

LETTERS BY NAPOLEON & HIS CONTEMPORARIES

garde ; informez moi quand le régiment sera formé +  
votre vœu avec le gouvernement pour qu'on ne permette  
point de bâtir dans les faubourgs de Prag ni de fortification  
fait par la lettre ci-jointe au Roi de Prusse à Dan  
par un courrier, de vous en même temps la nouvelle  
dame. Sur ce je prie Dieu qu'il vous ait en sa sainte  
très bonne garde. à J. Cloud le 4 août 1807.

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Illustrations:

*Front cover:* composite image based upon items 2 and 4  
*Rear cover:* four letters from Napoleon to Davout, 1807-1815  
(items 2,3,4, and 8)  
*Contents page:* signature adapted from item 4

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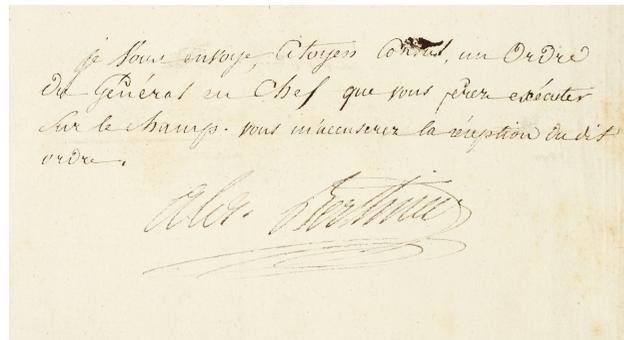


# LETTERS BY NAPOLEON & HIS CONTEMPORARIES

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1. **BERTHIER, Louis-Alexandre, Prince of Neuchâtel and Wagram.** Letter signed ('Alex Berthier') from Berthier to the French consul at Malta [i.e. Jean André Caruson], *Head-Quarters at Malta*, '25 Prairial, an 6' [i.e. 13 June 1798].

One page, folio (339 x 225mm), printed letterhead 'Armée d'Angleterre A Quartier-général [...] État-Major Général' with manuscript insertions, dated at the head in an early hand '13 juin' and docketed '86'; folded for dispatch, minimal light spotting, small tear, minor marginal chipping, small reinforcements on verso, otherwise very good. £350

A LETTER FROM BERTHIER, THE CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF, TO THE FRENCH CONSUL AT MALTA, CONVEYING AN ORDER FROM NAPOLEON, THE DAY AFTER THE FRENCH HAD CONQUERED MALTA. In early 1798, Napoleon had realised that the projected invasion of England he had been charged with planning was unlikely to succeed, so he persuaded the Directory to allow him to undertake an invasion of Egypt instead, with the intention of gaining control of British interests in Central Asia and the Middle East. Napoleon embarked for Egypt on 19 May 1798, and on 9 June his forces requested permission to use the Grand Harbour at Malta, which was refused. Using this pretext and emboldened by reports from French agents and representatives on the island (including Caruson), which described weak defences, the French invasion force landed on Malta at four separate points on the night of 9 June. Grand Master Ferdinand von Hompesch of the Knights of St. John asked for an armistice on 11 June and on 12 June Malta fell to Napoleon. This letter was written by Berthier the following day, and conveyed an order (no longer present) from Napoleon to Caruson, and requested that the order would be executed immediately and receipt of the order acknowledged (we cannot trace this order in the published correspondence).

Berthier had been appointed Chief of Staff of the *Armée d'Italie* by Napoleon in 1796, and from that time was an indispensable colleague, who was responsible for communicating Napoleon's orders to the army and ensuring that they were executed. He was promoted to Chief of Staff of the *Grande Armée*, and the collaboration between the two men – one devising strategy, the other managing its effective implementation – led to a series of brilliant successes. This method of collaboration evolved through the Egyptian Campaign, as Franck Favier explains: '[d]e cette campagne, Berthier fit un relation fort intéressante, même si elle semble dictée. Son rôle, nous le verrons, fut celui d'un chef d'état-major sans réels pouvoirs de décision mais plutôt d'exécution. Il partagea le quotidien, le moral de l'armée, mais les occasions de se distinguer ou de concourir au succès par des actes personnels furent minces. La campagne d'Égypte est la volonté de Bonaparte qui a pris de la maturité et s'impose réellement comme le chef incontesté de l'expédition' (*Berthier. L'ombre de Napoléon* (Paris: 2015), p. 97).

Less than a week after this letter was written, Napoleon and Berthier would depart the island for Egypt and disembark at Alexandria on 1 July 1798.

DIPLOMACY, STRATEGY, AND THE SPOILS OF WAR – NAPOLEON CONSOLIDATES HIS GAINS AFTER TILSIT

par un courrier, auroyez lui en même temps la nouvelle de  
bonne. Surce, je prie Dieu qu'il vous ait en sa sainte  
et digne garde. à St. Cloud le 4 août 1807.



2. NAPOLEON I, *Emperor of the French*. Letter signed ('Napoleon') to Louis Nicholas Davout ('Mon Cousin'), *St. Cloud*, 4 August 1807.

4 pp. on one bifolium, 4to (226 x 185mm); in the hand of baron de Méneval, numbered '47.' in top right corner and docketed 'Au Maréchal Davout' at bottom of 1r, both in ink in a near-contemporary hand; folded for dispatch, a small historical red ink mark on 2v, generally very good and clean; *provenance*: Louise-Aimée-Julie Davout, princesse d'Eckmühl (identified as the owner in *Correspondance de Napoléon 1er* (Paris: 1864), XV, p. 470) – sale, 'Empire', Sotheby's Paris, 2 December 2003, lot 272 – 'collection privée' (cf. *Correspondance générale* (Paris: 2010), VII, no. 16107).

£4750

'FAITES MOI CONNAÎTRE SI L'ON EST CONTENT À VARSOVIE DE LA CONSTITUTION QUE JE LEUR AI DONNÉE' – a wide-ranging and important letter from Napoleon to Louis-Nicolas Davout (1770-1823), 'one of the most, perhaps the most, able of Napoleon's

marshals' (H. Richardson, *A Dictionary of Napoleon and his Times* (London: 1920), p. 143), who would remain loyal to Napoleon through defeat and the Hundred Days, when he became the minister of war.

After embarking on a military career at the age of 17, Davout had advanced quickly within Napoleon's army, and distinguished himself at the Battle of Aboukir. In 1800 he married Louise-Aimée Leclerc (the sister-in-law of Napoleon's sister Pauline), and thus became a kinsman of Napoleon, who addressed him as 'Mon Cousin' in their correspondence. Davout was appointed marshal in 1804, played an instrumental role at Austerlitz, was made duc de Auerstädt in 1806 (in acknowledgement of his achievement of defeating the Duke of Brunswick, and thus deciding the outcome of the Prussian campaign), and in 1809, upon his success at Eckmühl, he was granted the title prince d'Eckmühl. During the Polish campaign, Napoleon dispatched Davout to Warsaw, whence he led the troops to victory at Eylau in June 1807.

This letter was composed on 4 August 1807, less than a month after Napoleon had concluded treaties at Tilsit with Russia (7 July 1807) and Prussia (9 July 1807), which consolidated his control over the Empire – a point often seen as the apogee of his reign. Through these treaties, which were negotiated and signed on a raft on the River Nieman, Napoleon and Alexander I established an alliance between France and Russia, halved the territory of Prussia, and divided the spoils of war between themselves, allocating some former Prussian territories to Russia, and then creating the Duchy of Warsaw (which would be ruled by Napoleon's ally, the King of Saxony), and the Kingdom of Westphalia, which would be ruled by Napoleon's younger brother, Jérôme Bonaparte, from the remainder.

This letter to Davout, whom Napoleon had named the Governor General of Warsaw, opens with a discussion of the impact of the treaties in terms of financial gain and administration, and he returns to these questions throughout the letter. Napoleon explains that, through his treaty with the King of Saxony, he has retained all of the claims of the King of Prussia over the Duchy of Warsaw, including his revenues of ca. 50 or 60 million francs. Further, the Duchy is estimated to yield 250,000 francs – and projected, if it is properly managed, to return 300,000 – and Davout is to inform Étienne Vincent-Marniola (1781-1809, Napoleon's resident at Warsaw) of the reservation of twenty million francs of properties for the Poles. Of these twenty million, two million have already been allocated to General Jan Henryk Dombrowski and General Josef Zajoncsek (both men had joined the Napoleonic army in 1797 and were at the head of the Polish army in early 1807). Vincent-Marniola is to receive further information from Hugues-Bernard Maret, duc de Bassano and Napoleon's secretary of state at the time, and to consult Davout on the overall revenue from the Duchy.

Of particular interest is Napoleon's request, '[f]aites moi connaître si l'on est content à varsovie de la constitution que je leur ai donnée', which refers to the constitution of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw he had published on 22 July, shortly before this letter was written. The constitution was based upon French legislation, with an acknowledgement of Polish political and

social structures and traditions, and was notable not only for the relatively liberal ideas that it introduced, but also for the extent that power was invested in the ruler, the King of Saxony.

