

# The Napoleon Series

## Maps and Mapmakers of the Napoleonic Wars: Russian Cartography

By: [Richard Tennant](#)

Very little information is available in English on Russian cartography during the Napoleonic Wars.

### Two Centuries of Russian Cartography<sup>1</sup>

In relatively significant numbers, Russian 'landscape schemes' intended to serve most diversified needs first appeared in the late XVI through XVIII Centuries. They had been necessitated by controlling a centralized state and securing its borders. The economic rise scheduled by Peter I<sup>2</sup> involved the task of geographically studying and mapping the entire country which required domestically trained geodesists and cartographers.

Since the 1740's through the end of that century, all cartographic works had basically been carried out by the Academy of Sciences.

In 1812, the Mapping Depot was restructured as the Military Topographic Depot and in 1822, the Military Topographic Corps was created with the giant task of degree measurements, triangulation, and topographic surveys.

### The Russian National Library<sup>3</sup> noted that

By the decree of Peter I, Vasily Kiprianov's Civil Printshop, the first enterprise in the country to specialize in text books, manuals and maps, was established in Moscow in the early eighteenth century.

In the late eighteenth century, the Military Topographic Depot (*must have been the Mapping Depot of the Academy of Sciences*) compiled the first state topographic map:

Detailed map of the Russian Empire and neighbouring foreign holdings - original name "Подробная карта Российской империи и близлежащих заграничных владений". [A map in 100 sheets](#), published by order of the Russian Government in the years 1797-1805.

This was the publication used by the army in the Patriotic War of 1812.

Placed on the Napoleon Series: January 2020

---

<sup>1</sup> [Two Centuries of Russian Cartography](#)

<sup>2</sup> Reigned from 1682 to 1725

<sup>3</sup> [The Russian National Library](#)