

Émilie Pellapra



Émilie Louise Marie Françoise Joséphine Pellapra (11 November 1806 – 22 May 1871), *comtesse de Brigode*, *princesse de Chimay*, was the daughter of [Françoise-Marie LeRoy](#) and possibly [Napoleon I of France](#). She claimed to be the product of her mother's affair with the French Emperor which supposedly took place in April 1805, but this date is incompatible with Émilie's birth in November 1806. She was married firstly to Count [Louis-Marie of Brigode](#) (1777–1827) and married secondly to Prince [Joseph de Riquet de Caraman](#) (1808–1886), 17th prince de Chimay.

She was born in [Lyon](#) on November 11, 1806, the daughter of Madame Pellapra, née [Françoise-Marie LeRoy](#), herself the wife of a rich financier named Henri (de) Pellapra. Émilie may have been the illegitimate daughter of Napoleon I, as she claimed to be.

Émilie Pellapra made it clear she was the natural daughter of Napoleon. This would have to have been the result of an affair with her mother at the time of a stay by Napoleon in Lyon. Her claim was that an affair took place in April 1805, whilst Napoleon was on the way to Italy to be crowned, but this date is incompatible with Émilie's birth of in November 1806. For Émilie to have been the daughter of Napoleon it would have been necessary that he stayed in Lyon in February 1806. However, no stay in this city at that time seems to have taken place and, according to several authors (in particular André Gavoty in the *Bulletin de l'Institut Napoleon* April 1950), Napoleon only met LeRoy in 1810.

Émilie Pellapra married Count Louis Marie de Brigode who died shortly after, though they had twins:

- Fernand de Brigode (1 August 1827 – October 1830), died young;
- Louis Marie *Henri* Pierre Désiré de Brigode (1 August 1827 – 1859), marquis of Brigode, French peer, Mayor of [Romilly](#), married Annette du Hallay-Coëtquen (1831–1905).

She remarried on 30 August 1830 to Prince [Joseph de Riquet de Caraman](#) (1808-1886), 17th prince de Chimay, son of Prince [François-Joseph-Philippe de Riquet](#) and [Thérésa Cabarrus](#), and had four children:

- Marie Thérèse Émilie de Riquet (1832–1851), countess of Lagrange;
- [Marie Joseph Guy Henry Philippe de Riquet](#), 18th prince de Chimay (1836–1892), married firstly Marie de [Montesquiou-Fezensac](#), then Mathilde de Barandiaran; father of [Marie Joseph Anatole Élie](#) and [Élisabeth, comtesse Greffulhe](#);
- Valentine de Riquet (1839–1914), Comtesse de Caraman-Chimay, first Princess Paul de [Bauffremont](#), then Princess Georges Bibesco;
- Eugène de Riquet (1847–1881), married Louise de Graffenried-Villars; his daughter Hélène Marie married [John Francis Charles, 7th Count de Salis-Soglio](#).

She died at the [Château de Menars](#) on May 22, 1871.

Bibliography

- *Une fille de Napoléon* (A daughter of Napoleon), Memoires of Émilie de Pellapra, Countess of Brigode, Princess of Chimay, Introduction by [Princess Bibesco](#).