Napoleon also discusses military matters, asking, '[f]aites moi connaître ce qu'il ya de nouveau du côté du Niemen, et si l'armée russe est dissoute' (under the terms of the treaties, the Russian army was to be disbanded) and – demonstrating how extensive his interest in all aspects of the military infrastructure was – '[f]aites moi connaître aussi la situation de vos hôpitaux'. Many hospitals had been established earlier in the year, particularly since the heavy casualties of the battle of Eylau had placed great strain upon the existing hospitals: '[s]o great were the preparations made that though, on the 30th June, 1807, there were 27,376 men in hospital, it was calculated that there was still available accommodation for nearly 30,000 men' (F. Loraine Petre, *Napoleon's Campaign in Poland 1806-1807* (London: 2001), p. 26). Regarding the disposition of Davout's troops throughout the area, Napoleon supposes that he will have stationed divisions at Toruń, Włocławek, Płock, Bydgoszcz, Warsaw, Rawa Mazowiecka, Pułtusk, Ostrołęka, Kalisz and Poznań, and judges that, '[a]insi distribuées, il me semble impossible que les troupes ne soient pas agréablement placées'. With regard to his other marshals, Napoleon states that Oudinot should remain at Gdansk with all of his reserves and that Soult will only withdraw as far as the Vistula.

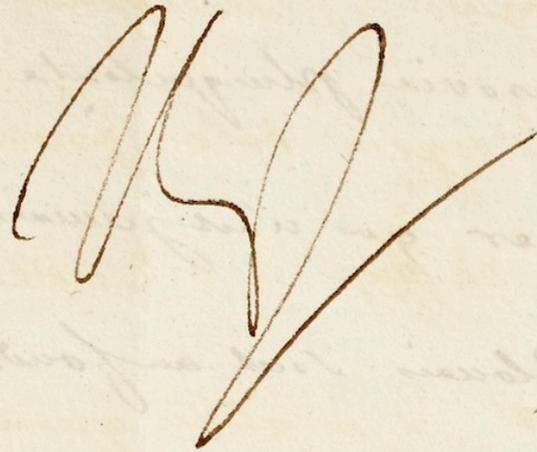
The Emperor then turns to questions of fortifications and urges Davout to complete the bridgehead at Prague, the works that had been initiated at Serock, and the defences in progress at Toruń. This is followed by thoughts on troop movements, a request for confirmation that the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> corps have returned to Silesia, and the proposal that a force of 6,000 infantry and 1,500 cavalry should be assembled, which is always ready to go to the aid of Poland if necessary; '[l]es Generaux Doubrowsky & Zayonchick doivent rester au service de la Pologne'.

This letter was written by Claude-François, baron de Méneval, Napoleon's private secretary from 1802-1813 – a position of privilege, which required great discretion. Méneval, who accompanied Napoleon on his journeys and campaigns throughout his period of employment, managed the large volume of letters Napoleon dictated, often at high speed, by first taking dictation in shorthand and then providing longhand transcriptions, which were checked and signed by Napoleon for dispatch. This letter appears to have been dictated with great urgency, rather than composed in calm circumstances: its themes are distributed across the letter, with further thoughts on subjects seemingly concluded in the first portion added later in the text.

The lines and markings added to the manuscript in a different campaign may be Davout's own reading marks, intended to facilitate his navigation of the text and to identify the passages that required him to act further. The letter was signed by Napoleon, unusually with his full name, and, after Davout's death, it passed to his widow, Aimée, princesse d'Eckmühl.

**'LES POLONAIS SONT LÉGERS, ACTIFS ... LES POLONAIS SONT, AU FOND, ATTACHÉS À LA FRANCE'  
AN UNUSUALLY LYRICAL LETTER FROM NAPOLEON ON THE POLES AND POLAND**

*vous ait eu fait et d'ignorer garde. Bayonne le 17  
avril 1808.*



3. **NAPOLEON I.** Letter signed ('Np') to Louis Nicholas Davout ('Mon Cousin'), *Bayonne*, '17 aout 1808' [but 17 April 1808].

2 pp. on one l. [v with one line and signature only], 4to (226 x 184mm); in the hand of baron de Méneval, dated at the head 17 August 1808, corrected to 17 April 1808 after the final sentence in a different hand, numbered '61.' in top right corner and docketed 'Au Maréchal Davout' at bottom of r, both in ink in a near-contemporary hand; folded twice for dispatch, generally very crisp and clean; *provenance*: Louise-Aimée-Julie Davout, princesse d'Eckmühl (identified as the owner in *Correspondance de Napoléon 1er* (Paris: 1865), XVII, p. 20) – sale, 'Empire', Sotheby's Paris, 2 December 2003, lot 284 – 'collection privée' (cf. *Correspondance générale* (Paris: 2011), VIII, no. 17633).

£4250

‘LES POLONAIS SONT LÉGERS, ACTIFS. LES GRANDES VILLES EN GÉNÉRAL ONT CE CARACTÈRE, VARSOVIE PLUS QUE TOUTE AUTRE; ELLES SONT COMME LA SURFACE DE LA MER QUI N’EST JAMAIS LA MÊME DEUX JOURS DE SUITE. MAIS LES POLONAIS SONT AU FOND ATTACHÉS À LA FRANCE.’ A remarkable and unusually lyrical letter written in April 1808, discussing the Poles and the Duchy of Warsaw, which had been instituted in July 1807 and was seen by many Poles as the kernel of a future Polish state, which would restore the losses of territory and population caused by successive invasions and consequent partitions. With a patriotic and enthusiastic response to Napoleon’s arrival, many Polish men enlisted voluntarily for the Napoleonic army, hoping that Napoleon would enlarge the Duchy to return Poland to its historical boundaries and influence. Thus, Polish troops served in many Napoleonic campaigns (including the Peninsular War, which would start at the beginning of July, less than three months after this letter was composed), but never saw the expected benefits once they returned to Poland (indeed, a Polish state was only formally constituted again a century or so after Napoleon’s death).

Napoleon comments that he finds the Polish people ‘légers, actifs’, noting that their major cities – Warsaw above all – share those characteristics, and are as constantly changeable as the surface of the sea. Nonetheless, he judges that, at heart, the Poles are attached to France. He then explains that, in taking the Polish into his service, he was acting in their best interest – he does not require further soldiers, since any number he requires is available in France; he had even stipulated in the ‘capitulation’ that Polish troops should not be sent to service at sea or in the colonies. The letter closes with the request that Davout contact baron de Bourgoing, to urge him to arrange the departure of troops; he is not to send any companies of fewer than 140 men: ‘Ce n’est pas une nuée d’officiers que je veux, mais des corps dont je puisse me servir’.

Napoleon had arrived at Bayonne in the French Basque country on 14 April, less than a month after Charles IV’s enforced abdication in favour of his son Ferdinand. Ferdinand had arranged a meeting with Napoleon in the city a few days before this letter was written, and the difficulties in Spain, the threat of a revolt, and Napoleon’s refusal to recognise Ferdinand as king foreshadowed later developments, including the Peninsular War – Ferdinand only remained in power until May, when he abdicated and the Spanish royal family was forced into exile to France. This letter, which discusses the Polish army and its merits for future campaigns, was most probably written with the anticipated military conflict in mind.

The letter was written by Claude-François, baron de Méneval, who was Napoleon’s private secretary from 1802-1813, and, after Davout’s death, it passed to his widow, Aimée, princesse d’Eckmühl.

NAPOLEON PLANS THE SUBJUGATION OF SPAIN, FOLLOWING A HUMILIATING DEFEAT:  
'DUPONT A DESHONORÉ NOS ARMES; IL A MONTRÉ AUTANT D'INEPTIE QUE DE PUSILLANIMITÉ'

*l'Autriche. Surce, je prie Dieu qu'il vous ait,  
mon Cousin, en sa sainte et digne garde.  
St. Cloud le 23 aout 1808.*

*Napoleon*

4. NAPOLEON I. Letter signed ('Napoleon') to Louis Nicholas Davout ('Mon Cousin'), *St. Cloud*, 23 August 1808.

4 pp. on one bifolium, 4to (225 x 183mm); in the hand of baron de Méneval, numbered '62.' in top right corner and docketed 'Au Maréchal Davout' at bottom of 1r, both in ink in a near-contemporary hand; folded twice for dispatch, a couple of historical ink smudges on outer pp., signature slightly smudged, generally very good and clean; *provenance*: Louise-Aimée-Julie Davout, princesse d'Eckmühl (identified as the owner in *Correspondance de Napoléon 1er* (Paris: 1865), XVII, pp. 539-40) – sale, 'Empire', Sotheby's Paris, 2 December 2003, lot 287 – 'collection privée' (cf. *Correspondance générale* (Paris: 2011), VIII, no. 18746).

£12,500

‘LES ANGLAIS AYANT DÉBARQUÉ DES FORCES ASSEZ CONSIDÉRABLES EN ESPAGNE, J’AI RAPPELÉ LE 1<sup>ER</sup> ET LE 6<sup>E</sup> CORPS ET TROIS DIVISIONS DE DRAGONS DE LA GRANDE ARMÉE POUR FINIR CET HIVER DE SOUMETTRE CE PAYS.’ In this important letter Napoleon plans a decisive intervention in the Peninsular War, which had broken out earlier in the year. The early months of the Peninsular War had been disastrous for the French: on 19 July, Dupont capitulated at Bailén, surrendering his army of some 18,000 men – about a third of the French forces in Spain – to the Army of Andalusia, and on 21 August (two days before this letter was written), Sir Arthur Wellesley’s Allied forces had defeated Junot at Vimeiro, and taken his army captive. These two defeats not only severely diminished the French forces, but also demonstrated that the conqueror of Europe was not invincible and thus contributed greatly to Allied morale. Napoleon understood the importance of victory in the Peninsula and, in this letter, he plans the subjugation of Spain, while ensuring that his central European conquests are not vulnerable to the depredations of a belligerent Austria, which was re-arming.

