

The Napoleon Series

The Germans under the French Eagles: Volume IV The Regiment of the Saxon Duchies – Chapter Two

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THE
REGIMENT OF THE SAXON DUCHIES

SECOND CHAPTER

THE SIEGE OF KOLBURG (KOŁOBRZEG) (1806)

I. -- The beginnings of investment.

As we have seen in the preceding chapter, the accession of the Duchies of Saxony into the Confederation of the Rhine was almost immediately followed by the requisitioning of a contingent of 2,800 men; this contingent, under the name of the "4th Infantry Regiment of the Division of the Princes," was organized without delay into three battalions: two battalions of line constituted by the soldiers of Gotha and Meiningen, and a light battalion furnished by the Duchies of Weimar and Hildburghausen; the companies of Coburg did not rejoin the campaign.

Under the command of Major von Germar, the light battalion of Saxe-Weimar, with officers and 707 men, left Weimar on the 6 March 1807, to go to Magdeburg; it arrived there on the 11th of the same month by Kölleda, Eisleben, Sandersleben, and Halberstadt, and there ordered it to proceed to Spandau, which he reached on the 13th by Brandenburg and Charlottenburg. In the latter city, General Clarke, Governor of Berlin, examined the battalion, and exchanged its old and mediocre Prussian fusils with French ones. Continuing northward, the Weimar battalion crossed Orianenburg, Zehdenick and Prenzlau, arriving on 24 March in Stettin (Szczecin). During the 18-day march, it had lost ten deserters... Therefore General Thouvenot, Governor of Stettin, had taken the wise precaution of quartering a company of the regiment with the headquarters in the very interior of the city, while the other three companies were placed in the "Prussian Fort," of which they were to form part of the garrison.



1807. — LE GÉNÉRAL CLARKE
Gouverneur de Berlin (4).
(D'après Fabre.)

1807. -- GENERAL CLARKE Governor of Berlin. (After Fabre).¹

This considerable number of desertions could be attributed to multiple causes: the Weimar soldiers had begun this campaign in the Prussian ranks, and the blood poured in common at Auerstaedt had cemented a real military fraternity between Weimars and Prussians; the territory of the Duchy had been greatly trodden by the passage of the belligerent armies, and the soldiers of Weimar easily attributed to the French all the calamities which had occurred to their little nation; the men of the new contingent of Confederation were surrounded by their hosts, who urged them to desert, and facilitated their means; and there were among them a certain number of former Prussian soldiers, who joyfully seized the opportunity of returning either to their former flag or, above all, to their old native bell tower.

Five days after the arrival of the Duchy regiment at Stettin, all the troops of the garrison of this place were assembled and reviewed by Marshal Mortier. This great parade took place in the principal square of the town, and the Saxon battalion marched before the Marshal, with a French battalion and the regiment of Würzburg which bore the title of "1st Infantry Regiment of the Confederation."

On the 2nd of April it left Stettin for Landsberg an der Warthe (Gorzów Wielkopolski), where it arrived on the 5th of the same month,² leaving 46 new deserters on the road, and the Weimar light battalion joined the line battalion (Gotha and Meiningen) which traveled the same day: this battalion, under the command of the Major von Kessel, had also crossed Magdeburg and Berlin, where General Clarke had also reviewed it; composed of three companies of Gotha and a company of Meiningen, having lost 202 deserters during the journey of a force of 14 officers and 474

¹CLARKE (Henri-Jacques-Guillaume), Count of Hunebourg, Duke of Feltre. Born at Landrecies in 1765, died at Neuwiller (Bas-Rhin) in 1818. He was of Irish origin and entered the École Militaire in 1781; Lieutenant Colonel of Dragoons in 1792; Brigadier General in 1793; then dismissed as suspect; reinstated in his post and appointed shortly after General of Division. Charged by the Directorate to supervise Bonaparte, who made him a friend, he was governor of Upper and Lower Austria in 1805; in 1806, Governor of Berlin, and Minister of War in 1807; created Count of Hunebourg in 1808, and Duke of Feltre in 1809. He joined the government of the Bourbons in 1814, accompanied Louis XVIII to Ghent, and became in the 2nd Restoration Peer of France, Minister of War and Marshal of France.

