

JOHN S. C. ABBOTT



***THE HISTORY
OF AUSTRIAN
EMPIRE***

John S. C. Abbott

The History of Austrian Empire

Enriched edition.

Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Tyler Ashford

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Introduction

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At the heart of John S. C. Abbott's *The History of the Austrian Empire* lies the persistent tension between the expansive ambitions of a ruling house and the fragile cohesion of a realm knit from diverse languages, faiths, and local traditions, where each assertion of central authority must contend with entrenched privileges, geographic vastness, and the unpredictable currents of European power, and where statecraft, marriage, reform, and war alternately promise unity and risk fracture, making the very idea of empire both a solution to insecurity and a source of perpetual strain upon subjects and sovereigns alike.

This work is a nineteenth-century narrative history by the American historian John S. C. Abbott, focusing on the Austrian Empire centered in Central Europe and shaped by the long ascendancy of the Habsburgs. Written for a broad audience in the era when popular histories sought to synthesize politics, diplomacy, and culture in accessible prose, it surveys the rise, consolidation, and governance of a composite monarchy. Rather than presenting a specialized monograph, Abbott offers a panoramic account of rulers, institutions, and conflicts across centuries, situating the empire within the shifting balance of European powers and the challenges of administering a multinational state.

Readers encounter a brisk, story-driven chronicle that emphasizes clear narration and moral reflection, the hallmarks of nineteenth-century popular history. Abbott's voice is direct and didactic without being technical, favoring vivid scenes, sharply drawn character sketches, and concise

explanations of policy. The tone is earnest and occasionally dramatic, but the pacing remains steady, guiding the reader through courts and council chambers as readily as through battlefields and frontiers. The effect is that of an informed guide who privileges coherence and continuity, so that episodes of conflict and reform serve a larger through-line about how empires attempt to secure stability amid complexity.

Without disclosing specific outcomes, the book explores recurring themes that structure the imperial experience: the struggle to reconcile dynastic legitimacy with local autonomy; the interplay of religious allegiance and state policy; the use of marriage, diplomacy, and war to acquire and integrate territories; and the effort to centralize administration without extinguishing regional rights. Abbott tracks how personalities and institutions interact, illustrating the limits of individual will when confronted with entrenched customs, fiscal pressures, and geopolitical constraints. The result is a study of power tempered by pragmatism, revealing how continuity, compromise, and periodic reform underpin an empire's claims to endurance.

Abbott pays sustained attention to geography and population, portraying the imperial center in conversation with its peripheries and showing how mountains, rivers, and borderlands shaped strategy and identity. He treats the empire as a layered mosaic, where distinct peoples and legal traditions coexist under a common crown, and where the language of imperial unity must be translated into everyday governance. By tracing negotiations, edicts, and accommodations alongside campaigns and alliances, the narrative highlights administration as much as triumph. The reader comes away with a sense that empire is a living

organism whose health depends on coordination more than conquest.

For contemporary readers, this perspective matters because it illuminates enduring questions about pluralism, sovereignty, and the management of difference in large political communities. Debates that animate modern states—over centralization and subsidiarity, religious and cultural diversity, border security, and the legitimacy of rule—echo throughout Abbott's account. The book models how to read empire not only as conquest, but as an ongoing negotiation among rulers, elites, and populations, mediated by law, bureaucracy, and narrative. Its nineteenth-century vantage point also invites reflection on how historical writing shapes memory, reminding us that the stories told about power can stabilize or unsettle political orders.

Approached as a carefully guided tour rather than a definitive archive, *The History of the Austrian Empire* offers a compelling entry point into the study of Central European statecraft and identity. Abbott's accessible synthesis opens pathways to deeper research while providing a cohesive framework for first-time readers. It encourages attention to pattern over spectacle, to institutions as well as individuals, and to the long arc of adaptation that keeps complex polities intact. In revisiting this classic narrative, we gain both a map of a pivotal empire and a mirror for present dilemmas, where unity, diversity, and authority still seek equilibrium.

