

The Napoleonic Wars came to an end at the Battle of Waterloo on June 18, 1815. Fought near present-day Brussels, Belgium, the battle was one of the most important in European history. A combined army which included the major powers—Austria, Great Britain, and Prussia—routed the French, forcing Napoleon to abdicate. Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington, who led the allied force, was restrained after his great triumph. Surveying the field of dead and dying men, he said: “Nothing except a battle lost can be half so melancholy as a battle won.”