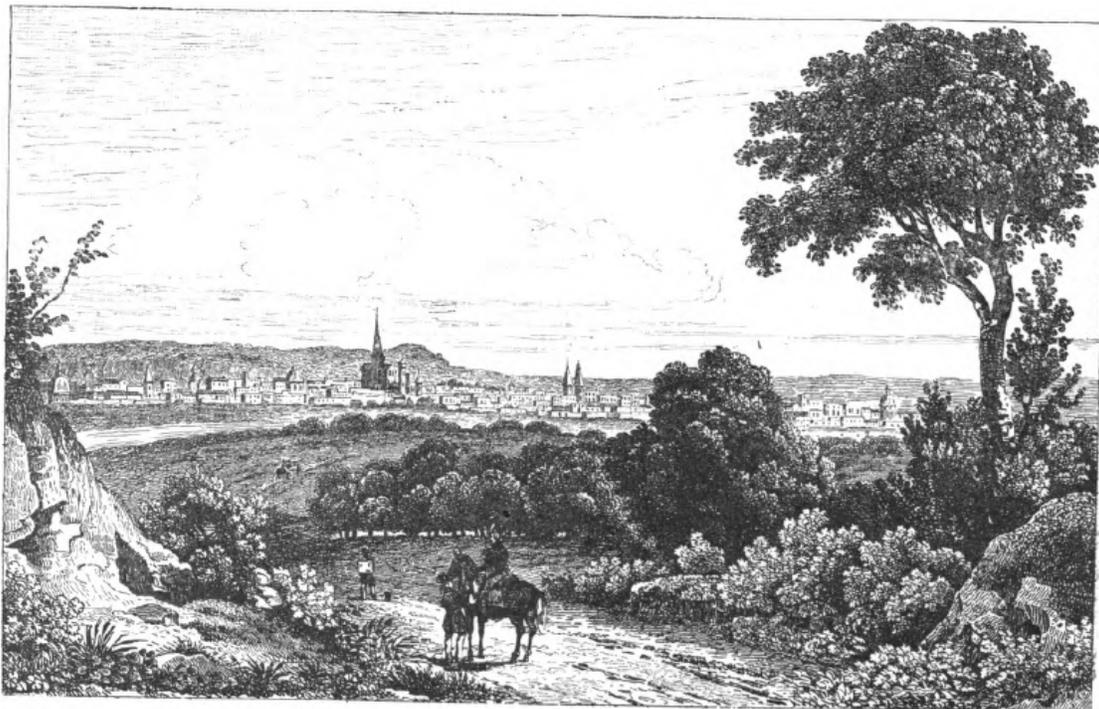
² "... The Saxe-Weimar contingent arrived on the Warta. (69th Bulletin of the Grand Army, Finkenstein, 4 April 1807.)

men at the beginning, that is to say from the middle of March.

At Landsberg, Colonel Egloffstein took command of the regiment now formed by the union of the two battalions. After having remained there until 12 April, the regiment was ordered to proceed to Konitz (Chojnice), where it arrived on the 19th by Friedberg, Driesen (Drezdenko), Schneidemühl (Piła), and Preußisch Friedland (Debrzno).

It was then that Colonel Liger-Belair, aide-de-camp to Marshal Ney, ordered the Saxon contingent to proceed without delay to Kolberg, where it was to reinforce the troops which had begun the siege of that fortress; the battalions therefore proceeded to this town by Belgard (Białogard), and arrived on the night of the 23 April, at 2:30 in the morning, in the camp in front of Kolberg. An aide-de-camp of Major-General Teulié immediately led them in the middle of the night to the east of the town, to the site designated for them on a hill, between the bivouacs of a Polish regiment on the right and an Italian regiment on the left; the night was icy, an east wind blew violently, the ground was spongy and damp; the Saxons soon lit fires ... But the cannon of the town was heard at once and balls rolled by the braziers around which the soldiers warmed ... It was necessary to quickly extinguish the fires, and after this salute of welcome of the enemy, the Duchy contingent waited in the darkness for the rising of the sun ...