Synopsis

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John S. C. Abbott's *The History of the Austrian Empire* presents a sweeping, chronological account of the Habsburg monarchy from its medieval foundations to the author's nineteenth-century present. Written in a narrative style, the book follows rulers, dynastic turns, wars, and diplomatic settlements that shaped a sprawling, multiethnic polity at the crossroads of Central and Eastern Europe. Abbott traces how geography, feudal inheritances, and strategic marriages gradually forged a composite empire, while recurring pressures—religious division, Ottoman incursions, and rival European powers—continually tested its cohesion. Throughout, he underscores the recurring tension between centralizing authority and the local privileges and identities that complicated rule.

Beginning with the early marches and the Babenberg line, Abbott outlines how Austria emerged from a frontier territory into a significant duchy, then a prominent pillar within the Holy Roman Empire. He emphasizes the decisive transfer of the core lands to the Habsburgs, whose consolidation followed recurring contests with neighboring realms, especially Bohemia and Hungary. The narrative explains how dynastic continuity, careful administration, and strategic strongholds secured the Danubian heartland. By situating Austria in the imperial constitution and in regional politics, Abbott shows how a family's fortunes intertwined with institutions that both empowered and constrained Habsburg ambitions.

Abbott then examines the late medieval and early modern transformations driven by marriage alliances and succession claims. The rise of Maximilian I and the subsequent partition of Habsburg responsibilities after Charles V reshaped Europe, leaving the Austrian line to manage Central European crowns while confronting the Ottoman advance. The first great siege of Vienna and religious fracturing during the Reformation frame a period when military defense and confessional policy became inseparable. The story follows shifting coalitions and the struggle to maintain authority over diverse estates, foreshadowing the broader confessional wars that would test both imperial influence and domestic stability.

After the traumas of the early seventeenth century, Abbott recounts how the dynasty reasserted control in its core lands, navigating the consequences of the Thirty Years' War and renewed conflict with the Ottomans. The dramatic rescue of Vienna in the late seventeenth century and subsequent campaigns pushed the frontier outward, altering the balance in Hungary and along the Balkans. He summarizes administrative centralization, court culture, and the evolving relationship between crown and estates, noting how victories brought new populations under Habsburg rule. The expanding empire's diversity, while a source of strength, also required delicate governance across languages, laws, and loyalties.

Turning to the eighteenth century, Abbott highlights the succession of Maria Theresa and the wars that tested her inheritance. Rivalry with Prussia, debates over military modernization, and fiscal and bureaucratic reforms mark this era, as the court sought to stabilize revenues and discipline the army. He traces the continuity and departures under Joseph II, whose ambitious programs of toleration,

legal rationalization, and ecclesiastical reordering faced resistance from entrenched interests. The narrative stresses how reform from above could strengthen state capacity yet risk alienating constituents, revealing an enduring dilemma: how to transform a dynastic composite monarchy without dissolving the bonds that sustained it.

The book then moves through the revolutionary and Napoleonic period, when Francis II adopted the imperial title of Austria and later saw the Holy Roman Empire dissolved. Abbott presents campaigns, alliances, and treaties as catalysts for territorial reconfiguration and institutional adaptation. With the Vienna settlement, the empire emerged as a principal guarantor of continental order, associated with Metternich's diplomacy and supervisory statecraft. Peace, however, demanded vigilance: censorship, policing, and carefully managed international congresses aimed to prevent upheaval. This conservative equilibrium, while durable, left unresolved tensions—national aspirations, social change, and constitutional questions—that accumulated beneath a surface of restored stability.

Abbott concludes with mid-nineteenth-century convulsions that swept Vienna, Hungary, and the Italian provinces, charting abdications, accessions, and campaigns that reshaped governance. The rise of Franz Joseph marked renewed centralization and attempts at cautious reform amid continuing pressures from nationality movements and great-power rivalry. The closing chapters underscore the empire's resilience and vulnerability: a vast realm sustained by diplomacy and administration yet challenged by modernization and diversity. Without preempting later developments, Abbott frames the Austrian experience as a case study in balancing tradition and adaptation. His narrative invites readers to consider how imperial structures

endure, adjust, and eventually confront transformative demands.

Historical Context

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John S. C. Abbott's history surveys the Habsburg realms that, from Vienna, governed a composite monarchy across Central and Eastern Europe. The Austrian Empire, formally proclaimed in 1804 by Francis II (thereafter Francis I of Austria), stood upon older institutions of the Holy Roman Empire, provincial estates, and a Catholic court culture. Abbott situates rulers and peoples within territories stretching from the Alps and Danube to Bohemia, Hungary, and northern Italy. He writes for a nineteenth-century American audience, explaining dynastic politics, military campaigns, and administrative reforms that shaped a multiethnic state whose coherence depended on monarchical legitimacy and centralized bureaucracy.