Napoleon commences by informing Davout that he has recalled the 1<sup>st</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> corps and three divisions of dragoons of the Grande Armée, in order to form a force which would completely conquer Spain in the coming winter. He then roundly condemns Dupont’s incompetence and cowardice, and promises retribution against the Allies with the words, ‘Dupont a deshonoré nos armes; il a montré autant d’ineptie que de pusillanimité. Quand vous apprendrez cela un jour, les cheveux vous dresseront sur la tête. J’en ferai bonne justice, & s’ils ont taché notre habit, il faudra qu’ils le lavent’. (These sentences are used by Max Gallo in the third volume of his *Napoléon* (Paris: 1997), when they are spoken by Napoleon to Davout in a fictitious meeting set earlier in August 1808.)

Demonstrating a comprehensive knowledge of the forces at his command, Napoleon then explains how he will provide Davout with a sizeable army numbering some 100,000 troops, despite the forthcoming campaign in Spain, to fend off possible Austrian attacks. Davout has been given command of Poland and Silesia, and ‘vous y avez le 3<sup>e</sup> corps, la division Oudinot, une division de dragons et la division de cuirassiers qui est à Baireuth. Un régiment de marche de 3,000 hommes, formé de détachements de vos quinze corps, va partir pour vous rejoindre; un autre régiment de marche fort de 4,000 h[omm]es également tiré des depots de vos corps va se mettre en mouvement pour porter votre corps d’armée à 39,000 hommes d’infanterie, et la division du g[éné]ral Oudinot à 11,000 hommes, ce qui vous formera un effectif de 50,000 hommes; & 20,000 Polonais ou Saxons, qui pourraient y être joints, vous feraient un effectif de 70,000 hommes d’infanterie. Des détachements de cavalerie partent également pour renforcer tous vos corps, de manière à ce que vous ayez 13,000 chevaux, ce qui avec 4 ou 5,000 Saxons ou Polonais, vous ferait 18,000 chevaux, et avec 12,000 hommes d’artillerie francais et étrangers, vous auriez à vous seul une armée de près de 100,000 h[omm]es’.

Commenting that ‘[l]es Saxons et les Polonais valent bien les Autrichiens’, Napoleon adds that marshal Mortier’s 5<sup>th</sup> corps is

making its way to Bayreuth; while he would dearly wish to bring it back to France, he is still undecided on the matter, and it will be at Davout's disposal, should unforeseen events arise.

Napoleon then considers the problem of the Austrian preparations for war, and the possible threat to the French Empire from their army: '[I] Autriche arme, mais elle arme par peur. Nos relations sont au mieux avec cette puissance; mais enfin elle arme, et j'ai commencé par lui demander des explications assez vives'. He further asserts that, due to his confidence in the alliance that France formed with Russia at Tilsit, he does not fear any attacks from Austria; nonetheless, he would rather be prepared for the worst: 'il faut se tenir en règle et avoir les yeux ouverts'. In accordance with the terms agreed at Tilsit, French forces will be withdrawn from Prussia and then be redeployed. The letter concludes with reassurances and advice to Davout: '[t]outes les troupes de la Confédération sont sous les armes, et au moindre signal de préparatifs menaçants que ferait l'Autriche, elles seraient en marche. Soyez rassurant dans votre langage; car je ne veux rien de l'Autriche'.

On 24 August, the day after this letter was written, Ferdinand VII was again proclaimed king in Madrid, and the conflict in the Peninsula continued to go against the French, leading them to withdraw from Portugal on 30 October 1808. Shortly afterwards, on 8 November 1808, Napoleon entered Spain with an army of 200,000 men, with the intention of achieving the conclusive victory which he anticipated in this letter, but, despite some early victories, the Peninsular War – which would be known as 'l'ulcère espagnol' – became a persistent and problematic drain on France's military resources over the following six years.

As Napoleon feared, Austria, sensing France's weakness, declared war in the following April, thus initiating the War of the Fifth Coalition (the eponymous coalition was formed of the Austrians and the British). Despite some initial successes, the Austrians were defeated by Napoleon and the conflict would end with the French victory of the French at Wagram (5-6 July 1809). The formal terms of the peace and an Austrian-French alliance were established by the Treaty of Schönbrunn (14 October 1809), which allocated a large amount of Austria's territory to France and its allies, and obliged Austria to pay an indemnity, reduce its army, and sever diplomatic and commercial ties with Britain. The alliance between Austria and France was further strengthened the following year, when Marie-Louise, the eldest daughter of Francis I of Austria, married Napoleon in Paris on 1-2 April 1810.

This letter was written by Claude-François, baron de Méneval, who was Napoleon's private secretary from 1802-1813, and, after Davout's death, it passed to his widow, Aimée, princesse d'Eckmühl.

A VERY DETAILED AND IMPORTANT LETTER FROM NAPOLEON TO GENERAL CLARKE, THE MINISTER OF WAR, CREATING A FORCE FROM THE 'YOUNG GUARD' AND 'OLD GUARD' TO STRENGTHEN THE FRENCH ARMY IN SPAIN

de l'administration de la garde, du Boulanger et tout ce qui est nécessaire pour faire campagne. au 15<sup>e</sup> décembre, le Général Dorsenne y passera la revue de cette 1<sup>re</sup> division; après le temps qu'il en aura passé je donnerai un ordre pour sa destination ultérieure. La revue aura lieu sur la place de Chartres. = La 2<sup>e</sup> division sera composée du 1<sup>er</sup> régiment de Cuirassiers et du 1<sup>er</sup> régiment de tirailleurs Chasseurs, du 1<sup>er</sup> rég<sup>t</sup>. à cheval et du 1<sup>er</sup> rég<sup>t</sup>. de tirailleurs Grenadiers, chaque régiment aura 1600 hommes pris en son arme, d'un régiment de Cavalerie formé d'un escadron de Cheval légers Polonais, d'un escadron de Chasseurs, d'un escadron de Grenadiers et d'un escadron de Dragons formé de 600 hommes, en ayant soin de prendre les hommes les moins fatigués. chaque régiment d'infanterie aura deux pièces d'artillerie, les autres qui fera huit pièces qui seront fournis par une de compagnies d'artillerie qui se formera à la force, du caisson, administration etc. Cette division sera commandée par le G<sup>al</sup> Dumas de la garde. Je passerai la revue de cette division le 15 au Cambrésis; elle devra être dans le cas de partir le 16 décembre. = La 3<sup>e</sup> division sera composée de deux régiments de fusiliers et de deux régiments de la vieille garde, composés chacun de 1600 h<sup>ommes</sup> pris en son arme et aura 8 pièces de canon. = Tout la Cavalerie de la garde, avec 60 pièces d'artillerie, 4000 mules attelés, et les pontons à la suite de la Compagnie de pontonniers et des marins, sera prête à partir le 1<sup>er</sup> janvier. J'irai passer la revue le 1<sup>er</sup> janvier à midi au Cambrésis. Ainsi la garde sera composée à son départ pour l'Espagne de 10000 hommes d'infanterie, de 4000 hommes de cavalerie et de 84 pièces de canon, avec tout le caisson, ~~et~~ administrateurs et tout ce qui est nécessaire. Ce Corps sera commandé par le Duc d'Angoulême pour un ordre immédiat. Donner sur le champ tous les ordres, afin que les Généraux de la garde fassent toutes les dispositions nécessaires pour remettre l'état de caisson, des provisions et matériel de l'administration, du Boulanger etc. Il est à désirer que la garde ait les caissons nécessaires pour porter du pain au moins pour quatre jours. Soyez je prie Dieu qu'il vous ait cette sainte garde. à Paris le 5 décembre 1809.

Recu le 5<sup>e</sup> 1809, et remis le même jour, par le  
M<sup>re</sup> Gerard, qui le communiquera à M<sup>re</sup> Labarie  
~~qui sera porteur~~ M<sup>re</sup> Gaffendy.

*Napoléon*

Siison 85/86  
127

5. NAPOLEON I. Letter signed ('Napol') to général Henri Clarke, duc de Feltre ('Monsieur le Général Clarke'), Paris, 5 December 1809.

3 pp. on a bifolium, 4to (227 x 183mm); in the hand of baron de Méneval, with an annotation in another contemporary hand at the foot confirming receipt of the letter and the communication of its contents, and one autograph correction by Napoleon on the first page; written on watermarked paper, all edges gilt; folded once for dispatch, very light creasing of bottom corner; *provenance*: [?sale, Sotheby's London, 10 May 1984, lot 358 (part of a lot comprising 27 letters from Napoleon to Clarke, 9 April-5 December 1809)] – [?sale, Christie's London, 16 December 1991, lot 311 (part of a lot comprising 28 letters from Napoleon to Clarke, 9 April-5 December 1809)] – sale, Piasa, Paris, 3 December 2002, lot 175 (cf. *Correspondance générale* (Paris: 2013), IX, no. 22557). £4750

‘LA GARDE IMPÉRIALE DOIT RECEVOIR L’ORDRE DE SE TENIR PRÊTE À ENTRER EN CAMPAGNE POUR LA CAMPAGNE D’ESPAGNE.’ A detailed and important letter, in which Napoleon directs Clarke, his minister of war, to assemble a force comprised of three divisions of the elite imperial guard, which will be sent to Spain to reinforce the French army in Spain, stating that ‘[c]e corps sera commandé par le Duc d’Istrie [i.e. maréchal Bessières, who had been created duc d’Istrie in May 1809] sous mes ordres immédiats’.

