

richard sharpe books in order

richard sharpe books in order: A Complete Guide to the Sharpe Series

The Richard Sharpe books have captivated readers around the world with their thrilling tales of adventure, military strategy, and heroism set against the backdrop of the Napoleonic Wars. Authored by the prolific Bernard Cornwell, this series chronicles the life of Richard Sharpe, a British soldier rising through the ranks amid war, intrigue, and personal challenges. If you're new to the series or a longtime fan looking to revisit the saga, understanding the books in chronological order is essential to fully appreciating Sharpe's journey.

In this comprehensive guide, we'll explore the Richard Sharpe books in order, providing detailed summaries, background information about each novel, and insights into the development of Sharpe's character. Whether you're a casual reader or a dedicated collector, this article will serve as your ultimate resource for navigating the series.

Understanding the Richard Sharpe Series

Before diving into the books themselves, it's helpful to understand the context of the series. Bernard Cornwell's Sharpe novels are historical fiction, blending real events with fictional characters to create compelling narratives. The series spans multiple decades, depicting Sharpe's evolution from a young private to a seasoned officer.

The series is notable for its vivid descriptions of battles, military tactics, and life during the Napoleonic era. Cornwell's meticulous research ensures historical accuracy, making the series not only exciting but also educational.

The Chronological Order of the Richard Sharpe Books

While some readers prefer to read the books in the order they were published, the most immersive experience comes from reading them in chronological order of Sharpe's life. Below is the recommended sequence, including publication dates and brief summaries.

1. Sharpe's Eagle (1981)

Setting: 1809, during the Peninsular War in Spain

Summary:

This debut novel introduces Richard Sharpe as a sergeant in the British Army. Sharpe's valor and resourcefulness shine during the Battle of Talavera, where he proves himself amidst chaos and danger. The story also explores his early life, his first encounters with the British officer Sir Henry Simmerson, and his burgeoning reputation.

Key Themes: Courage, loyalty, military strategy

2. Sharpe's Gold (1981)

Setting: 1810, during the Peninsular War

Summary:

Sharpe is tasked with recovering stolen gold from French forces. The mission takes him across Spain and involves complex alliances, treacherous terrain, and fierce combat. His leadership qualities come to the forefront as he navigates betrayal and danger.

Highlights: The Siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, a blend of action and tactical ingenuity.

3. Sharpe's Company (1982)

Setting: 1811

Summary:

Sharpe leads a company of British soldiers through small skirmishes and larger battles. When his men are accused of theft, Sharpe must clear their names while fighting off French advances. This novel deepens the portrayal of Sharpe's leadership and integrity.

4. Sharpe's Sword (1983)

Setting: 1812

Summary:

Sharpe becomes involved in a mission to capture a French fort in Portugal. The novel showcases Sharpe's tactical brilliance and introduces key characters like Patrick Harper, his loyal Irish scout. The story also includes Sharpe's first encounter with the infamous French officer, Major Ducos.

5. Sharpe's Rifles (1988)

Setting: 1812-1813

Summary:

This novel follows Sharpe and his riflemen as they fight in the Battle of Salamanca. It's notable for its detailed depiction of sharpshooting tactics and guerrilla warfare. Sharpe's skills with the rifle earn him respect and fear on both sides.

6. Sharpe's Revenge (1989)

Setting: 1813

Summary:

Sharpe seeks justice for the death of his wife and the theft of his land. His quest takes him into Spain and France, and the story explores themes of revenge and redemption amid the larger canvas of the Napoleonic Wars.

7. Sharpe's Waterloo (1990)

Setting: 1815, Battle of Waterloo

Summary:

In this climax of the series, Sharpe faces the decisive battle that ends Napoleon's reign. The novel captures the chaos and scale of the battle, highlighting Sharpe's bravery and tactical acumen.

8. Sharpe's Devil (1992)

Setting: 1820s, South America

Summary:

Moving beyond Europe, this novel takes Sharpe to South America, where he becomes embroiled in political upheaval and guerrilla warfare. It offers a different perspective on Sharpe's adventures and personal growth.