Abbott begins with the Habsburg rise from medieval counts to European dynasty, tracing how marriage diplomacy and inheritance expanded Austrian domains. After the 1526 Battle of Mohács, Ferdinand I secured the crowns of Bohemia and Hungary, placing the monarchy at the frontier with the Ottoman Empire. The Reformation challenged Habsburg authority, while the Counter-Reformation entwined throne and altar. The first Ottoman siege of Vienna in 1529 made the capital a symbol of Christian resistance. Provincial estates bargained for privileges, and confessional divisions hardened, establishing the tensions between local autonomy and central rule that recur throughout the narrative.

Seventeenth-century conflict culminated in the Thirty Years' War, when the Bohemian Revolt of 1618 and the

Defenestration of Prague ignited a struggle over sovereignty and religion. Under Emperor Ferdinand II, Habsburg forces crushed the Bohemian estates at White Mountain in 1620 and pursued recatholicization and consolidation. Commanders such as Wallenstein embodied wartime militarization and court intrigue. The Peace of Westphalia in 1648 curtailed imperial reach in Germany yet left the Austrian branch predominant within its hereditary lands. Abbott emphasizes how confessional policies, noble resistance, and battlefield fortunes forged patterns of governance that persisted beyond the empire's medieval constitutional framework.

Renewed Ottoman wars reshaped the monarchy. The relief of Vienna in 1683, led by Poland's John III Sobieski alongside imperial generals, marked a turning point. Subsequent campaigns pushed Habsburg frontiers down the Danube, and treaties such as Karlowitz (1699) transferred large portions of Hungary and the Balkans to Austrian administration. The War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714) brought gains in Italy and the Southern Netherlands. Charles VI's Pragmatic Sanction (1713) sought dynastic stability by enabling his daughter Maria Theresa to inherit composite crowns, a legal device whose European acceptance dominated diplomacy and foreshadowed hard-fought contests over succession.

Maria Theresa's accession in 1740 triggered the War of the Austrian Succession, during which Prussia seized Silesia, a loss confirmed after the Seven Years' War. Facing powerful rivals, the Habsburgs pursued military, fiscal, and educational reforms, professionalizing administration and tightening central control. Joseph II extended "enlightened absolutist" measures: religious toleration edicts, curbs on ecclesiastical privilege, attempts to standardize law, and

partial relief of peasant burdens. Yet reforms that sidelined provincial estates provoked resistance in Hungary, the Austrian Netherlands, and parts of Italy. Abbott treats these efforts as pivotal experiments in modern statecraft within a deeply traditional dynastic framework.

Revolutionary and Napoleonic upheavals redefined the monarchy. After defeats at Austerlitz (1805) and Wagram (1809), Francis II dissolved the Holy Roman Empire in 1806 and concentrated sovereignty in the Austrian Empire. Klemens von Metternich, rising to dominance, steered diplomacy that restored Austria's stature at the Congress of Vienna (1814–1815) and organized the German Confederation under Austrian presidency. At home, the regime relied on censorship, police surveillance, and the Carlsbad Decrees (1819) to contain liberal and nationalist agitation. Abbott recounts how Vienna's conservatism underwrote continental order while sharpening tensions among subject nationalities and reform-minded elites.

In 1848, revolutionary waves overturned the Metternich system: protests and barricades in Vienna forced the chancellor's resignation, while uprisings spread in Lombardy-Venetia and throughout the Hungarian kingdom. Emperor Ferdinand I abdicated in favor of Franz Joseph, who, with imperial armies and Russian intervention, suppressed Hungarian independence efforts by 1849. The monarchy reimposed centralized rule—often called neoabsolutism—reorganizing administration and legal codes while marginalizing representative institutions. Abbott presents these convulsions as a crucible for imperial survival, illustrating the clash between dynastic cohesion and emerging national movements that would define mid-nineteenth-century Central Europe.

