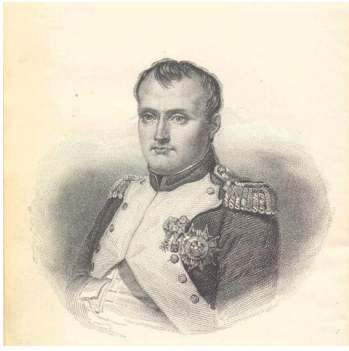
This time, however, Europe's monarchs would stop Napoleon before his momentum kicked in. This time, the Allies would try to catch Napoleon unprepared.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/NAPOLEON-ABDICATES-Vanity-Fair>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/NAPOLEON-ABDICATES-Vanity-Fair>

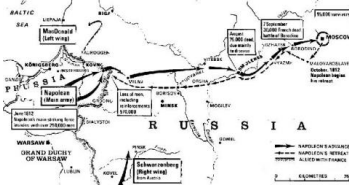


Napoleon: A Portrait

Image online, courtesy the napoleon-series.org website.

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View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Napoleon-A-Portrait>



A Map of the "Great Retreat" from Russia

Image online, courtesy Madan G Singh via PublishUS website.

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View this asset at:

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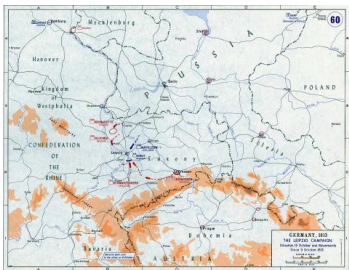
Painting of the Battle at Berezina, Nov. 26, 1812

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Map of Germany, 1813

Map image from the U.S. Military Academy's Map Collection. Online, courtesy USMA.

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Joseph Bonaparte and the Case of the Crown Jewels

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Arthur Wellesley - Portrait

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Leipzig Campaign, Map of Europe 1813

Map image from the [U.S. Military Academy's Map Collection](http://www.usma.edu/map-collection/). Online, courtesy USMA.

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Napoleon Wars - Campaign in France, 1814

Map image from the [U.S. Military Academy's Map Collection](http://www.usma.edu/map-collection/). Online, courtesy USMA.

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Napoleon's Home: Palace of Fontainebleau

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Napoleon-s-Home-Palace-of-Fontainebleau>



Emperor's Throne at Fontainebleau

Image online, courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Emperor-s-Throne-at-Fontainebleau>



Louis XVIII: a Portrait

Image online, courtesy the nobility.org website.

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Italian Isle of Elba

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Elba - View of the Coast

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Bonaparte - Prelude to Waterloo

This video clip, providing details and historical background, is online via YouTube.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Bonaparte-Prelude-to-Waterloo>



Bonaparte - Disaster in Russia

Clip from "Napoleon," a four-hour series by [David Grubin](#). The mini-series, produced by David Grubin Productions in association with Devillier Donegan Enterprises, originally aired on PBS during November of 2000 as part of the series on [Empires](#). Copyright, Grubin Productions, all rights reserved. Clip provided here as fair use for educational purposes and to acquaint new viewers with the program.

The entire documentary runs 240 minutes.

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