The Treaty of Schönbrunn (14 October 1809), concluded the short-lived War of the Fifth Coalition and thus enabled Napoleon to return to the pressing problem of the Peninsular War and redeploy men and *matériel* previously engaged in the Austrian campaign to Spain. This letter provides a fascinating and informative insight into Napoleon’s strengths as a military commander and strategist, with a comprehensive and meticulous knowledge of the forces under his command, and how he assembled forces for specific purposes, equipping them not only with the weaponry that they required for their campaign, but also the necessary logistical support, including bakers and ambulances. Equally interesting is his desire not to field battle-weary soldiers unless necessary and the request that Clarke chooses ‘les hommes les moins fatigués’ above others.

The corps which Napoleon assembled through the orders in this letter was divided into three divisions, the first two drawn from the Young Guard, and under the command of the *généraux de brigade* who had led them to victory at Wagram some months earlier, and the third from the Old Guard. This new force was to be mustered, inspected, and then dispatched to Spain in the following weeks: the first division is to assemble at Chartres on 13 December 1809, and, provisionally, will be commanded by général de brigade François Roguet. This division will be composed ‘d’un escadron de cheveu-légers Polonais, d’un escadron de chasseurs, de la compagnie de mameluks, d’un escadron de dragons et d’un escadron de Grenadiers, le tout formant 600 chevaux. On prendra de préférence les hommes qui sont à Paris et qui n’ont pas fait-la campagne d’Allemagne, et le G[énéral] Walther désignera un major de la Garde pour commander ce régiment de cavalerie. L’infanterie de cette division sera composée du 2<sup>e</sup> régiment de conscrits et du 2<sup>e</sup> régiment de tirailleurs chasseurs formant la 1<sup>ère</sup> brigade, du 2<sup>e</sup> régiment de conscrits et du 2<sup>e</sup> régiment de tirailleurs Grenadiers formant la 2<sup>e</sup> brigade. Chacun de ces régiments sera fort de 1,600 hommes au moment du départ. Il y aura deux pièces de 3 ou de 4 attachées à chaque régiment avec les caissons d’infanterie nécessaires. Ces 8 pieces

seront servies par une des trois compagnies d'artillerie de la Garde qui se réunissent à la Fère. On joindra également à cette division des caissons pour le transport du pain, des ambulances, un commissaire des guerres, un détachement de l'administration de la Garde, des boulangers et tout ce qui est nécessaire pour faire campagne. Au 15 décembre le général Dorsenne passera la revue de cette 1<sup>ère</sup> division; & sur le compte qu'il m'en rendra le 17, je donnerai des ordres pour sa destination ulterieure. La revue aura lieu sur la place de Chartres'.

The second division will be commanded by général de brigade Pierre Dumoustier, and will be composed 'du 1<sup>er</sup> régiment de conscrits et du 1<sup>er</sup> régiment de tirailleurs chasseurs, du 1<sup>er</sup> rég[imen]t de conscrits et du 1<sup>er</sup> rég[imen]t de tirailleurs Grenadiers, chaque régiment ayant 1600 hommes présents sous les armes, d'un régiment de cavalerie formé d'un escadron de cheveau legers polonais, d'un escadron de chasseurs, d'un escadron de Grenadiers et d'un escadron de Dragons fort de 600 hommes, en ayant soin de prendre les hommes les moins fatigués. Chaque régiment d'infanterie aura deux pieces d'artillerie; ce qui fera huit pièces, qui seront servies par une des compagnies d'artillerie qui se forment à la Fère, des caissons, administrations, &c. [...] Je passerai la revue de cette division le 15, au Carrousel; elle devra être dans le cas de partir le 16 décembre'.

The third division will be formed 'de deux régiments de fusiliers et de deux régiments de la vieille garde composés chacun de 1600 h[omm]es présents sous les armes et aura 8 pieces de canon. Toute la cavalerie de la Garde, avec 60 pieces d'artillerie, 4000 outils attelés, et six pontons à la suite de la compagnie de pontonniers et des marins, sera prête à partir le 1<sup>er</sup> janvier. J'en passerai la revue le 1<sup>er</sup> janvier à midi au Carrousel'. Napoleon then concludes with a summary of the force that he has constructed in this manner: '[a]insi ma Garde sera composée à son départ pour l'Espagne de 19000 hommes d'infanterie, de 4000 hommes de cavalerie et de 84 pieces de canon, avec tous les caissons, administrations et tout ce qui est nécessaire. Ce corps sera commandé par le duc d'Istrie sous mes ordres immédiats'. The letter ends with an instruction to disseminate his orders as quickly as possible, and a final note on the victualling of the force: [i]l est nécessaire que la Garde ait les caissons nécessaires pour porter du pain au moins pour quatre jours'.

This letter was published, with some variations and minor omissions, in *Correspondance de Napoléon 1er*, XX, no. 16032 and also in *Correspondance générale* (no. 22557), again with some variations and minor omissions; neither of the two editions appear to have drawn upon the present manuscript, although the newer edition used a catalogue illustration of part of it. *Correspondance générale* records eight letters from Napoleon to Clarke written on 5 December 1809 (nos 22554-22561), so it is possible that this letter was not included in the lots sold by Sotheby's and Christie's noted above.

Ce Courrier a du tomber hier a la suite d'un journal et  
doit arriver aujourd'hui a Montmirail.

Le Sieur Vie Comitalde, Major General

(\*) Le Sieur de la Fayette  
Arcis-sur-Aube

Exp. le 20 Mars 1814.

6. NAPOLEON I and Louis-Alexandre BERTHIER, *Prince of Neuchâtel and Wagram*. Letter signed ('Alexandre') from Berthier to Napoleon with a two-line autograph reply by Napoleon, *Plancy*, 20 March 1814.

One page, 4to (250 x 202mm); folded for posting, slightly browned and spotted, margins skilfully reinforced on verso with japanese tissue; *provenance*: early, carefully erased annotation in lower margin – neat annotation in a 19th-century French hand on the upper margin and another on the lower margin identifying Napoleon's response (marked with an 'X') as 'note de la main de Napoléon' (possibly executed when the manuscript was mounted in an album) – loose, early-20th-century typed description of the letter and translation into English, one l., traces of mounting on verso (presumably mounted on an album leaf with the letter when sold at:) – sale, Parke Bernet, New York, 1 December 1947, lot 353 ('The letter is mounted on a sheet of paper; undoubtedly extracted from an album') – sale, Bloomsbury Book Auctions, 18 October 2001, lot 148. £4950

