

The Napoleon Series

The Germans under the French Eagles: Volume I

The Regiment of Frankfurt – Chapter 11

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THE
REGIMENT OF THE FRANKFURT

CHAPTER XI

THE 1809 CAMPAIGN AND ENLARGEMENT OF FRANKFURT IN 1810

When the war against Austria was decided in the spring of 1809, the French minister at Frankfurt was ordered on 10 April to ask the Prince-Primate, in addition to the troops already fighting in Spain, for a new battalion of 600 men destined to hold garrison in the citadel of Erfurt. The cadres of the small army of Dalberg were immediately filled by recruits, and Major Horadam placed at the head of the battalion which left for Erfurt in May.

There was a momentary question as to whether to involve the battalion in operations, for the Emperor wrote on 10 July from Schönbrunn to the Chief of Staff:

...You will leave to the Duke of Abrantès the ability of removing from the citadel of Erfurt the battalion of the Prince Primate, leaving there a garrison sufficient to be master of the citadel...

But finally, the battalion made no move, stayed in Erfurt and returned to Frankfurt at the end of the year.

On 16 February 1810, by the Treaty of Paris, Napoleon remodeled the territory of the Grand Duchy, giving it a very remarkable increase in size. Dalberg gave to Bavaria the temporal sovereignty of Ratisbon, of which he was also the spiritual pastor, and he received in compensation the principalities of Fulda and Hanau, the remains of the houses of Orange-Fulda and Hessen-Kassel. He lost 30,000 inhabitants, but gained 158,000.

The Grand Duchy now formed a compact block of 300,000 souls; it was divided into four departments: Frankfurt, Aschaffenburg, Fulda and Hanau, and was to be transmitted at the death of the Prince Primate, no longer to Cardinal Fesch, but to Eugene de Beauharnais.

The confederation contingent was increased to 2,800 men and conscription declared the basic law of the State; it was the first time it had been established in these territories, and the successive levies demanded in 1812 and 1813 were only to be made with great difficulty.

The bourgeois guard was suppressed and replaced by a national guard of three battalions to which every valid man belonged until the age of 60; only State employees and the disabled were excluded, at an annual tax of 100 florins.

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