First issued in 1859 as part of Abbott's Monarchies of Continental Europe series, and later retitled in some editions, the work reflects an American popular historian's effort to render complex continental politics intelligible. Abbott's accessible narrative highlights decisive rulers, religious policy, and state reforms, emphasizing the balance between order and liberty as understood in his day. Ending before the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 and the 1867 Austro-Hungarian Compromise, it captures the Austrian Empire at a pre-rupture moment. The book implicitly critiques reaction and clericalism while acknowledging the perils of fragmentation, mirroring transatlantic debates about authority, constitutionality, and national aspiration.

The History of Austrian Empire

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PREFACE

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The studies of the author of this work, for the last ten years, in writing the "History of Napoleon Bonaparte," and "The French Revolution of 1789," have necessarily made him quite familiar with the monarchies of Europe. He has met with so much that was strange and romantic in their career, that he has been interested to undertake, as it were, a *biography* of the Monarchies of Continental Europe—their birth, education, exploits, progress and present condition. He has commenced with Austria.

There are abundant materials for this work. The Life of Austria embraces all that is wild and wonderful in history; her early struggles for aggrandizement—the fierce strife with the Turks, as wave after wave of Moslem invasion rolled up the Danube—the long conflicts and bloody persecutions of the Reformation—the thirty years' religious war—the meteoric career of Gustavus Adolphus and Charles XII. shooting athwart the lurid storms of battle—the intrigues of Popes—the enormous pride, power and encroachments of Louis XIV.—the warfare of the Spanish succession and the Polish dismemberment—all these events combine in a sublime tragedy which fiction may in vain attempt to parallel.

It is affecting to observe in the history of Germany, through what woes humanity has passed in attaining even its present position of civilization. It is to be hoped that the human family may never again suffer what it has already endured. We shall be indeed insane if we do not gain some wisdom from the struggles and the calamities of those who

have gone before us. The narrative of the career of the Austrian Empire, must, by contrast, excite emotions of gratitude in every American bosom. Our lines have fallen to us in pleasant places; we have a goodly heritage.

It is the author's intention soon to issue, as the second of this series, the History of the Empire of Russia.

JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

Brunswick, Maine, 1859.

CHAPTER I.

RHODOLPH OF HAPSBURG.

From 1232 to 1291.

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Hawk's Castle.—Albert, Count of Hapsburg[1].—Rhodolph of Hapsburg.—His Marriage and Estates.—Excommunication and its Results.—His Principles of Honor.—A Confederacy of Barons.—Their Route.—Rhodolph's Election as Emperor of Germany.—The Bishop's Warning.—Dissatisfaction at the Result of the Election.—Advantages Accruing from the Possession of an Interesting Family.—Conquest.—Ottocar Acknowledges the Emperor; yet breaks his Oath of Allegiance.—Gathering Clouds.—Wonderful Escape.—Victory of Rhodolph.—His Reforms.

In the small canton of Aargau, in Switzerland, on a rocky bluff of the Wulpelsberg, there still remains an old baronial castle, called Hapsburg, or Hawk's Castle. It was reared in the eleventh century, and was occupied by a succession of warlike barons, who have left nothing to distinguish themselves from the feudal lords whose castles, at that period, frowned upon almost every eminence of Europe. In the year 1232 this castle was occupied by Albert, fourth Count of Hapsburg. He had acquired some little reputation for military prowess, the only reputation any one could acquire in that dark age, and became ambitious of winning new laurels in the war with the infidels in the holy land.

Religious fanaticism and military ambition were then the two great powers which ruled the human soul[19].

With the usual display of semi-barbaric pomp, Albert made arrangements to leave his castle to engage in the perilous holy war against the Saracens, from which few ever returned. A few years were employed in the necessary preparations. At the sound of the bugle the portcullis was raised, the drawbridge spanned the moat, and Albert, at the head of thirty steel-clad warriors, with nodding plumes, and banners unfurled, emerged from the castle, and proceeded to the neighboring convent of Mari. His wife, Hedwige, and their three sons, Rhodolph, Albert and Hartman, accompanied him to the chapel where the ecclesiastics awaited his arrival. A multitude of vassals crowded around to witness the imposing ceremonies of the church, as the banners were blessed, and the knights, after having received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, were commended to the protection of God. Albert felt the solemnity of the hour, and in solemn tones gave his farewell address to his children.