The stronghold of Kolberg in lower Pomerania, seated on the right bank of the Persante (Parsęta), then counted about 6,000 inhabitants; situated at a ¼ of a mile from the North Sea, it had its port there; the town, built in a square, had three gates: that of the Embouchure, opening towards the north and leading to the port; the Moulins, to the south, on the route to Stettin and Berlin; finally, that of Lauenburg, also called the gate of Peter, which opened to the west on the road to Köslin (Koszalin); three other openings overlooked the river and led to the left bank of the Persante. Of the five suburbs which were grouped around the central nucleus, only one, that of Lauenburg, was furnished with some fortified works.



Berlin.
(D'après la *France militaire.*)

Berlin. (After the *Military France.*)

The enclosure, reinforced with exterior works, possessed two deep ditches; the three fronts comprised a strong entrenchment, six bastions, and a third line of works, redoubts and fleches; to the south and south-west, the town was covered by the course of the Persante itself. A series of detached works completed the defense. They were, to the north-east of the mouth of the river, the fort called the Embouchure, furnished with mason parapets and solid and spacious casemates; to the east of the port, a series of three works on the right bank of the river; to the north-east of the square, on an eminence, the so-called Wolfsberg redoubt, from which one could fire on the city; to the south-east, the redoubt of Ziegel; to the south, those of Hohenberg and Kautzenberg.

In the very interior of the town, the powder magazines were bombproof, and many casemates. Finally, in order to connect with the port and protect supplies by sea, the Maikühle works, at the seaside, on the left bank of the Persante, lined with ditches and palisades and reinforced with wolf pits and auxiliary defenses: this last work completely dominated the port. The valley of the Persante, which was very marshy, was of a difficult course, and considerable floods could be had there.

Such was the position of the Prussian fortress in which the French and Allied troops undertook the siege at the end of 1806. The commandant of the town, Colonel Lucadou, had a garrison of 700 to 800 men, composed of the Schill Freikorps (infantry and cavalry) and five citizen militia companies. Schill, a lieutenant in the regiment of the Prussian Dragoons of the Queen, wounded at Auerstaedt and taken refuge at Kolberg, had formed a corps of partisans with soldiers isolated or escaped from the successive disasters of the Prussian armies; he had soon gained a reputation for his lucky strikes, and his little band grew daily.

When the strongholds of Prussia fell into our hands at the appearance of a few hussars, Kolberg had courageously dismissed a French parliamentarian who had come on 8 November 1806, to summon the town: no military demonstration having followed this summons, all winter it had been employed to reinforce the town with garrison, works, and supplies. Schill, with his partisans, covered the approaches and assured the city against an abrupt attack.

It was not until February 1807 that part of the French 8th Corps, under the command of Marshal Mortier, left Swedish Pomerania, and after pushing Schill back to Sellnow (Zieleniewo), began the investment of the town with Italian troops commanded by General Teulié; a second unnecessary summons, made on 15 March, was immediately followed by the taking of the redoubt of Kautzenberg, near Sellnow and that of Hohenberg, which later became the "Fort Napoleon." But the troops of investment were too feeble to push this first advantage further; so Marshal Mortier arrived on 5 April with reinforcements; he settled in Zernin (Czernin) and after an reconnaissance of the approaches attacked the important work of Maikühle on the 7th, 9th and 10th of April, but without success. Obligated to turn to the Oder, where the Swedes became threatening, the Marshal gave General Loison the direction of operations before Kolberg, and set out on the 14th with an Italian regiment. Schill immediately imitated him, embarking the next day with some of his cavalry to go to the Swedish Pomerania.

This was the situation of the parties in the presence of one another towards the end of April, when the 500 Saxons formed, the two battalions of the Duchies Regiment arrived to reinforce the siege.



1807. — LE MARÉCHAL MORTIER

Commandant le 8^e corps (1).

(D'après A. Tardieu.)

1807. -- MARSHAL MORTIER Commander of the 8th Corps.³ (After A. Tardieu.)