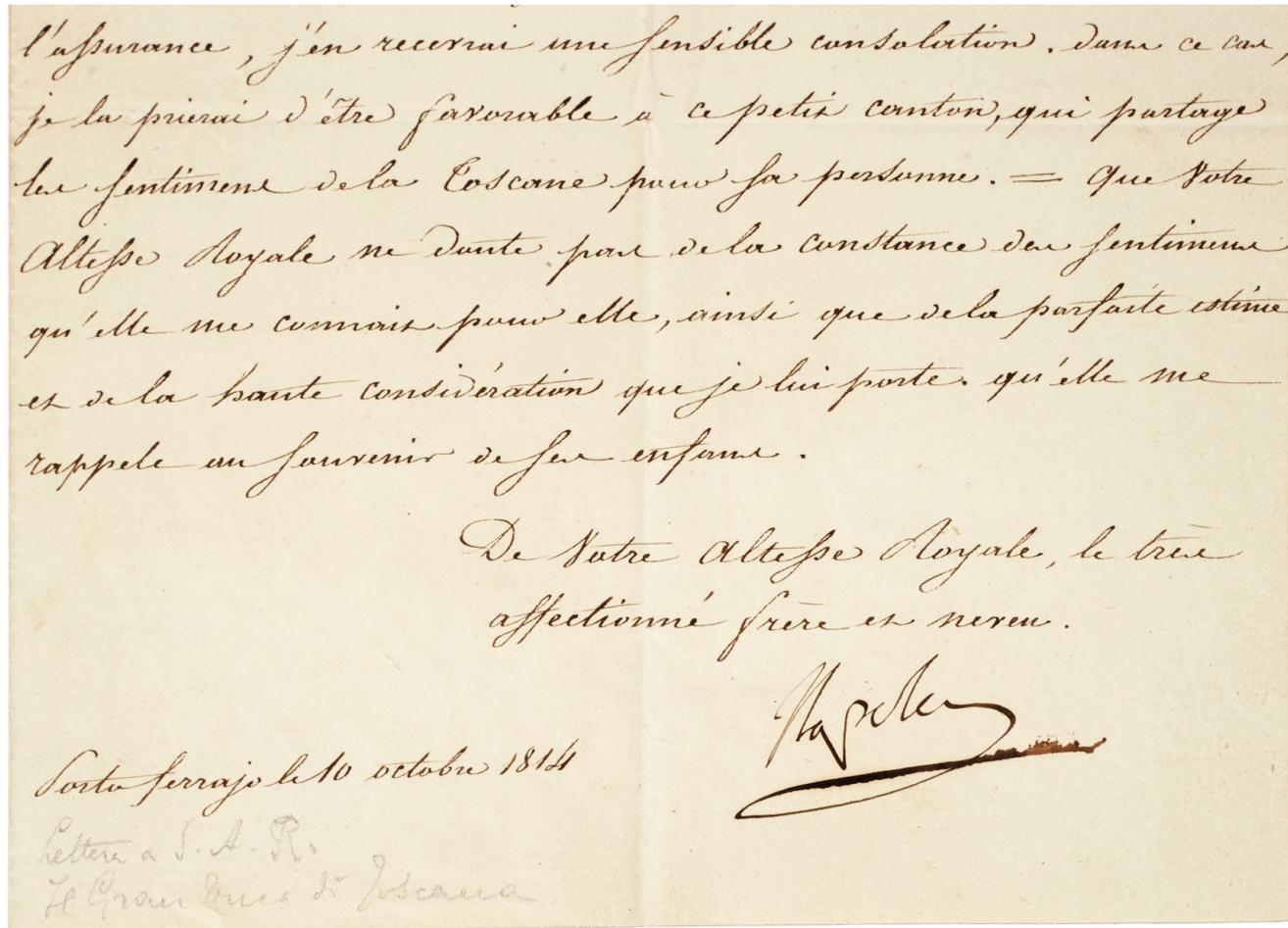
‘LES DIRIGER SUR SEZANNE ET ARCIS SUR AUBE.’ A letter from Berthier confirming that Napoleon’s orders had been carried out, annotated with a further instruction in the Emperor’s hand (for Napoleon’s original orders, see his letter of 18 March 1814, *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier* (Paris: 1869), XXVII, pp. 389-390). Written in the final weeks of the War of the Sixth Coalition – which would end ignominiously with Napoleon’s defeat, abdication, and exile to Elba – Berthier’s letter responds to Napoleon’s orders of 18 March and confirms that men and *matériel* have been marshalled in preparation for Napoleon’s planned engagement with Schwarzenberg’s Austro-Russian forces at either Méry or Troyes. Berthier states that he has instructed General Mouriez, the commander of Meaux, ‘de fait partir de cette place hier 19 mars, le convoi de 100. voitures d’artillerie, venant de Paris’, and that the convoy will be escorted by the 6th Battalion of the 86th Regiment of the Line; the 3rd Battalion of the 40th Regiment of the Line; one battalion of the Garde national each from the Seine-Inférieure, the Eure, and the Oise; the 8th Regiment of Cavalry of the Line; and one battery of eight pieces of artillery. Berthier closes his letter with the statement that, ‘[c]e convoi a du coucher hier à La Ferté sous Jouarre et doit arrivera aujourd’hui à Montmirail’.

The plans set in place by this exchange would culminate in the Battle of Arcis-sur-Aube (20-21 March 1814), a desperate, hard-fought engagement between the heavily outnumbered French forces and the Austro-Russian units commanded by Tsar Alexander I and Schwarzenberg that were ranged against them. Napoleon responded to Berthier’s report with a hastily-written instruction ‘les diriger sur Sezanne et Arcis sur Aube’, and, most unusually, Napoleon neither signed nor initialled his note, which suggests that it was written under the most desperate circumstances in the course of the battle.

The battle of Arcis-sur-Aube was the last that Napoleon fought in person before his abdication on 6 April 1814. During the engagement Napoleon’s horse would be killed beneath him, as a shell exploded and engulfed both rider and mount in smoke and flames, and the French would be defeated, despite their remarkable efforts. Indeed, Thiers wrote that, ‘the soldiers as well as [Napoleon] performed prodigies of valour. Napoleon believed himself victorious, and he believed it sincerely, for it was a miracle that 20,000 men had resisted forces that had successively increased from 40,000 to 90,000. He was proud of himself and his soldiers, and saw in this possibility of fighting forces so unequal a guarantee of success to the end of the war’ (*History of the Consulate and the Empire of France under Napoleon* (London: 1894), X, p. 83). Such hopes were, however, ill-founded, and by the end of March the Allies had entered Paris; shortly afterwards, Napoleon would be deposed by the Senate and compelled to abdicate.

Berthier had been appointed Chief of Staff of the *Armée d’Italie* by Napoleon in 1796 and from that time was an indispensable colleague, who would implement Napoleon’s plans and strategies and become Chief of Staff of the *Grande Armée*. After Napoleon’s abdication in 1814, Berthier would serve Louis XVIII, and later escorted the monarch from France when Napoleon returned during the Hundred Days; this letter is one of the last to be generated by a formidable collaboration that spanned nearly twenty years and was fundamental to Napoleon’s military conquests.

A REMARKABLE AND MUCH-QUOTED LETTER FROM THE EXILED NAPOLEON, REGRETTING THAT HE HAS NOT HEARD FROM HIS WIFE FOR TWO MONTHS NOR FROM HIS SON FOR SIX, AND WISHING TO COMMUNICATE WITH THEM



7. NAPOLEON I. Letter Signed ('Napoleon') to Ferdinand III, Grand Duke of Tuscany ('Monsieur mon frère et tres cher Oncle'), Portoferraio, Elba, 10 October 1814.

One p. on a bifolium with integral blank, 4to (230 x 186mm); folded for dispatch, otherwise very good; *provenance*: 19<sup>th</sup>-century pencilled annotation at the foot in Italian, identifying the recipient – sale, Sotheby's New York, 23 November 1981, lot 199 – 'Property from a Prominent American Library' (sale, Christie's New York, 14 June 2006, lot 362). **£9500**

'JE ME FLATTE QUE, MALGRÉ LES ÉVÉNEMENTS QUI ONT CHANGÉ TANT D'INDIVIDUS, VOTRE ALTESSE ROYALE ME CONSERVE QUELQU' AMITIÉ.' A remarkable and moving letter from the exiled Napoleon to Ferdinand III, the Grand Duke of Tuscany and uncle of Empress Marie-Louise, asking that he be allowed to communicate with his wife and to receive news of her and his son, the King of Rome.

Following his first abdication in April 1814, Napoleon went into exile on Elba, where he landed on 4 May. Under the terms of the Treaty of Fontainebleau, Napoleon was allowed a small army and permitted to retain the title of Emperor; however, Empress Marie-Louise and the King of Rome had returned to her native Vienna and, under the treaty, she was given the duchies of Parma, Piacenza, and Guastalla with full sovereignty. Napoleon's hopes that she and their son would join him on Elba were frustrated by a number of factors (including her desire not to), and communication was complicated by the watchfulness and interventions of the censors, the unreliability of postal systems, and the interference of political figures. Angered and saddened by these difficulties, Napoleon explains to Ferdinand III that, 'n'ayant pas reçu de nouvelles de ma femme depuis le 10 aout et de mon fils depuis 6 mois', he is sending this letter to him via chevalier Colonna, Madame Mère's chamberlain. Napoleon then proposes that he is allowed to write a letter to Marie-Louise every week, which will be transmitted via Ferdinand, and that Napoleon will be sent news of her in return, and also the letters of the comtesse de Montesquiou, the governess of the King of Rome. After expressing the hope that, despite the momentous events which have changed so many, Ferdinand retains some friendship for him, Napoleon explains that Ferdinand's consent to the proposal will provide great consolation. The letter concludes with Napoleon's wish that Ferdinand looks with favour upon 'ce petit canton [i.e. Elba], qui partage les sentimens de la Toscane pour sa personne' and that 'Votre Altesse Royale ne doute pas de la constance des sentimens qu'elle me connait pour elle, ainsi que de la parfaite estime et de la haute considération que je lui porte qu'elle me rappelle au souvenir de ses enfans'. The familial bonds between the two men which are referred to in the salutation are restated in Napoleon's valediction: 'De Votre Altesse Royale, le très affectionné frère et neveu Napoleon'.

Marie-Louise and Napoleon had married on 1-2 April 1810 and on 20 March 1811 she gave birth to the legitimate male heir that Napoleon wished for. The match between the French emperor and the daughter of the Holy Roman Emperor Francis II (Francis I of Austria) had been guided by Metternich and was certainly informed by political considerations. Following Austria's defeat by France, an alliance between the two empires had been established by the Treaty of Schönbrunn, and the marital union served to consolidate it. The marriage, however, began to falter as the War of the Sixth Coalition moved towards its conclusion, and Marie-Louise's relationship with Count von Neipperg, which began while Napoleon was in exile, ensured that she did not travel to Elba, nor rejoin him during the Hundred Days.