"My sons," said the steel-clad warrior, "cultivate truth and piety; give no ear to evil counselors, never engage in unnecessary war, but when you are involved in war be strong and brave. Love peace even better than your own personal interests. Remember that the counts of Hapsburg did not attain their heights of reputation and glory by fraud, insolence or selfishness, but by courage and devotion to the public weal. As long as you follow their footsteps, you will not only retain, but augment, the possessions and dignities of your illustrious ancestors."

The tears and sobs of his wife and family interrupted him while he uttered these parting words. The bugles then sounded. The knights mounted their horses; the clatter of

hoofs was heard, and the glittering cavalcade soon disappeared in the forest. Albert had left his ancestral castle, never to return. He had but just arrived in Palestine, when he was taken sick at Askalon[2], and died in the year 1240.

Rhodolph, his eldest son, was twenty-two years of age at the time of his father's death. Frederic II[3]., one of the most renowned monarchs of the middle ages, was then Emperor of that conglomeration of heterogeneous States called Germany. Each of these States had its own independent ruler and laws, but they were all held together by a common bond for mutual protection, and some one illustrious sovereign was chosen as Emperor of Germany, to preside over their common affairs. The Emperor of Germany, having influence over all these States, was consequently, in position, the great man of the age.

Albert, Count of Hapsburg, had been one of the favorite captains of Frederic II. in the numerous wars which desolated Europe in that dark age. He was often at court, and the emperor even condescended to present his son Rhodolph at the font for baptism. As the child grew, he was trained to all athletic feats, riding ungovernable horses, throwing the javelin, wrestling, running, and fencing. He early gave indications of surprising mental and bodily vigor, and, at an age when most lads are considered merely children, he accompanied his father to the camp and to the court. Upon the death of his father, Rhodolph inherited the ancestral castle, and the moderate possessions of a Swiss baron. He was surrounded by barons of far greater wealth and power than himself, and his proud spirit was roused, in disregard of his father's counsels, to aggrandize his fortunes by force of arms, the only way then by which wealth and power could be attained. He exhausted his revenues by

maintaining a princely establishment, organized a well-selected band of his vassals into a military corps, which he drilled to a state of perfect discipline, and then commenced a series of incursions upon his neighbors. From some feeble barons he won territory, thus extending his domains; from others he extorted money, thus enabling him to reward his troops, and to add to their number by engaging fearless spirits in his service wherever he could find them.

In the year 1245, Rhodolph strengthened himself still more by an advantageous marriage with Gertrude, the beautiful daughter of the Count of Hohenberg. With his bride he received as her dowry the castle of Oeltingen, and very considerable territorial possessions. Thus in five years Rhodolph, by that species of robbery which was then called heroic adventure, and by a fortunate marriage, had more than doubled his hereditary inheritance. The charms of his bride, and the care of his estates seem for a few years to have arrested the progress of his ambition; for we can find no further notice of him among the ancient chronicles for eight years. But, with almost all men, love is an ephemeral passion, which is eventually vanquished by other powers of the soul. Ambition slumbered for a little time, but was soon roused anew, invigorated by repose.

In 1253 we find Rhodolph heading a foray of steel-clad knights, with their banded followers, in a midnight attack upon the city of Basle. They break over all the defenses, sweep all opposition before them, and in the fury of the fight, either by accident or as a necessity of war, sacrilegiously set fire to a nunnery. For this crime Rhodolph was excommunicated by the pope. Excommunication was then no farce. There were few who dared to serve a prince upon whom the denunciations of the Church had fallen. It was a stunning blow, from which few men could recover.

Rhodolph, instead of sinking in despair, endeavored, by new acts of obedience and devotion to the Church, to obtain the revocation of the sentence.

In the region now called Prussia, there was then a barbaric pagan race, against whom the pope had published a crusade. Into this war the excommunicated Rhodolph plunged with all the impetuosity of his nature; he resolved to work out absolution, by converting, with all the potency of fire and sword, the barbarians to the Church. His penitence and zeal seem to have been accepted, for we soon find him on good terms again with the pope. He now sought to have a hand in every quarrel, far and near. Wherever the sounds of war are raised, the shout of Rhodolph is heard urging to the strife. In every hot and fiery foray, the steed of Rhodolph is rearing and plunging, and his saber strokes fall in ringing blows upon cuirass and helmet. He efficiently aided the city of Strasbourg in their war against their bishop, and received from them in gratitude extensive territories, while at the same time they reared a monument to his name, portions of which still exist. His younger brother died, leaving an only daughter, Anne, with a large inheritance. Rhodolph, as her guardian, came into possession of the counties of Kyburg, Lentzburg and Baden, and other scattered domains.