II. -- Beginning of the siege.

The troops employed at the siege of Kolberg, under the overall command of Major-General Loison, consisted of the Teulié Division, and were distributed in the following manner round the town: at the extreme right, which leaned against the sea, a newly levied and still incomplete Polish regiment under the command of Colonel Prince Sulkowski; to the left of this corps, a regiment of Nassau (soon after replaced by two battalions of Württemberg); then the two Saxon battalions reduced by desertion --the Weimar light battalion at 270 men, and the line battalion of Gotha-Meiningen at 224 men; farther south, between Bullenwinkel and Tramm, the first regiment of Italian line; in front of Altstadt and facing the north, the Italian 2nd Regiment of Light Infantry, leaning on the right bank of the Persante; finally, on the left bank of this river, in front of Sellnow, the Italian 1st Light Regiment holding the extreme left of the blockading corps. Some Dutch hussars, recently levied, formed the whole cavalry of the besiegers, whose head-quarters, established at Tramm, was guarded by the companies of grenadiers of the different regiments of the

³MORTIER (Édouard-Adolph-Casimir-Joseph), Duke of Trévisé, born at Cateau in 1708, died in Paris in 1835. Elected captain in the 1st Battalion of the Northern Volunteers, fighting at Jemmapes, Hondschoote, Wattignies, Fleuras, Altenkirchen; General of Brigade in 1793, Major General seven months later. Conqueror of Hanover in 1803; Marshal of France in 1801; was distinguished in 1803 in the battle of Dirnstein, where with 4,000 men he overcomes 30,000 Russians. Commanded in 1800 the 8th Corps of the Grande Armée; in 1807, defeated the Swedes at Anklam and distinguished himself at Friedland. Created Duke of Trévisé. Illustrious in Spain at the sieges of Zaragoza and Ocana; commanded the Young Guard in 1812; fighting in 1813 in Lützen, Bautzen, Dresden, Leipzig, Hanau. Having refused to sit on the Council of War, which condemned Marshal Ney to death, was dismissed by the government of the Bourbons. Grand Chancellor of the Legion of Honor in 1831, Minister of War and President of the Council (1814-1835), he was killed alongside Louis-Philippe by the explosion of the Fieschi machine on the Boulevard du Temple, in Paris.

division.

The siege artillery was beginning to arrive: its park was established at Zernin, and the troops had from that time to furnish numerous workers for the construction and arming of the attack works. Thus, on 26 April, the two Saxon battalions were employed in the construction of a redoubt, known as the Saxon redoubt, opposite the important Prussian fort of the Wolfsberg.

The line of investment bristled with works of fortifications: in front of the Polish bivouacs was the "Polish redoubt"; then the "Saxon redoubt", the redoubts "Angelo" and "Audifret" in front of the bivouacs of the Saxons and the Italians; the works of Altstadt; and finally the four redoubts of Sellnow, on the left bank of the Persante. The greatest activity began to reign in the siege corps as soon as large caliber pieces arrived, and ceaseless battles of outposts were then fought over the whole front; the 28th of April, in one of these engagements, nine soldiers of the Duchies' regiment passed to the enemy. As soon as the command had been informed, it immediately replaced with Italians all the posts occupied by the Saxons, who were still manifestly unwilling to fight the Prussians.

The besieged, on the other hand, did not remain inactive; on 29 April Major Gneisenau arrived at the town by sea from Danzig to take command of the garrison which had been considerably reinforced. It consisted of a force of more than 6,000 men: 1,200 men for the corps of Schill, a battalion of Prussian grenadiers (the garrison elite) commanded by the Captain von Waldenfels, the Moller Fusiliers Battalion, two reserve battalions, two jäger foot companies, a garrison artillery company, a detachment of foot field artillery, and three cavalry squadrons: mounted jäger, cuirassiers, and hussars.

The sea being free, relief of every kind did not cease to arrive in Kolberg; a Swedish frigate of 46 guns brought to the besieged the support of its fire; anchored in front of the right of the siege corps, she participated with her artillery in numerous engagements; fortunately, its draft prevented her from approaching much of the coast and the bivouacs of the Poles.