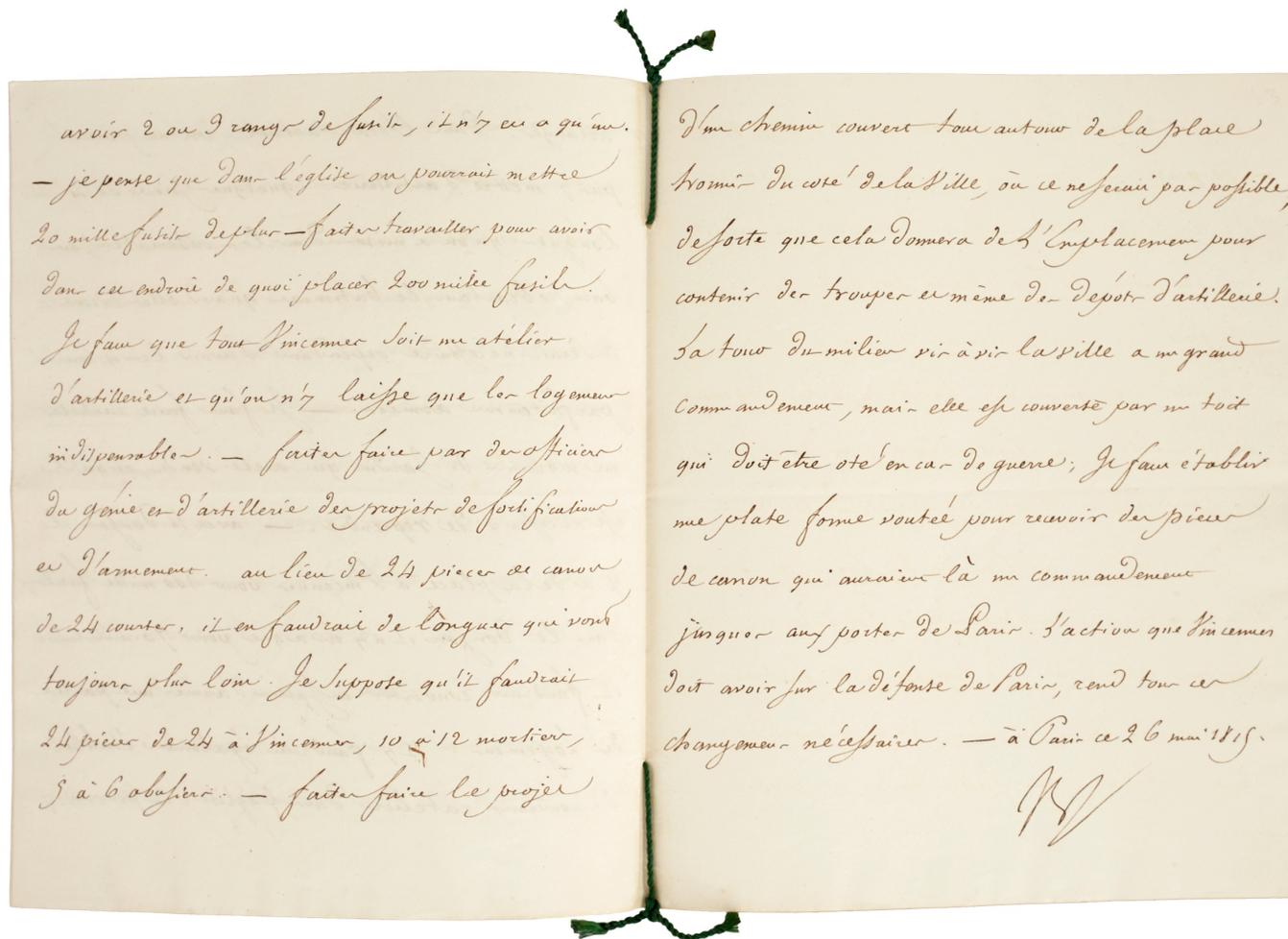
Ferdinand III (1769-1824), became Grand Duke of Tuscany in 1790, when his father became Holy Roman Emperor Leopold II. Following Ferdinand's defeat by the French, the Treaty of Lunéville (1801) gave Tuscany to France and granted Ferdinand the

principality of Salzburg, with the title of Elector. In 1805 he exchanged it for the duchy of Würzburg under the terms of the Treaty of Pressburg, and only returned to Tuscany as Grand Duke in 1814, following Napoleon's defeat by the Sixth Coalition. Napoleon's hope that familial ties would endear him to a former opponent who had lost his lands and title to France's ambitions was misplaced; as Norman Mackenzie commented, after citing this text, '[t]he Duke did not even acknowledge this letter [...] but sent it on to [his brother] the Emperor Francis. Francis merely showed it to his daughter, with instructions that she was not to reply. And she never did. She never wrote Napoleon another word' (*The Escape from Elba: The Fall and Flight of Napoleon 1814-1815* (Barnsley: 2007), p. 135).

In his *Marie-Louise, l'île d'Elbe, et les cent-jours* (Paris: 1885), Imbert de Saint-Amand – who reprints the first half of the letter on p. 75 – quotes an account left by de Méneval (who had travelled to Vienna with Marie-Louise), which illuminates the wider political context: 'Un jour [...] au retour d'une des visites journalières que Marie-Louise faisait au palais impérial, elle en rapporta une lettre de l'empereur Napoléon que son père lui avait remise. L'empereur se plaignait du silence de l'impératrice, et la pria de lui écrire pour lui donner de ses nouvelles et de celles de son fils. Cette lettre était depuis quatre jours dans les mains de l'empereur d'Autriche; un courrier du grand-duc de Toscane l'avait apportée. Elle avait été sans nul doute communiquée aux souverains; car c'était dans cette intention, et pour prouver sa bonne foi à ses alliés, que l'empereur François avait exigé de sa fille la remise des lettres que lui adresserait son époux. L'impératrice ne fit aucune réponse, attendu que la permission ne lui en était pas accordée' (pp. 74-75). Indeed, the letter of 10 August 1814 referred to by Napoleon was the last that he would ever receive from Marie-Louise.

THE POIGNANT AND PATHETIC SENTIMENTS EVINCED IN THIS LETTER, TOGETHER WITH THE KNOWLEDGE THAT MARIE-LOUISE WOULD NEVER RETURN AND THAT THE KING OF ROME WOULD NEVER SEE HIS FATHER AGAIN BEFORE HIS DEATH IN 1821 HAVE ENSURED AN ENDURING INTEREST IN THIS LETTER, which has been frequently quoted in both the original and in translation since it was published in *Correspondance de Napoléon 1er* (Paris: 1879; XXVII, no 21651, with some minor omissions and variations). One of the earliest printings of the text was by Imbert de Saint-Amand some six years later (as noted above), and D.A. Bingham's *A Selection from the Letters and Despatches of the First Napoleon* (London: 1884) included an English translation of the first half of the letter (III, pp. 355-356). In the very early twentieth century the text published in the *Correspondance* was reprinted in full by Frédéric Masson in *L'impératrice Marie-Louise: 1809-1815* (Paris: 1902, pp. 609-610), on the centenary of Napoleon's death, the first half of the letter was printed in *Napoleon; raconté par lui-même 1807-1821* (Paris: 1921, pp. 235-236), and, in more recent times, the same passage was quoted by Max Gallo in chapter 24 of his *Napoléon: L'immortel de Sainte-Hélène* (Paris: 1997).

AN IMPORTANT LETTER TO DAVOUT ABOUT THE DEFENCE OF PARIS, WRITTEN ON THE DAY ALEXANDER I OF RUSSIA,  
FRANCIS I OF AUSTRIA, AND FREDERICK WILLIAM III OF PRUSSIA MARCHED ON FRANCE



8. NAPOLEON I. Letter signed ('Np') to Louis Nicholas Davout ('Mon Cousin'), Paris, 26 May 1815.

5 pp. on 2 bifolia, [3 pp. blank], 4to (226 x 182mm); numbered '394.' in top right corner and docketed 'Au ministre de la Guerre.' at bottom of 1r, both in ink in a near-contemporary hand, foliated in pencil on all written ll.; all edges gilt, 2 [?more recent] green silk ties through main fold at top and bottom, folded once for dispatch, generally very good and clean; provenance: sale, 'Empire', Sotheby's Paris, 2 December 2003, lot 350.

£5500

‘LA TOUR DU MILIEU VIS À VIS LA VILLE A UN GRAND COMMANDEMENT, MAIS ELLE EST COUVERTÉ PAR UN TOIT QUI DOIT ÊTRE OTÉ EN CAS DE GUERRE; IL FAUT ÉTABLIR UNE PLATE FORME VOUTÉE POUR RECEVOIR DES PIECES DE CANON QUI AURAIENT LÀ UN COMMANDEMENT JUSQU-AUX PORTES DE PARIS.’ In this letter, written during the Hundred Days and less than a month before Waterloo, Napoleon plans the defence of Paris against the Allied forces mustered against him, gives Davout, the Minister of War, detailed instructions for the preparation of Vincennes as a defensive position, and explains its role in the defence of Paris. Vincennes, an important prison under the Consulate as much as the Empire, was used by Napoleon to incarcerate high-profile or significant figures, since it was very well defended: its donjon tower, built in the fourteenth century, is the tallest medieval fortified structure in Europe. In preparation for the Russian campaign of 1812, which required significant logistic support, Napoleon decided to use Vincennes as a major arsenal and supply depot, and it remained in use as such until 1814, when the Empire fell.

