

# The Forgotten Heroes: Flag Officers Of The Arc De Triomphe 1789-1815

When discussing the rich history of the Arc de Triomphe, most people tend to focus on its stunning architecture and symbolic importance. However, obscured by the grandeur of this iconic Parisian monument lies a captivating realm of forgotten heroes - the flag officers who played a pivotal role in the tumultuous period of 1789-1815. In this article, we embark on a journey to uncover the tales of these brave men and their significant contributions to French military history.

The Arc de Triomphe, commissioned by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1806, stands as a testament to the triumphs and losses of the French Revolution and Napoleon's empire. Yet, very few visitors to this monumental landmark are aware of the stories that lie beneath the surface of its grand arches. Behind every victory and defeat portrayed on its walls, stood flag officers who led the French armies to glory or faced insurmountable challenges.

From the Battle of Valmy in 1792 to the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, numerous flag officers emerged as key figures who shaped the course of history. These brave men were not only military tacticians but also conveyors of hope and inspiration to their troops. Their names may have faded in time, but their deeds live on within the stones of the Arc de Triomphe.

## **Napoleon's Admirals: Flag Officers of the Arc de Triomphe, 1789–1815** by Edmund Spencer(Kindle Edition)

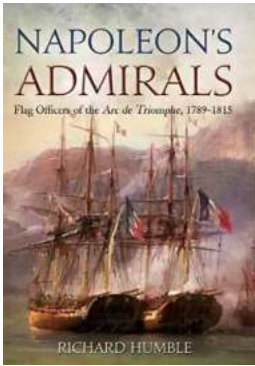
★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 3154 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled



Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 246 pages
Lending	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Hardcover	: 438 pages
Item Weight	: 1.73 pounds
Dimensions	: 6.14 x 0.94 x 9.21 inches



One such flag officer was Admiral Pierre-Charles Villeneuve, who commanded the French and Spanish fleets at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. Despite being heavily outnumbered by the British, Villeneuve displayed remarkable courage and strategic acumen. Though the battle ultimately ended in defeat, Villeneuve's unwavering commitment to his troops cemented his place among the forgotten heroes of the Arc de Triomphe.

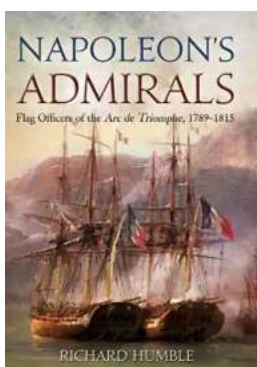
Another notable figure etched into the annals of the Arc de Triomphe is General Jean-Baptiste Kléber, a renowned military commander who led French forces during the Egyptian Campaign. Kléber's tactical brilliance and unwavering resolve were instrumental in achieving victory against formidable odds. Tragically, he was assassinated in 1800, leaving behind a legacy that endures within the majestic archways of the Arc de Triomphe.

As we wander through the dimly-lit corridors of history, we encounter General Louis-Nicolas Davout, a military genius who earned the title of "The Iron Marshal." With his unmatched skill and strategic prowess, Davout led the French army to countless victories, earning him the admiration of both friend and foe. Though his name may not be as well-known today, it is engraved upon the walls of the Arc de Triomphe as a testament to his remarkable leadership.

Among the many flag officers who rose to prominence during this period was Admiral François-Joseph Linois. Known for his audacious naval expeditions, Linois played a significant role in various battles across the globe. From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean, his strategic brilliance and unwavering loyalty to France earned him a place of honor in the pantheon of flag officers enshrined within the Arc de Triomphe.

These are just a few glimpses into the lives of the forgotten heroes who proudly stood as flag officers during the turbulent era of 1789-1815. Countless others, whose names may forever be lost to the ravages of time, left a lasting impact on history through their unwavering dedication and gallant acts of bravery.

So the next time you find yourself standing beneath the imposing arches of the Arc de Triomphe, remember the flag officers who served as the backbone of the French army. Reflect upon the sacrifices they made, the battles they fought, and the victories they secured. Their stories deserve to be told, for they are the hidden gems weaving the legacy of this iconic monument. Let us not forget the flag officers who remain eternally honored within the walls of the Arc de Triomphe.



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“A most readable and interesting work . . . deserves a place on the shelves of anyone interested in war at sea during the Great French Wars.” —Nautical Research Journal

On the four sides of the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, serried tablets display the names of 660 honored commanders of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. Most are those of generals and marshals of the French Army—but 26 of them are those of admirals, commanders of the fleets of Republican and Napoleonic France.

In Napoleon’s Admirals, Richard Humble presents not only their individual stories, but an entirely new appraisal of the Anglo-French naval war of 1793-1814: the longest sea war in modern history.

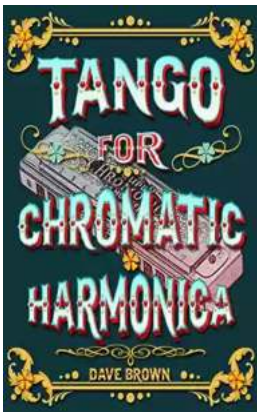
Many myths are exploded in this book—from the long-held idea that aristocratic officers of the French Navy emigrated en masse when the Revolution came, leaving the Navy leaderless and doomed to repeated defeats at sea, to the popular British belief that the naval war ended with Nelson’s victory at Trafalgar.

Of the 26 “Admirals of the Arc,” 23 had learned their trade in the French royal and merchant navies of the ancien régime. Republican France could call on a wide range of seasoned combat veterans from the American Revolutionary War (1778-83), whose stories are a revelation in themselves.

In his account of the men who imposed such a strain in on the world's greatest Navy for 21 years, Richard Humble has provided a remarkable addition to the well-worn pages of conventional naval history.

“Not only authoritative; it makes a very enjoyable and instructive read.” —The Napoleon Series

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