The French military authorities had justly been moved by the weakness of the Saxon forces, and the governments of the Duchies had been called upon to fill urgently the voids caused by desertion and to supplement their federal contingents. On 30 April, ten officers and ten non-commissioned officers of the Duchies Regiment were sent to Gotha, Meiningen and Weimar, with the mission of supervising the reinforcement detachments: surprised at Pyritz on 3 May by a party of the corps of Schill, they fell into the hands of the enemy, and were only released under a promise not to serve a year against Prussia; but the French government did not accept this convention, and the Saxon officers were obliged to go and take the detachments which they had been charged with driving to the siege corps.

On May 1st, Major Forster brought to the Duchies Regiment a first reinforcement of three companies: two companies of Gotha, one of grenadiers, and one company of Meiningen; as might have been foreseen, this detachment did not arrive before Kolberg until it had lost a considerable number of deserters. Four days later Colonel Henning arrived with another reinforcement of three companies of Gotha, one of which was a company of grenadiers. These new units finally permitted the defined organization of the regiment, of which the thousand men were thus divided:

Colonel Egloffstein, commanding the regiment;
Colonel von Henning, commanding the two line battalions (10 companies of Gotha and Meiningen);
Major von Germar, commanding the light battalion (4 Weimar companies).

On the 4th of May an order from General Loison divided the Teulié Division into four brigades, each of which was charged with guarding and defending several works:

1st Brigade. Colonel of Berndes. Polish Regiment, 2 Württemberg battalions. Polish and Saxon Redoubts.
2nd Brigade. Colonel Fontani. Italian 1st Regiment of the Line, Regiment of the Saxon Duchies. Angelo and Audifrut Redoubts.
3rd Brigade. Colonel Castandini. Italian 2nd Light Regiment. Fort Napoleon. Altstadt Redoubt.
4th Brigade. Colonel Bonfanti. Italian 1st Light Regiment. The 4 redoubts of Sellnow.

A Dutch regiment (Colonel Anthing) and a French brigade came some time later to complete the line of investment on the left bank of the Persante between the 4th Brigade and the sea.

The Captain von Könneritz, with a company of Weimar, was detached at Zernin to the park of siege artillery commanded by the General de Mosel; the role of this company was to protect the park against the audacious incursions of the Freikorps of Schill, and to make up for the want of artillery of the besieging troops; these Weimar were subsequently employed as gunners in a number of bombardment batteries.

III. -- Attack and taking of Wolfsberg.

During the six weeks which passed from the beginning of May to the middle of June, we find the two adversaries particularly determined to remain or to become masters of the work of the Wolfsberg. The artillery of the siege corps gradually strengthened, and the approaching works advanced more and more towards the town whose guns lost their advantages; the besieged redoubled their energy and activity, their sorties multiplied, and the relief from without came to throw into the fortress guns and ammunition in abundance.

In these daily combats, the military spirit of our Confederate allies was formed and grew; defections become rarer, acts of courage more frequent; they became accustomed to obey the elite generals whom the Emperor had given them, and at their school become solid soldiers, worthy of their comrades of the Grand Armée; if Napoleon had not yet use them on the great battlefields, it was because he wanted to experience them in this siege warfare, which had become for them the best of schools: one day, perhaps soon, he would put them in line with the great actions in which the fate of the people was decided.

On 7 May a rather violent battle took place before the Wolfsberg; a large party of the troops of the siege corps took part: the Polish Regiment, the two Württemberg battalions, the Italians and 50 Gotha sharpshooters commanded by Lieutenant von Beust I.

Each of the companies in Gotha and Meiningen had ten sharpshooters armed with grooved carbines: the firing accuracy of these weapons was significantly higher than that of ordinary rifles. Thus, till the end of the siege, these shooters were often assembled, and placed under the orders of officers of choice to perform special missions; in this last battle, the Gotha sharpshooters, supported by a reserve of twenty volunteers of the same contingent, kept the Prussian outposts, which had advanced against the Polish and Saxon redoubts, in check, and stopped all their efforts.