Two months before this letter was written, Napoleon had returned from Elba to Paris as Louis XVIII departed the city, and the entire garrison rose up in favour of Napoleon on 30 March 1815. Throughout the spring and in the weeks leading up to Waterloo, the Emperor’s efforts were concentrated on preparing the defence of France, and this letter is concerned with the measures that Napoleon put into place at Vincennes for this purpose. The letter begins with the information that on 10 June (i.e. two weeks later) the donjon of Vincennes would be handed over by the artillery to the police; but if the enemy should approach, the artillery would still be able to return to the fortress and make use of it. Napoleon had visited Vincennes the previous day and describes in this letter the supplies of ammunition that he found there – too little for the defence of Paris, and about a third less than he expected: fewer than 200 cannons (rather than 300); 2 million rounds of ammunition instead of 5 million; 20 Coehorn-type mortars, which need to be supplemented with ten Gomer-type mortars to secure the entire area with confidence. Indeed, Napoleon comments that, had he had sufficient supplies of mortars at Vincennes during the Battle of Paris in 1814, the Prince of Wurttemberg’s forces would not have been able to establish an artillery depot at the fort of Charenton.

Napoleon then asks Davout for advice about potential sources for further weaponry, and instructs that, since there are only small reserves of tools for the military engineers left, 20,000 further sets of sapper’s tools (‘outils à pionniers’) should be brought to Vincennes. Further instructions concern the acquisition of very large howitzers with a greater range than the present guns; the arming of the siege towers so that all of them may be used; and the re-acquisition of a portion of the grounds that had been sold, to expand the space available for military use. Napoleon then calculates the capacity of Vincennes as an arsenal: with the donjon there is space for 100,000 arms, but without it for only 70,000, and he plans to convert some of the living quarters and the church (already pressed into service, but not fully exploited) into further storage – the church is to accommodate an additional 20,000 guns. With some further adjustments, Vincennes in its entirety should thus hold some 200,000 pieces and it should be completely devoted to issues of armament and fortification: ‘[i]l faut que tout Vincennes soit un atelier d’artillerie’.

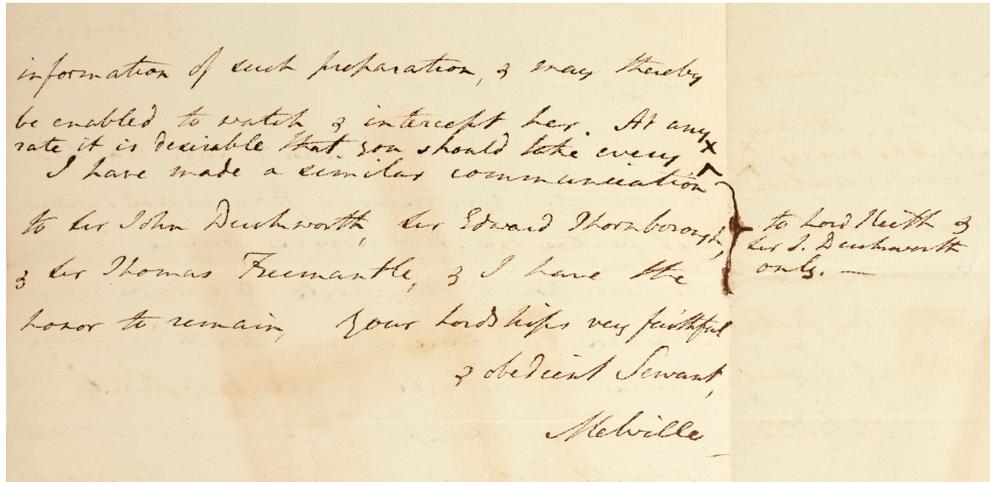
The final portion of the letter concerns military and architectural changes in Vincennes: Davout is to oversee the paving of a path to provide a space for the use of troops and artillery, and, in the case of war, the roof of the central tower facing the town should be removed in order to set up a vaulted platform on which artillery can be placed. Any artillery situated here would be very advantageously placed to command an area that reached to the gates of Paris. The letter closes with an affirmation of the Vincennes' important strategic role: '[l]'action que Vincennes doit avoir fut la défense de Paris, rend tous ces changemens nécessaires'.

These arrangements and preparations were most necessary and pressing – on 26 May 1815, the date of this letter, the Emperors of Russia and Austria, and the King of Prussia left Vienna, to march on France. *The Times* of 29 May 1815 printed a report from the *Gazette de France* of 23 May discussing the problems that the armies of the Seventh Coalition might face: 'the want of unity in this allied army, comprehending such diversity of interests, languages, and manners, [may be] contrasted with the French army, comprised of one people, united in one common cause, and directed by one single genius' (p. 2) – the meticulous planning shown in this letter accords with this analysis and illustrates Napoleon's ability to plan successfully across a broad theatre. It also demonstrates the importance of Napoleon's earliest military experiences, gained as a second lieutenant of artillery in the regiment of La Fère and then as first lieutenant to the 4<sup>th</sup> regiment of artillery, and the thorough understanding of artillery and its strategic use which he acquired during these years and deployed to great effect throughout his military career.

On the Allied side, the Duke of Wellington was making similar preparations and assessments; in a letter of 26 May 1815 to Castlereagh, the Foreign Secretary, Wellington enclosed 'a rough memorandum of the state of our force at present, with a view to the calculation of subsidy', and giving much detail on men available and men, as well as moneys, needed (Southampton archives, MS 61 Wellington Papers 1/465/77).

The letter was not published in *Correspondance de Napoléon 1er*, but was printed in H. de Mauduit *Les derniers jours de la Grande Armée* (Paris: 1847), pp. 407-410.

THE BRITISH NAVY ATTEMPT TO PREVENT NAPOLEON'S ESCAPE TO AMERICA AFTER WATERLOO  
AN IMPORTANT MANUSCRIPT FROM THE CELEBRATED DE COPPET COLLECTION OF NAPOLEONICA



information of such preparation, & may thereby  
be enabled to watch & intercept her. At any  
rate it is desirable that you should take every  
I have made a similar communication  
to Sir John Duckworth, Sir Edward Hornborough,  
& Sir Thomas Fremantle, & I have the  
honor to remain Your Lordships very faithful  
& obedient Servant,  
Melville

to Lord Keith &  
Sir J. Duckworth  
only. —

9. MELVILLE, Robert Saunders DUNDAS, 2nd  
Viscount. Draft autograph letter signed ('Melville') to  
Viscount Keith and others, Wimbledon, 27 June 1815.

2 pages on a bifolium, 4to (237 x 185mm); headed  
'Private & Secret' and docketed on the verso;  
watermarked 'C Ansel / 1813', all edges gilt; folded for  
filing, light browning and offsetting, otherwise very  
good; provenance: [?]Andre De Coppet, New York  
(1892-1953, *vide infra*; his sale, Sotheby's, 28 October  
1957, part IX, lot 2613; sold for £32 to:) –  
'Hobbins' (buyer of record). £3500

'YOU SHOULD TAKE EVERY PRECAUTION IN YOUR POWER WITH A VIEW TO HIS SEIZURE & DETENTION SHOULD HE ENDEAVOUR TO QUIT FRANCE BY SEA.' An important draft of a letter from Viscount Melville, the First Lord of the Admiralty to Viscount Keith, Commander-in-Chief of the Channel Fleet and three other admirals, alerting them to Napoleon's intentions to escape to America in the immediate aftermath of Waterloo and instructing them to stop him. The scion of a distinguished Scottish legal family, Robert Dundas (1771-1851) had entered parliament in 1794 as the Member for Hastings, and was appointed President of the Board of Control for India in 1807, where his principal occupation was to frustrate Napoleon's efforts to gain political influence or power in British India. In 1811 he succeeded his father as the second Viscount Melville and in 1812 Liverpool, the Prime Minister, promoted Melville to the position of First Lord of the Admiralty: '[a]t the Admiralty Melville gave of his best. A diligent administrator ably balancing the pressures on him, he was regarded by the navy as a thoroughly reliable representative of its interests, and by his political colleagues as a man who could be ruthless when necessary. While the wars went on, his job was to maintain the British maritime supremacy established at the battle of Trafalgar. In a state paper of February 1813 he pointed out that France, with the shipbuilding resources of Holland and Italy at her disposal, would be able to construct a fleet to match Britain's if the struggle continued much longer. The point was underlined by complaints from Wellington in Spain of inadequate protection for the convoys supplying him, especially after the outbreak of hostilities with the United States in 1812 unleashed hordes of American privateers on the Atlantic. With resources everywhere stretched, Melville yet coped' (ODNB).