This rapidly-increasing wealth and power, did but increase his energy and his spirit of encroachment. And yet he adopted principles of honor which were far from common in that age of barbaric violence. He would never stoop to ordinary robbery, or harass peasants and helpless travelers, as was constantly done by the turbulent barons around him. His warfare was against the castle, never against the cottage. He met in arms the panoplied knight, never the timid and crouching peasant. He swept the roads of the

banditti by which they were infested, and often espoused the cause of citizens and freemen against the turbulent barons and haughty prelates. He thus gained a wide-spread reputation for justice, as well as for prowess, and the name of Rhodolph of Hapsburg was ascending fast into renown. Every post of authority then required the agency of a military arm. The feeble cantons would seek the protection of a powerful chief; the citizens of a wealthy town, ever liable to be robbed by bishop or baron, looked around for some warrior who had invincible troops at his command for their protection. Thus Rhodolph of Hapsburg was chosen chief of the mountaineers of Uri, Schwitz and Unterwalden; and all their trained bands were ready, when his bugle note echoed through their defiles, to follow him unquestioning, and to do his bidding. The citizens of Zurich chose Rhodolph of Hapsburg as their prefect or mayor; and whenever his banner was unfurled in their streets, all the troops of the city were at his command.

The neighboring barons, alarmed at this rapid aggrandizement of Rhodolph, formed an alliance to crush him. The mountaineers heard his bugle call, and rushed to his aid. Zurich opened her gates, and her marshaled troops hastened to his banner. From Hapsburg, and Rheinfelden, and Suabia, and Brisgau, and we know not how many other of the territorial possessions of the count, the vassals rushed to the aid of their lord. They met in one of the valleys of Zurich. The battle was short, and the confederated barons were put to utter flight. Some took refuge in the strong castle of Balder, upon a rocky cliff washed by the Albis. Rhodolph selected thirty horsemen and thirty footmen.

"Will you follow me," said he, "in an enterprise where the honor will be equal to the peril?"

A universal shout of assent was the response. Concealing the footmen in a thicket, he, at the head of thirty horsemen, rode boldly to the gates of the castle, bidding defiance, with all the utterances and gesticulations of contempt, to the whole garrison. Those on the ramparts, stung by the insult, rushed out to chastise so impudent a challenge. The footmen rose from their ambush, and assailants and assailed rushed pell mell in at the open gates of the castle. The garrison were cut down or taken captive, and the fortress demolished. Another party had fled to the castle of Utleberg. By an ingenious stratagem, this castle was also taken. Success succeeded success with such rapidity, that the confederate barons, struck with consternation, exclaimed,

"All opposition is fruitless. Rhodolph of Hapsburg is invincible."

They consequently dissolved the alliance, and sought peace on terms which vastly augmented the power of the conqueror.

Basle now incurred the displeasure of Rhodolph. He led his armies to the gates of the city, and extorted satisfaction. The Bishop of Basle, a haughty prelate of great military power, and who could summon many barons to his aid, ventured to make arrogant demands of this warrior flushed with victory. The palace and vast possessions of the bishop were upon the other side of the unbridged Rhine, and the bishop imagined that he could easily prevent the passage of the river. But Rhodolph speedily constructed a bridge of boats, put to flight the troops which opposed his passage, drove the peasants of the bishop everywhere before him, and burned their cottages and their fields of grain. The bishop, appalled, sued for a truce, that they might negotiate

64 The Pragmatic Sanction was Charles VI's legal decree (promulgated to secure his dynasty) allowing his daughters to succeed to the Habsburg hereditary lands; Charles sought formal recognition of it from other European powers, and disputes over the sanction later contributed to the War of the Austrian Succession.

65 Cardinal Fleury (André-Hercule de Fleury, 1653-1743) was tutor and then chief minister to King Louis XV of France, effectively directing French policy from the late 1720s and playing a key role in alliances with Spain and opposition to Habsburg aims.