Additional Novels in the Series

While the above list covers the core chronological order, Bernard Cornwell also wrote additional Sharpe novels and short stories to expand the universe:

- Sharpe's Escape (2007): A prequel set before the original series, exploring Sharpe's early days.
- Sharpe's Skirmish (2002): Short stories filling in gaps between novels.
- Sharpe's Battle (1997): Set during the Battle of Vitoria in 1813.
- Sharpe's Honour (1998): Focuses on Sharpe's efforts to uphold his honor amid political intrigue.

Reading these additional works can enrich your understanding of Sharpe's character and the historical context.

How to Approach Reading the Series

To get the most out of the Richard Sharpe books, consider the following tips:

- Read in Chronological Order: Enhances character development and understanding of historical events.
- Pay Attention to Historical Details: Cornwell's research adds depth; noting real battles and figures enriches the experience.
- Take Notes of Key Characters: Sharpe's relationships, especially with Harper and Patrick Harper, are central to the series.
- Explore the Historical Background: Familiarize yourself with the Napoleonic Wars for better context.

Where to Start with the Richard Sharpe Books

For newcomers, starting with Sharpe's Eagle is recommended. It introduces Sharpe's character, the tone of the series, and historical setting. After that, following the chronological order ensures a seamless journey through Sharpe's military career.

Conclusion: Embark on the Adventure

The Richard Sharpe books in order offer a compelling blend of history, adventure, and character development. Bernard Cornwell's masterful storytelling transports readers to a turbulent era where bravery and cunning are paramount. Whether you're interested in detailed battle descriptions, complex characters, or a gripping narrative, the Sharpe series delivers all.

By understanding the sequence and key themes of each novel, you'll be well-equipped to enjoy the series fully. Dive into the world of Richard Sharpe and experience a journey through one of the most exciting periods in military history.

Happy reading!

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the correct reading order for the Richard Sharpe books by Bernard Cornwell?

The recommended reading order is chronological based on the timeline of events: starting with 'Sharpe's Eagle,' followed by 'Sharpe's Gold,' 'Sharpe's Company,' and so on, covering all titles in the series in the order they take place.

Are the Richard Sharpe books published in the order they should be read?

Not necessarily. Many of the books were published out of chronological order, so for the best experience, it's advised to read them in chronological order according to the historical timeline outlined in the series.

How many Richard Sharpe books are there, and what is the first one in the series?

There are 21 main novels in the Richard Sharpe series, with 'Sharpe's Eagle' being the first book published and the starting point of the series.

Is there a recommended starting point for new readers of the Richard Sharpe series?

Yes, beginners are advised to start with 'Sharpe's Eagle,' which introduces the main character and sets the stage for the series' historical backdrop.

Do the Richard Sharpe books follow a continuous storyline or are they standalone?

While each book can be read independently, they follow a continuous chronological storyline, with recurring characters and evolving plotlines, so reading in order enhances understanding and enjoyment.

Are there any thematic or historical considerations when reading the Richard Sharpe books in order?

Yes, the series is set during the Napoleonic Wars, so reading in chronological order provides a better understanding of the historical context and how the events unfold over time.

Are the Richard Sharpe books suitable for young readers or only adults?

The series is generally aimed at adult readers due to its mature themes, violence, and historical complexity, so parental discretion is advised for younger audiences.

Where can I find the complete list of Richard Sharpe books in order?

The complete list can be found on Bernard Cornwell's official website, major book retailers, or dedicated series guides online, which organize the books chronologically and by publication.

Additional Resources

Richard Sharpe Books in Order: An In-Depth Guide to the Legendary Series

The Richard Sharpe series by Bernard Cornwell stands as one of the most compelling and enduring works in historical fiction. Spanning over two decades, this prolific collection of novels chronicles the adventures of the eponymous British soldier during the Napoleonic Wars, blending meticulous historical detail with gripping storytelling. For newcomers and seasoned readers alike, understanding the proper Richard Sharpe books in order is essential to fully appreciating the character's development, the narrative continuity, and the rich tapestry of historical events depicted across the series.

In this comprehensive review, we will explore the chronological and publication order of the Richard Sharpe series, analyze the thematic progression, discuss the significance of reading order, and provide recommendations for readers interested in diving into this immersive world of martial adventure and historical intrigue.