As a result of this affair, during which the place had fired more than 180 cannon shots, and blew up a caisson of powder in the midst of the lines of the besiegers, General Loison issued the following order of the day:

Headquarters of Tramm, 8 May 1807.

The commander-in-chief expresses his satisfaction to the two companies of voltigeurs of the Italian 1st Regiment, to the Württemberg detachment, to the sharpshooters of the regiment of the Saxon Duchies, and to the Poles for their brilliant conduct in the affair of the 7th of May; he particularly manifested his contentment for the intrepidity with which 50 Poles had repulsed the attack of the enemy's cavalry, and he reserved to inform the Emperor Napoleon of the zeal and goodwill of the brave troops under his command.

Loison.

The works of Altstadt and Bullenwinkel receive pieces of high caliber; these ancient redoubts, built by the Prussians, had been changed by the troops of the siege, since they had fallen into their hands, and had become good points of support for the attack on the town.

On 15 May the Swedish frigate opened a violent fire against the right of our lines and killed everyone of the Poles.

The taking of the Wolfsberg became the most immediate objective of General Loison; to arrive there, he decided to build a path of pilings, fascines and sand, which would bring the assailants closer to the work through the marshy meadows which covered the approaches. This operation was carried out on the night of the 17th to the 18th of May, and gave rise to a rather violent struggle to cover the workers against the attacks of the besieged; the troops, led by

General Teulié, consisted of 1,600 men, Italians, Württembergers, Poles, and 100 sharpshooters of the two battalions of the Saxon line commanded by Lieutenant von Buttlar (of Meiningen). The Duchies Regiment also provided a large number of workers for the construction of the roadway.

This engagement, which lasted from ten o'clock in the evening to four in the morning, cost about 150 men to each of the two adversaries; the Prussians also had a captain and 50 men taken prisoner; the colonel of the Italian 1st Regiment of Line was killed and the Saxon skirmishers counted three dead and several wounded, among whom was Lieutenant von Buttlar.

The next morning the parallel was opened before the Wolfsberg, still occupied by 300 Prussian grenadiers and six pieces of cannon.

The completion of the causeway was very difficult because of the uninterrupted fire which started from the Wolfsberg. General Loison decided to build an entrenchment against the Wolfsberg itself, ahead of the Saxon redoubt. This work began on the 19th of May, at daybreak, was finished at midnight under the continuous fire of the Prussian batteries and the Swedish frigate by 180 Italians and 200 men from Gotha and Meiningen under the command of Major Forster and the Captains von Bunau and Knauth. The workers were covered by the skirmishers of the two battalions of the Saxon line, joined to the companies of Italian, Württemberg and Polish voltigeurs. The workers and support had 14 men killed or seriously injured. During this fight, an English brig armed with 18 cannons of 24 appeared before Kolberg, accompanied by several transport ships.

In the last days of May, the besiegers had not built around the Prussian fortress fewer than 25 works, large or small entrenchments, redoubts, fleches or batteries; their line extended eastward from the shore of the sea to the right bank of the Persante, and on the left bank of that river, ascending northward, beyond the village of Sellnow, was transformed into a veritable little entrenched camp; moreover, numerous roads had been established and the development of the trenches was considerable.

As the French convoys were often attacked on the road from Stettin to Danzig by small Prussian corps, the Duchies Regiment was ordered to make four detachments of 80 men each on the following points: Köslin, Naugard (Nowogard), Roman (Rymań) and Körlin (Karlino): it was the contingent of Gotha who furnished them (21 May).

A few days later, almost under the town walls of Kolberg, Schill's corps surprised a convoy of cattle and forage escorted by 40 Dutch hussars near the village of Werder: these hussars were largely Prussian prisoners of war: they abandoned their chiefs, passed over to the enemy, and the convoy was taken to Kolberg by the Schillians.

If the bombardment of the city occasioned to its defenders already serious losses, the besiegers, on their side, had still to suffer from the blows of the heavy caliber cannon in the town and from the fire of the enemy's warships; on 26 May, taking advantage of a favorable wind, the Swedish frigate and the English brig approached the Polish camp, which they riddled with projectiles. The Poles, as well as the soldiers occupied before the Wolfsberg, had more than 40 killed or injured.