66 Stanislaus Leczinski (Stanisław Leszczyński, 1677-1766) was a Polish noble who was king of Poland during 1704-1709 and was again elected by a large Polish faction in 1733 with French backing, though he was opposed and ultimately expelled by rival powers.

67 Prince Eugene (Eugene of Savoy, 1663-1736) was a leading Habsburg general and statesman renowned for his military campaigns against the Ottoman Empire and France; though born in France, he served Austria for most of his career and commanded imperial forces in the 1730s.

68 Francis Stephen of Lorraine (1708-1765) was the Duke of Lorraine who married Maria Theresa and later became Holy Roman Emperor Francis I as her consort, acquiring the Grand Duchy of Tuscany in compensation for ceding Lorraine to France.

69 Azof (modern spelling: Azov) refers to the Sea of Azov, a shallow inlet of the Black Sea at the mouth of the Don River that was strategically important and contested by Peter the Great in the early 18th century.

70 Janissaries were the Ottoman Empire's elite infantry corps, originally recruited as converted Christian youths and later a powerful political and military corps from the 14th century until their abolition in 1826.

71 An Austrian plenipotentiary and military officer who appears in the chapter as the negotiator blamed for the surrender of Belgrade, later imprisoned by imperial order and subsequently released by Maria Theresa to command Austrian forces.

72 A historic Central European region and then a wealthy duchy bordering Prussia that was the object of Frederick II's 1740–41 invasion; much of the territory now lies within modern Poland (with parts in the Czech Republic and Germany).

73 A duchy (referred to here as a potential cession to Prussia) centered on the town now known as Głogów in western Poland; it was a smaller border province near Prussia in the mid-18th century.

74 An archaic spelling of 'cimeter' or scimitar, referring to a curved sword or sabre used in ceremonial and military contexts in early modern Europe and adjacent regions.

75 Irregular light troops recruited mainly from the Habsburg Military Frontier (often Croat and other Balkan border communities) who served as skirmishers and raiders in 18th-century Central European warfare.

76 A Latin declaration spoken by the Hungarian nobles at Maria Theresa's coronation, translated as 'We will die for our sovereign, Maria Theresa,' expressing their pledge of loyalty to her.

77 A variant spelling of Parc-aux-Cerfs, the name given to a small house or set of residences associated with King Louis XV of France where he kept private mistresses in the mid-18th century; historians use slightly different spellings and descriptions of the site.

78 A French phrase meaning a general raising of the people for military service or insurrection (i.e., a mass levy); here it denotes the Hungarian summons to arms called by Maria Theresa.

79 The British ambassador to Vienna in the 1740s (Sir Thomas Robinson, later 1st Baron Grantham), who acted as England's diplomatic representative and negotiator with Maria Theresa during the War of the Austrian Succession.

80 Jeanne Antoinette Poisson (Madame de Pompadour, 1721-1764) was the chief mistress and influential court patron of King Louis XV of France, who exercised significant political and cultural influence at Versailles.

81 Count Wenzel Anton von Kaunitz-Rietberg was an Austrian statesman and diplomat who served for decades as Austria's leading foreign minister and helped engineer the diplomatic reorientation of Austria toward France.

82 A military order of merit instituted by Maria Theresa (established 1757) to reward officers for distinguished bravery or successful military command; it became one of the principal Habsburg military honors.

83 Elizabeth Petrovna (reigned 1741–1762) was Empress of Russia whose death on 5 January 1762 precipitated rapid changes in Russian policy during the Seven Years' War.

84 The book uses the name 'Paul III.' for the short-lived Russian emperor deposed in 1762; historians more commonly identify this ruler as Peter III of Russia (1728–1762), who reigned briefly in 1762 before being overthrown by his wife, Catherine II.

85 Refers to the series of territorial divisions by neighboring powers—beginning with the First Partition in 1772 and followed by further partitions in 1793 and 1795—by Russia, Prussia and Austria that progressively removed large portions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and ultimately erased it as an independent state by 1795.

86 An older English spelling of Kyiv (also spelled Kiev), a city on the Dnieper River that was historically the residence of medieval Russian grand dukes and is located in modern-day Ukraine.