

An acclaimed classic of the many memoirs to have survived from the epic, tragic and disastrous Russian Campaign of 1812. This translation is taken from chapters of Fezensac's larger memoir - *Souvenirs Militaires de 1804 a 1815 par le duc de Fezensac*, Paris, 1863. The author starts the campaign as an aide-de-camp attached to the General Staff, and is slightly more insulated to the horrors of the march to Moscow, although glimpses of the hardships reach even the higher reaches of command. Later, after the fire and sack of Moscow, he takes command of regiment of infantry and it is then that the truly epic struggles the men undertook against their principal nature on the retreat from Moscow. His regiment forms part of Marechal Ney's dwindling, over-worked, staving rearguard, and is witness to its trials and Homeric travails including the crossings of the Dneiper and Berezina. This edition is introduced by a pithy summation of the campaign by General Knollys, who without impinging on the narrative, gives a good overall account of the campaign leaving the details of Fezensac's experiences to be brought out in his own words. Raymond-Aymerie-Philippe-Joseph de Montesquiou-Fezensac, born in Paris in 1784 into an ancient noble family, a cadet branch of the House of Gascony, he volunteered as a private soldier in 1803. He achieved rapid promotion in the campaigns of 1805 and 1806, and later serving as Marechal Ney's aide-de-camp. His promotion would not have been hampered by his marriage to Mademoiselle Clarke, daughter of the Minister of War, General Clarke who held this post the majority of the Empire, also played a pivotal role in the fall of Paris and Napoleon's abdication in 1814. Created a baron of the empire by Napoleon, he had been promoted to the rank of chef d'escadron by the time of the 1812 Russian campaign. He was promoted to general de brigade in 1813 during the German campaign of 1813 but did not rally to Napoleon during the Hundred Days. He was elevated to the title of comte in 1817 and duc in 1821. The text, whole and complete, is taken from the edition published in 1852 by Parker, Furnivall, and Parker, London. Author: Raymond-Aymerie-Philippe-Joseph de Montesquiou-Fezensac 1784-1867. Translator and Introduction: General Sir William Thomas Knollys 1797-1883

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