The Duke of Saxe-Hildburghausen had not yet furnished the Saxon Regiment with its federal contingent; on the 2nd of June a small column of 58 soldiers, led by two officers, arrived to represent this Duchy: all that remained of a starting strength of 170 men: 87 had deserted during the journey; the detachment was incorporated into the light battalion of Weimar, which at that time numbered 330 men, of whom 80 were employed in artillery.

The most violent battle since the beginning of the siege took place on the night of the 5th to the 6th of June. The trenches were getting closer and closer to the Wolfsberg; a new trench was opened that night, under the direction of the French Brigadier General Ruby; Colonel Egloffstein of the Saxon regiment, as colonel of the day, had five companies of Italian grenadiers and two companies of French voltigeurs; the "Ferranto" entrenchment was occupied by Captain Bose (of Meiningen) and Lieutenant Kratzschmar (of Gotha) with 60 men of the Duchies Regiment. The besieged, in order to stop the work of approaching, opened a terrible fire, to which the batteries of the siege immediately responded. This sudden cannonade, which had been opened in the middle of the night, caused all the troops to be armed, both in the besieged city and in the blockade; the exit of the Prussians and their repeated attacks on the "Ferranto" entrenchment were repulsed; but this bloody night cost more than 150 men to each of the opposing troops.

As a result of this battle, the 100 sharpshooters of the two line battalions of the Duchies Regiment, armed with rifles, whose fire was surer and carried farther, were then divided into two detachments of 50 men, each commanded by an officer ; these detachments rose up successively every twenty-four hours in front of the "Audifret" artillery: the shooters, covered by a shoulder against the blows of the enemy, never ceased until the end of the siege, to fire upon the Prussian artillerymen, and significantly hamper them.

It was on the 6th of June that a part of the artillery of siege, which had become available as a result of the capitulation of Danzig, began to arrive at Kolberg. Marshal Lefebvre had taken possession of this important fortress on 24 May, and the large-caliber pieces he then sent to General Loison were immediately used to arm new batteries.

On 11 June, the trenches had reached 60 paces from the Wolfsberg. After a desperate resistance, in spite of the most energetic efforts of the garrison, which was about to see its most important boulevard fall, in spite of the shells of the Swedish frigate, the position became untenable for the defenders.

The French artillery had opened a methodical fire on the fort at 3 o'clock in the morning, and continued it without interruption; the breach was practicable, and two columns of assault were preparing to crown the enemy's works when, at five o'clock in the evening, a white flag was hoisted over its broken parapets: the fire ceased immediately and a suspension of arms of 15 hours was agreed upon. The battalion of Prussian grenadiers, who composed the garrison of the fort, obtained for its energetic defense the retreat to the town with its artillery, and the Wolfsberg was handed over to the besiegers.

It was a great success: without losing a moment, Saxon workers were immediately employed to restore the redoubt in a state of defense, to return against the town its parapets almost destroyed by the cannon, to establish in the redoubt a bomb proof to deposit powder and load the bombs and the shells. These operations, carried out with the utmost diligence, are terminated at the expiration of the fifteenth hour of the armistice; at this moment the town directed a terrible fire on the Wolfsberg, but fortunately of little effect, to which the batteries of the siege replied. Some Italians and a soldier of Gotha are killed in the redoubt; but a loss more painful was going to strike the French army: very near there, General Teulié visiting with the Major von Germar the trenches where the light battalion of Weimar-Hildburghausen was found was hit at the top of the thigh by a cannonball of 4 and so seriously wounded that he had to suffer the amputation of the leg: this wound had to be mortal.