The Origin and Evolution of the Richard Sharpe Series

Bernard Cornwell introduced Richard Sharpe in 1981 with Sharpe's Eagle, setting the stage for a series that would eventually encompass over twenty novels, as well as short stories, anthologies, and adaptations. The series is renowned for its vivid battle scenes, well-researched historical context, and the complex, relatable character arc of Sharpe—a humble rifleman who rises through the ranks to become a seasoned officer.

Initially conceived as standalone stories, the novels gradually formed a cohesive narrative arc, with each book building upon the events and character development of the previous installments. Cornwell's meticulous attention to historical accuracy has garnered praise from historians and fiction enthusiasts alike, making the Richard Sharpe series a cornerstone of historical adventure literature.

Understanding the Publishing vs. Chronological

Order

Before delving into the list, it's important to distinguish between publication order and chronological order:

- Publication Order: The sequence in which the books were originally released, starting with Sharpe's Eagle (1981).
- Chronological Order: The sequence of events within the story universe, which may differ from publication order due to prequels, flashbacks, or story timeline adjustments.

While many readers prefer to follow the publication order to experience the series as originally presented, others opt for chronological reading to better follow the historical timeline and character development.

The Series in Publication Order

For those interested in experiencing the series as Bernard Cornwell published it, here is the complete list of Richard Sharpe novels in order:

1. Sharpe's Eagle (1981)
2. Sharpe's Gold (1981)
3. Sharpe's Company (1982)
4. Sharpe's Sword (1983)
5. Sharpe's Enemy (1984)
6. Sharpe's Honor (1985)
7. Sharpe's Regiment (1986)
8. Sharpe's Rifles (1988) – also known as Sharpe's Prey in some editions
9. Sharpe's Siege (1988)
10. Sharpe's Rifles (also published as Sharpe's Prey) (1988)
11. Sharpe's Escape (1989)
12. Sharpe's Fury (1990)
13. Sharpe's Tiger (1991)
14. Sharpe's Battle (1995)
15. Sharpe's Triumph (1998)
16. Sharpe's Fortress (1999)
17. Sharpe's Gold (2000) – reissue
18. Sharpe's Devil (2001)
19. Sharpe's Skirmish (2002, collection of short stories)
20. Sharpe's Sword (2003) – reissue
21. Sharpe's Assassin (2021)

(Note: Some titles have multiple editions or retitled versions; refer to your preferred publisher for specifics.)

Chronological Order of the Series

If you prefer to follow the chronological sequence of Sharpe's life and the historical timeline, the order shifts slightly. The series begins with

Sharpe's early military experiences during the French Revolution and proceeds through the Napoleonic Wars, with some prequel stories exploring his origins.

The recommended chronological order is as follows:

1. Sharpe's Tiger (1991) – Sharpe's first military experience during the uprising in India.
2. Sharpe's Fortress (1999)
3. Sharpe's Trafalgar (2000) – a short story; included in collections.
4. Sharpe's Prey / Sharpe's Rifles (1988)
5. Sharpe's Skirmish (2002, collection)
6. Sharpe's Enemy (1984)
7. Sharpe's Honour (1985)
8. Sharpe's Regiment (1986)
9. Sharpe's Siege (1988)
10. Sharpe's Escape (1989)
11. Sharpe's Fury (1990)
12. Sharpe's Battle (1995)
13. Sharpe's Triumph (1998)
14. Sharpe's Devil (2001)
15. Sharpe's Assassin (2021)

Note: Some stories and novellas, like Sharpe's Trafalgar and Sharpe's Skirmish, are best read alongside or after the novels for a fuller picture.

Thematic and Character Development Across the Series

One of the series' strengths lies in its evolution of Richard Sharpe himself. Starting as a raw, ambitious rifleman, Sharpe matures into a seasoned, strategic officer, navigating the complex politics, brutal warfare, and personal dilemmas of the Napoleonic era.

Key themes include:

- Military Honor and Loyalty: Sharpe's sense of duty often conflicts with political and personal interests.
- Class and Social Mobility: The series explores Sharpe's rise from humble origins to a respected officer.
- Historical Accuracy and Detail: Each novel incorporates real battles, historical figures, and locations, immersing the reader in the period.
- Personal Relationships: Love, loss, and camaraderie are central to Sharpe's journey, adding emotional depth.

Reading the series in chronological order reveals Sharpe's growth and the shifting landscape of early 19th-century warfare, offering a nuanced understanding of his character and the historical context.

