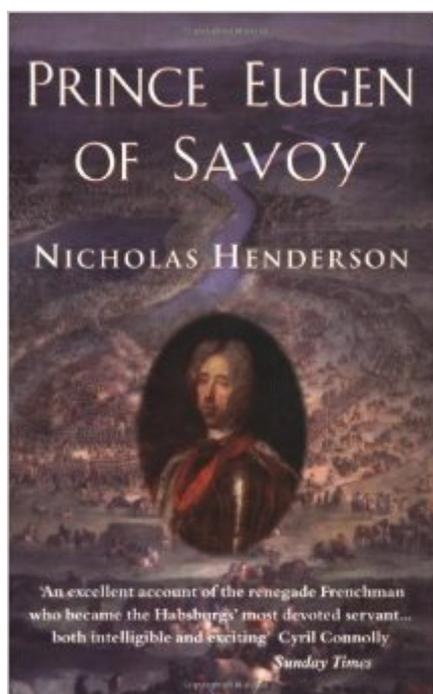


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Prince Eugen Of Savoy (Phoenix Press)



Synopsis

Soldier of 30 campaigns and the survivor of fourteen wounds, Prince Eugen fought against the French with Marlborough in a glorious brotherhood that Winston Churchill praised in glowing terms as without peer.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Thank god for N. Henderson. Finding a book, any book written about the Prince are extremely hard to come by. Additionally the book is excellent. Fluid, easy reading, well done period atmosphere outline, the "times" of Eugene right up to his passing, personal anecdotes that really give you the flavor of his personality, overall balance and depth of subject all make this a 5 star selection. Now, if I can just find something like this on Turenne, I'll be set. LOL. As a social aside, any person looking to emulate a man with integrity, loyalty, who is personally brave and honest, will be hard pressed to find one better than Eugene.

Henderson has written a traditional historical biography of Eugen (Eugene) of Savoy. At the time of his writing, this was the only such biography in English. This still seems to be true. Henderson's book is much more readable than most traditional biographies, and it is even a page-turner at times. He provides good coverage of Eugen's character, and gives significant attention to his interests in architecture, art, and bibliophilia. As you might expect from a book written in the 1960s, Henderson

dances around Eugen's apparent homosexuality but provides enough facts for your own evaluation. The book's major weakness is that it lacks any explanation of Eugen's military successes. Since Henderson is not a military professional, he shied away from any analysis, and the battles mostly rest on Eugen's "brilliance" and "courage." Since Eugen's rise was predicated on his military abilities, this is an unfortunate (and glaring) omission. Nonetheless, if you're interested in the period or the place (Austria-Hungary), this is a very useful biography of an important figure who is all too often forgotten today.

I was introduced to Eugen the same way as perhaps most history enthusiasts in the Anglophone world--as Marlborough's great ally in the War of Spanish Succession. Also, Napoleon had given him favorable mention, placing him in the same pantheon as Alexander, Hannibal, Gustavus Adolphus, Frederick the Great and others. Setting out to find out what more I could about Eugen, I found Henderson's biography, and little else. As one reviewer has already pointed out, Henderson focuses broadly on Eugen's whole life and does not give perceptive analysis concerning Eugen's military exploits. Hopefully someday a military historian will write a book on Eugen's generalship, or such an existing work will be translated into English. Eugen's early years near the court of Louis XIV, his rejection by the Sun King in wanting to join his army, and subsequent service with the Hapsburgs is the stuff of a great historical novel. One of the great what-ifs of that era must be what if Louis would have said yes to Eugen. In the employ of the Hapsburgs, Eugen worked on interior lines of sorts against the Ottoman's expansion on one side, and Louis XIV's ambitions on the other. His status as a great independent commander was secured by the rout of the Turks at Zenta in 1697. Later, with Marlborough, he helped frustrate Louis' designs at the battles of Blenheim, Oudenarde and Malplaquet. Not just a great general, Eugen also had intense interests in architecture, art and books. He built Belvedere, the baroque palace in Vienna, and possessed thousands of works of art and books. It is a pity that at his death he was intestate, and never having married, his estate went to a niece he barely knew and who had little affection for her uncle. Even if Eugen wasn't into the ladies, as some have suggested, he should have bitten the bullet and produced an heir, as most like-minded aristocrats were wont to do.

This is an excellent biography of one of the great figures of European history in the 18th century. Eugen of Savoy led Austrian Imperial armies in the Balkans, Italy and Flanders. He won great victories over the Turks and Louis XIV's France. He was the Duke of Marlborough partner at Blenheim, Oudenarde and Malplaquet. This study gives you a full picture of this important man both

on the battlefield and in his private life. A great collector and builder, Eugen left a mark on Vienna still visible today and well told in this account. Eugen's statue still towers over Budapest today, a fitting reminder of the man who taught Frederick the Great the art of war.

Dated, but with some good stuff. Lots of information, somewhat stilted writing, but in the absence of any modern bio of Eugene, worth it.

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