

The Napoleon Series

The Germans under the French Eagles: Volume II

The Baden Contingent – Chapter 1

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THE BADEN CONTINGENT

FIRST CHAPTER

THE PRINCE PRIMATE

The counter-blows of the French Revolution had left Germany completely shaken, and the ancient Germanic Empire looked like an old building threatening ruin, at the mercy of the next political gust of wind.

Elector Charles Frederick of Baden was one of our nearest neighbors: his country, since Louis XIV, had been trampled and ransacked many times by the French as well as by the Austrian armies; but the present circumstances made it a new situation, for if Napoleon had just founded an empire which rendered France the most compact and powerful state in Europe, on the other hand, the Emperor of Austria, the chief of the Germanic Empire, exercised scarcely more influence over the feudal states than an influence which diminished more and more. Thus the Elector of Baden, out of prudence, by policy, and by interest, seemed naturally inclined to seek an intimate union with France, and to claim, by sheltering under the folds of the tricolor, a guarantee he could not hope to find greater elsewhere.

It was therefore without much trouble that Napoleon, at the moment when he left the camp of Boulogne to march against Austria in 1805, had the Elector of Baden sign the 1st of October the *Treaty of Ettlingen*, by which this prince placed at the disposal of the Emperor of the French a contingent of 3,000 men. This figure was soon raised to 4,000; -- the Baden, our new allies, under the orders of Marshal Ney, scarcely exceeded, moreover, the frontiers of Austria; the Emperor, perhaps, was anxious to spare at first those German soldiers, who for the first time appeared in the ranks of the Imperial army; or did he feel for their military valor only a moderate confidence, probably inspired by the rather unfortunate memories left by the troops of the Circles, following the last campaigns in which they had taken part.

A disposition of 2 December 1805 gives us the distribution of the Baden contingent, pompously described as "division":

HARRANT, Major General.
 BRUCHNER, aide-de-camp.
 VON PORRECK, Adjutant-Commander.
 GROLMANN, deputy.

	men.
Division of Foot Jäger, 1 battalion	339
1 st Battalion, Regiment of the Elector	435
2 nd Battalion, Regiment of the Elector Regiment	529 } 2,156
1 st Battalion, Regiment of Prince Louis of Baden	456
2 nd Battalion, Regiment of Prince Louis of Baden	397
Hussars:	24
Artillery	441
Total	2,321

We find the Baden, before the battle of Austerlitz, employed to assure the lines of communication of the army and established at Braunau, under the command of Brigadier-General Lauriston.



1805. LE GÉNÉRAL LAURISTON.
 Commandant les troupes badoises à Braunau (†).
 (D'après la *France militaire*.)

1805. GENERAL LAURISTON. Commander the Baden troops at Braunau.¹
(According to *Military France*.)

The *Treaty of Pressburg* generously rewarded our new allies; Baden and Württemberg shared Austrian Swabia; the Elector of Baden obtained Ortenau and Breisgau, and the Emperor of Germany had to consent, moreover, to abandon all the property of the Order of Saint-Jean and Order of Teuton included in the boundaries of the electorate.

These temporary alliances of 1805 between France on the one hand, the electorate of Baden, Württemberg, Bavaria, and the Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt on the other, were but a first step towards the establishment of a more solid order of things for Germany: on 12 July 1806, following the negotiations led by Talleyrand and Charles Dalberg, Archbishop of Mainz, the *Confederation of the Rhine* was formed, under the protectorate of France; Elector Charles Frederick of Baden entered it with the title of Grand Duke. His power was singularly increased since 1789; he now had 954,000 subjects instead of 200,000, and his revenues were increased from 4,200,000 to 9,000,000 florins.

The Constitutive Act of the Confederation, signed for the new Grand Duchy by Baron Sigismund von Reitzenstein, "member of the Electoral Board and Grand Cordon of the Order of Loyalty," stipulated that Baden would provide a federal quota of 8,000 men (Article 38). It was further specified (Article 36) that the arming of the contingents should be effected only as a consequence of an invitation "addressed by the Emperor and King to each of the Allied Powers".

The fifteen sovereign princes forming the Confederation proclaimed themselves permanently separated from the territory of the Germanic Empire and united by a particular confederation under the name of "Confederate States of the Rhine" (Article 1). They no longer considered themselves bound by any law of the Empire and renounced all titles of dignity expressing any relationship with it (Articles 2 and 3). The new Grand Duke of Baden received the rights, honors and prerogatives attached to the royal dignity. He was to appear at the Confederate State Diet Meetings in the College of Kings, as well as the other two grand Dukes, that of Berg and that of Hesse-Darmstadt; this college was presided over by the Prince Primate, arch chancellor of the Confederation and one of its creators.

¹Lauriston (Alexandre-Bernard Law, Marquis de), Marshal of France, born in Pondicherry in 1768, died in 1828. -- Entered the artillery in 1793, brigadier general in 1800. Command, in 1804, of the army embarked on the squadron of Admiral Villeneuve. 1805, Army of Germany. 1807, Army of Italy (Castel-Nuovo). 1808, Spain. 1809, Raab, Wagram. 1812, Russia. 1813, Lützen; taken prisoner at Leipzig, only returning to France under the Restoration. Minister of the King's House, under Louis XVIII. Campaign of Spain, in 1823, and Marshal of France the same year.



LE GRAND-DUCHÉ DE BADE AVANT 1805.

(D'après la *Campagne de 1805*, du Capitaine COLIN).

THE GRAND DUCHY OF BADEN BEFORE 1805.

(According to *The Campaign of 1805*, of Captain COLIN).



LE GRAND-DUCHÉ DE BADE APRÈS 1805.

(D'après VIDAL-LANLACHE).

THE GRAND DUCHY OF BADEN AFTER 1805.

(According to VIDAL-LANLACHE).

The political ties which united the Grand Duchy of Baden more closely to France had been preceded by a family alliance, for in 1806 the hereditary Prince of Baden, grandson of Charles Frederick, had married Stephanie de Beauharnais, cousin of the Empress Josephine. This marriage was not happy; all the sons who were born of it died young and under rather mysterious circumstances; only girls subsisted, and it is not the blood of the Beauharnais who reigns at Baden today.²

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²Rambaud, *Germany under Napoleon I*, page 29.