Recommendations for New Readers

Beginners might find it beneficial to start with the publication order, beginning with Sharpe's Eagle, to experience the series as originally conceived. However, for those particularly interested in Sharpe's origins in India, beginning with Sharpe's Tiger provides valuable background.

Suggested starting points:

- For traditional series experience: Sharpe's Eagle (published first)
- For chronological immersion: Sharpe's Tiger

Once engaged, readers can decide whether to follow the publication sequence or the chronological timeline, depending on their interest in narrative flow versus historical progression.

Beyond the Novels: Adaptations and Extended Universe

The Richard Sharpe series has inspired a successful television adaptation starring Sean Bean, which aired from 1993 to 2008. The TV series largely follows the novels but includes some deviations and new storylines.

Additionally, Bernard Cornwell has authored short stories, anthologies, and supplementary material expanding Sharpe's world, such as Sharpe's Skirmish and Sharpe's Devil. Fans can explore these for additional depth and context.

Conclusion: Navigating the Rich Tapestry of Sharpe's Adventures

The Richard Sharpe series remains a masterclass in historical fiction, combining engaging storytelling with rigorous research. Understanding the Richard Sharpe books in order—whether by publication or chronological timeline—enhances the reading experience, allowing fans to follow Sharpe's evolution from a young rifleman to a seasoned veteran.

For scholars, enthusiasts, and new readers, the series offers a compelling window into the tumultuous era of the Napoleonic Wars, set against the backdrop of one man's relentless pursuit of honor, survival, and justice. Whether you choose to read in publication order or chronological sequence, Bernard Cornwell's Richard Sharpe novels promise an immersive journey into one of history's most fascinating periods, told through the life of a truly memorable hero.

Final Recommendations:

- Start with Sharpe's Eagle (publication order) or Sharpe's Tiger (chronological order).
- Consider reading Sharpe's Skirmish and other short stories after completing the novels for added context.
- For a full appreciation, explore the television adaptation and related materials.

Embark on the adventure today and discover why the Richard Sharpe series continues to captivate readers around the world.

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richard sharpe books in order: Sharpe 3-Book Collection 1: Sharpe's Tiger, Sharpe's Triumph, Sharpe's Fortress (The Sharpe Series) Bernard Cornwell, 2011-11-15 *SHARPE'S COMMAND, the brand new novel in the global bestselling series, is available to pre-order now* Three classic Richard Sharpe adventures.

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richard sharpe books in order: Sharpe's Revenge Bernard Cornwell, 2009-03 Richard Sharpe triumphs in the last battle of the war, only to find himself in worse peril when charged to recover Napoleon's treasure. It is 1814. There are rumours that Napoleon is dead, or has run away, but Sharpe has one last, battle to fight before he can lay down his sword - it is the battle for Toulouse. Little does he know it will be one of the bloodiest conflicts of the war. But Sharpe's war is not only the battle. Accused of stealing Napoleon's treasure, Sharpe must discover the unknown enemy who has tried to frame him - and his revenge is ingenious and devastating. Soldier, hero, rogue - Sharpe is the man you always want on your side. Born in poverty, he joined the army to escape jail and climbed the ranks by sheer brutal courage. He knows no other family than the regiment of the 95th Rifles whose green jacket he proudly wears.

richard sharpe books in order: Sharpe 3-Book Collection 2: Sharpe's Havoc, Sharpe's Eagle, Sharpe's Gold (The Sharpe Series) Bernard Cornwell, 2011-11-01 Three classic Richard Sharpe adventures

richard sharpe books in order: Sharpe's Havoc Bernard Cornwell, 2009-03-17 New York Times Bestselling Author Newly Reissued Richard Sharpe returns to the battlefields of the Iberian Peninsula, where he and his men bravely fight the French invasion into Portugal in 1809. The world-renowned Sharpe series is now available with gorgeous packaging for a new generation of readers A few years after Richard Sharpe's heroic exploits on the battlefields of Trafalgar, Sharpe finds himself once again in Portugal, fighting the savage armies of Napoleon Bonaparte, as they try to bring the whole of the Iberian Peninsula under their control. Travelling with a small British contingent, Sharpe is on the lookout for Kate Savage, the daughter of an English wine shipper, who has gone missing a few months before. But just as he follows the first leads to the missing girl, the French onslaught on Portugal begins and the city of Oporto becomes a bloody scene of carnage and disaster as it falls into the hands of the enemy.