Following his defeat at Waterloo on 18 June 1815, Napoleon had fled the battlefield and returned to Paris on 21 June. On 22 June he abdicated and began to plan his escape to the United States, while the Allies attempted to track down and capture the

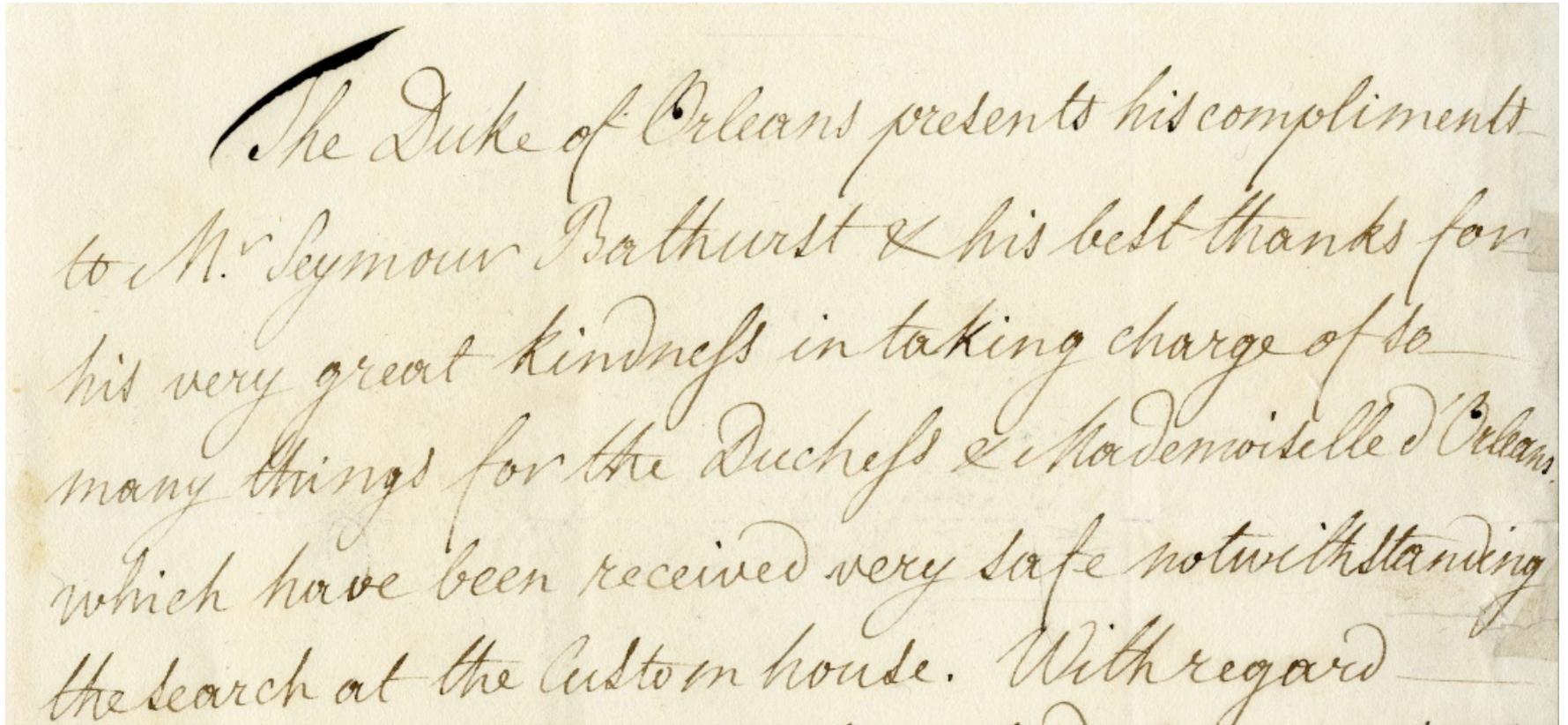
fugitive Emperor, before he departed from Europe, as Melville's instructions show: '[r]eports have reached His Majesty's Government from various quarters that in the event of adverse fortune, it was the intention of Bonaparte to escape to America. If there is any truth in those statements, he will in all probability make the attempt now, unless he should be forcibly detained at Paris. If he should embark in a small vessel from one of the numerous Ports along the Coast of France, it may be scarcely possible to prevent his escape; but if he should wait till a Frigate or Sloop of War can be fitted out for him, you may perhaps receive information of such preparation, & may thereby be enabled to watch & intercept her. At any rate it is desirable that you should take every precaution in your power with a view to his seizure & detention should he endeavour to quit France by sea'. In the event, Napoleon (fearing the wrath of a vengeful Louis XVIII) threw himself upon the mercy of the British and surrendered to Frederick Maitland, captain of HMS *Bellerophon*, on 15 July 1815.

This appears to be Melville's retained draft, which has been docketed on the verso with the names of the four admirals it was to be sent to: Keith; Sir John Duckworth Bt, the Port Admiral at Plymouth; Sir Edward Thornborough, Commander-in-Chief, Portsmouth; and Sir Thomas Fremantle (at the end of the letter, the names of recipients are given as 'Admiral Viscount Keith, &c &c &c'). Two words have been cancelled, and the text has been amended with the addition of a carat and an annotation 'to Lord Keith & Sir J. Duckworth only', to show that the sentence 'At any rate it is desirable that you should take every precaution in your power with a view to his seizure & detention should he endeavour to quit France by sea' should only be included in the copies of the letter sent to Keith and Duckworth.

The present manuscript matches exactly the description of the 'Autograph Draft signed' of a letter from Melville to Keith dated 27 June 1815 in the collection of the American collector Andre De Coppet, which was sold in 1957 (see provenance note above), and is presumably the same manuscript. De Coppet was educated at Princeton University and then worked as a broker in his family's firm of De Coppet & Doremus, and through the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s he assembled an outstanding collection of European and American historical manuscripts. Much of his Americana was bequeathed to Princeton after his death, but the remainder of the collection (comprising nearly 3,000 lots) was sold by Sotheby's between 1954 and 1958 in a series of ten auctions, of which five were dedicated to manuscripts of the revolutionary and Napoleonic eras: as Sotheby's wrote in the preface to the first of the Napoleonic catalogues, De Coppet 'was fascinated [...] by the intellectual men of action and of these he regarded Napoleon as chief. The dispersal of the Crawford, Rosebery, and Brouwet collections of Napoleonica has left his own without a rival in private hands. Many of the choicest things from these collections passed into his'.

The text was published in H.W.E. Petty-Fitzmaurice, Earl of Kerry (ed.) *The First Napoleon. Some Unpublished Documents from the Bowood Papers* (London: 1925), pp. 145-146, from the copy of the letter sent to Keith (Kerry was the great-great-grandson of Viscount Keith, and included some of his ancestor's correspondence in the volume), and C. Lloyd (ed.) *The Keith Papers: Selected from the Letters and Papers of Admiral Viscount Keith* (London: 1955), III, p. 346.

LOUIS-PHILIPPE D'ORLÉANS, THE FUTURE KING, PREPARES TO RETURN TO FRANCE  
AFTER THE RESTORATION OF LOUIS XVIII



The Duke of Orleans presents his compliments  
to M<sup>r</sup>. Seymour Bathurst & his best thanks for  
his very great kindness in taking charge of so  
many things for the Duchess & Mademoiselle d'Orléans  
which have been received very safe notwithstanding  
the search at the Custom house. With regard

10. LOUIS-PHILIPPE, duc d'Orléans, and later King of France. Autograph letter to Thomas Seymour Bathurst, Twickenham, 17 January 1816.

1 page, 4to (224 x 183mm); torn from a bifolium at left edge, folded for dispatch, 2 short marginal tears and one on a fold, all with historical repairs on the verso, nonetheless very crisp and clean.

£400

AN UNUSUAL AUTOGRAPH LETTER WRITTEN IN ENGLISH BY LOUIS-PHILIPPE (1773-1850), DUC D'ORLÉANS AND LATER THE LAST KING OF FRANCE, WHILE HE WAS ARRANGING HIS RETURN TO FRANCE FOLLOWING THE SECOND AND FINAL ABDICATION OF NAPOLEON. Louis-Philippe had been forced to flee France in 1793 and had settled at Twickenham near London in 1800. In 1814, upon the restoration of Louis XVIII, he returned to France, where he served in the army, and, following Napoleon's successful return in March 1815, was dispatched with the comte d'Artois (the future King Charles X) to apprehend the Emperor. They failed in their mission, and Louis-Philippe was forced to leave France again – it was only in 1816, some time after the Battle of Waterloo and during the subsequent reconstitution of a post-Napoleonic France, that Louis-Philippe was able to establish himself and his family in Paris.

This letter was written by Louis-Philippe to the young soldier Thomas Seymour Bathurst (1793-1834), who had served in the 1st Foot Guards and fought at Waterloo; his regiment remained in Paris in 1816-17, and it is likely that this letter was sent to him there. Seymour (as he was known to his friends and family, and is addressed here by Louis-Philippe) was the son of Henry Bathurst, 3rd Earl of Bathurst (1762-1834), who held a number of offices of state and was Secretary of State for War and the Colonies from 1812 to 1827; in the decade following his appointment, Bathurst, Lord Liverpool (the Prime Minister), and Lord Castlereagh (the foreign secretary), 'were effectively an inner cabinet that decided foreign, military, and colonial policy' (ODNB).

Louis-Philippe's letter thanks Seymour Bathurst (whom he had probably met through his military service) for 'his very great kindness in taking charge of so many things for the Duchess & Mademoiselle d'Orleans which have been received very safe notwithstanding the search at the Custom house'. (Louis-Philippe had married Maria Amelia, daughter of Ferdinand IV, in 1809, and by January 1816 they had two sons and two daughters; a third daughter would be born in March 1816.) The letter then enquires about the fate of some parcels which had been sent previously, but had not yet been received at Paris – 'it is supposed they are still detained at the Custom house' – and concludes with Louis-Philippe's statement that, 'the Duke & Duchess of Orleans would be extremely obliged to Lord Bathurst to release them'.

Lord Bathurst (i.e. Henry, 3rd Earl of Bathurst), was responsible for Napoleon's exile to St Helena, but would also have been in charge of the import of goods to France in his capacity of Secretary of State for War and the Colonies. With this letter, written to the son who had already proved himself helpful in the relocation, Louis Philippe appears to have hoped that Lord Bathurst's influence in France would ensure the speedy release of his property from the custom house.

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