richard sharpe books in order: Sharpe's Devil Bernard Cornwell, 2009-10-13 From New York Times bestselling author Bernard Cornwell, another exciting adventure in the world-renowned

Sharpe series, chronicling the rise of Richard Sharpe, a Private in His Majesty's Army at the siege of Seringapatam. Five years after the Battle of Waterloo, Sharpe's peaceful retirement in Normandy is shattered. An old friend, Don Blas Vivar, is missing in Chile, reported dead at rebel hands – a report his wife refuses to believe. She appeals to Sharpe to find out the truth. Sharpe, along with Patrick Harper, find themselves bound for Chile via St. Helena, where they have a fateful meeting with the fallen Emperor Napoleon. Convinced that they are on their way to collect a corpse, neither man can imagine the dangers that await them in Chile...

richard sharpe books in order: Sharpe's Fortress Bernard Cornwell, 2002-01-08 Be prepared for scenes of great action & heroic. The sword hissed an inch behind the boy's neck. I said to leave him alone! Sharpe said. Or do you want to fight me instead? None of us, a calm voice said behind Sharpe, wants to fight Ensign Sharpe. Richard Sharpe. Soldier, hero, rogue—the man you always want on your side. Born in poverty, he joined the army to escape jail and climbed the ranks by sheer brutal courage. He knows no other family than the regiment of the 95th Rifles, whose green jacket he proudly wears.

richard sharpe books in order: The Last Kingdom Bernard Cornwell, 2009-03-17 The first installment of Bernard Cornwell's New York Times bestselling series chronicling the epic saga of the making of England, "like Game of Thrones, but real" (The Observer, London)—the basis for The Last Kingdom, the hit Netflix series. This is the exciting—yet little known—story of the making of England in the 9th and 10th centuries, the years in which King Alfred the Great, his son and grandson defeated the Danish Vikings who had invaded and occupied three of England's four kingdoms. The story is seen through the eyes of Uhtred, a dispossessed nobleman, who is captured as a child by the Danes and then raised by them so that, by the time the Northmen begin their assault on Wessex (Alfred's kingdom and the last territory in English hands) Uhtred almost thinks of himself as a Dane. He certainly has no love for Alfred, whom he considers a pious weakling and no match for Viking savagery, yet when Alfred unexpectedly defeats the Danes and the Danes themselves turn on Uhtred, he is finally forced to choose sides. By now he is a young man, in love, trained to fight and ready to take his place in the dreaded shield wall. Above all, though, he wishes to recover his father's land, the enchanting fort of Bebbanburg by the wild northern sea. This thrilling adventure—based on existing records of Bernard Cornwell's ancestors—depicts a time when law and order were ripped violently apart by a pagan assault on Christian England, an assault that came very close to destroying England.

richard sharpe books in order: Sharpe 3-Book Collection 7: Sharpe's Revenge, Sharpe's Waterloo, Sharpe's Devil (The Sharpe Series) Bernard Cornwell, 2012-03-22 Three classic Richard Sharpe adventures

richard sharpe books in order: Sharpe's Prey Bernard Cornwell, 2009-10-13 The greatest writer of historical adventures today. —Washington Post Critically acclaimed, perennial New York Times bestselling author Bernard Cornwell (Agincourt, The Fort, the Saxon Tales) makes real history come alive in his breathtaking historical fiction. Praised as the direct heir to Patrick O'Brian (Agincourt, The Fort), Cornwell has brilliantly captured the fury, chaos, and excitement of battle as few writers have ever done—perhaps most vividly in his phenomenally popular novels following the illustrious military career of British Army officer Richard Sharpe during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. In Sharpe's Prey, Sharpe must prove his mettle once again after performing courageously on Wellesley's battlefields in India and the Iberian Peninsula, as he undertakes a secret mission to Copenhagen, Denmark in 1807 to prevent a resurgent Napoleon from capturing the Danish fleet. Perhaps the San Francisco Chronicle said it best: If only all history lessons could be as vibrant.

richard sharpe books in order: Vagabond Bernard Cornwell, 2009-10-13 From New York Times bestselling author Bernard Cornwell, the sequel to The Archer's Tale—the spellbinding tale of a young man, a fearless archer, who sets out wanting to avenge his family's honor and winds up on a quest for the Holy Grail. In 1347, a year of conflict and unrest, Thomas of Hookton returns to England to pursue the Holy Grail. Among the flames of the Hundred Years War, a sinister enemy awaits the fabled archer and mercenary soldier: a bloodthirsty Dominican Inquisitor who also seeks

Christendom's most holy relic. But neither the horrors of the battlefield nor sadistic torture at the Inquisitor's hands can turn Thomas from his sworn mission. And his thirst for vengeance will never be quenched while the villainous black rider who destroyed everything he loved still lives. Cornwell writes the best battle scenes of any writer I've read past or present.—George R.R. Martin

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richard sharpe books in order: *Sharpe's Battle* Bernard Cornwell, 2009-10-13 From New York Times bestselling author Bernard Cornwell, the twelfth installment in the world-renowned Sharpe series, chronicling the rise of Richard Sharpe, a Private in His Majesty's Army at the siege of Seringapatam. Quartered in a crumbling Portuguese fort, Richard Sharpe and his men are attacked by an elite French unit, led by an old enemy of Sharpe's, and suffer heavy losses. The army's high command blame Sharpe for the disaster and his military career seems to be ruined. His only hope is to redeem himself on the battlefield. So with his honour at stake, against an overwhelming number of French troops, Sharpe leads his men to battle in the narrow streets of Fuentes de Oñoro.

richard sharpe books in order: *Bloomsbury Good Reading Guide* Nick Rennison, 2009-01-01 Deciding what to read next when you've just finished an unputdownable novel can be a daunting task. The Bloomsbury Good Reading Guide features hundreds of authors and thousands of titles, with navigation features to lead you on a rich journey through some of the best literature to grace our shelves. This greatly expanded edition includes the latest contemporary authors and landmark novels, an expanded non-fiction section, a timeline setting historical events against literary milestones, prize-winner and book club lists. An accessible and easy-to-read guide that no serious book lover should be without. The essential guide to the wild uncharted world of contemporary and 20th century writing. Robert McCrum, The Observer

richard sharpe books in order: *Agincourt* Bernard Cornwell, 2009-12-29 The greatest writer of historical adventures today (Washington Post) tackles his richest, most thrilling subject yet: the heroic tale of Agincourt. One of the most dramatic victories in British history, the battle of Agincourt—immortalized by Shakespeare in *Henry V*—pitted undermanned and overwhelmed English forces against a French army determined to keep their crown out of Henry's hands. Here Bernard Cornwell resurrects the legend of the battle and the band of brothers who fought on that fateful October day in 1415. An epic of redemption, *Agincourt* follows a commoner, a king, and a nation's entire army on an improbable mission to test the will of God and reclaim what is rightfully theirs—an exhilarating story of survival and slaughter that is, at once, a brilliant work of history and a triumph of imagination.

richard sharpe books in order: *The Bloody Ground* Bernard Cornwell, 2009-03-17 From New York Times bestselling author Bernard Cornwell, comes the fourth installment in The Starbuck Chronicles, an exciting novel which vividly captures the horror of the battle field. It is late summer 1862 and the Confederacy is invading the United States of America. Nate Starbuck, a northern preacher's son fighting for the rebel South, is given command of a punishment battalion – a despised unit of shirkers and cowards. His enemies expect it to be his downfall, as Starbuck must lead this ramshackle unit into a battle that will prove to be the bloodiest of the Civil War.

richard sharpe books in order: *The Fort* Bernard Cornwell, 2010-09-28 After the British establish a fort on the Penobscot River, the Massachusetts patriots--among them General Peleg

Wadsworth and Colonel Paul Revere--mount an expedition to oust the redcoats.

richard sharpe books in order: Sharpe's Eagle Bernard Cornwell, 2011 Captain Richard Sharpe prepares to lead his men against the army of Napoleon at Talavera in what will be the bloodiest battle of the war. After their cowardly loss of the regiment's colors, the men's resentment toward the upstart Sharpe turns to treachery, and Sharpe must fight to redeem the honor of his regiment.

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