An English ship had brought to the besieged on 14 June, 45 guns and howitzers with numerous ammunition; Major von Gneisenau was able to replace his out-of-service pieces and reinforce the artillery of the works of defense; but he wished above all to avail himself of this unexpected succor to try to recover the Wolfsberg. During the night of the 14th to the 15th, the battalion of grenadiers, which had just been illustrated by the defense of this work, was led by the Captain von Waldenfels, and supported by the Prussian fusiliers, left the city in the greatest silence, in a pouring rain. The enemy's column arrived without being perceived to the foot of the entrenchments; only the defenders recognize it and open fire; but the Prussians bound onto the parapets; Captain von Waldenfels first succeeded, and fell struck to death with a shot; his soldiers, electrified by his example and exasperated by his death, rushed upon the defenders and after a short battle remained masters of the redoubt. Colonel de Henning (of Gotha), his aide-de-camp Lieutenant Gernand, eight subaltern officers, 150 Poles (almost all wounded) and a howitzer fell into the hands of the Prussians. The prisoners are immediately taken to Kolberg, from whence a ship transported them a few days later to Memel.

The first moment of stupor passing, the trench reserve made up of two Italian infantry companies and two companies of Saxon grenadiers, supported by the rest of the Poles, rushed upon the work which was retaken after a bloody hand-to-hand combat. The Prussians were thrown back to the town where they returned at 4 o'clock in the morning, carrying with them their wounded and some of their dead, without having had time to put the redoubt out of service, which was the principal object of their operation; they had lost 4 officers and 113 men in this affair. From then on, the redoubt of Wolfsberg took the name of "Fort Loison"; it received considerable reinforcements and was sheltered from new insults.

This failure was not to discourage the energetic Major von Gneisenau: two days later, on the night of June 16-17, the besieged made simultaneous sorties on several works of the siege corps and succeeded in surprising the redoubt "Angelo" guarded by a hundred Italians and a few Weimar men employed as artillerymen: four guns were spiked by the enemy, who were soon driven out of his conquest and pushed back into the main town by the Italian and Weimar

reserve companies that rushed into battle .

On June 19th, the Duchies Regiment received a small reinforcement of 44 men from Gotha and 27 men from Meiningen: it was a compensation for the capture of a detachment of 25 soldiers from Gotha that the corps of Schill corps had effected a few days before: these Saxons escorted a French convoy between Treptow (Trzebiatów) and Korlin: escort and convoy were taken away prisoners to Kolberg.

On the evening of the same day the Swedish frigate approached the coast as close as its draft permitted it, and anchoring itself at the height of "Fort Loison," directed an uninterrupted fire of an hour, during which she shot 157 projectiles. At the same time, the town opened the most violent fire on the work and its approaches; under the protection of this dreadful cannonade, an attacking column of volunteers, including the 400 remaining men of the battalion of the grenadiers, as well as the battalion of the Prussian fusiliers, rushed towards the fort which remained silent; it arrived at the palisades; at this moment the defenders opened a terrible fire, which, however, did not stop the assailants; they climbed the parapets; but the garrison manned them at once, and, with the bayonet, with the coldest intrepidity, rejected the Prussians into the ditches, and obliged them to retire. This audacious attack cost the enemy 4 officers killed, 4 wounded; 400 dead were spread within a radius of 200 paces. The Prussian column returned to the town, protected in its retreat by the fire of the Swedish frigate, which still fired more than 200 cannon shots. One hundred men of the Duchies Regiment (60 from Gotha and 40 from Weimar) had taken part in this glorious affair under the command of the Captain von Einsiedel and Lieutenant Merkel of Gotha. The latter, wounded in the head from a burst of shells, succumbed shortly afterwards to his wound.

The next day, towards noon, a Prussian parliamentarian approached the line of outposts, and came to demand a suspension of arms to carry away and bury the soldiers of Kolberg's garrison who had fallen the day before in front of Fort Loison. This proposal was accepted and the fire immediately suspended.

General Loison profited the circumstance for the celebration in the afternoon at the head-quarters of Tramm, of the solemn funeral of General Teulié, who died on the 18th of June, as a result of his wound. All the available troops attended this great funeral parade; the musket salvos fired over the grave of the brave was echoed by those of all the batteries of the siege. The recognition by the soldiers for this courageous and beloved leader resulted in the construction of a tall pyramid of stone surmounted by a bomb in the small pine forest which served as a cemetery for the besieging troops.

The 86th Bulletin of the Grand Army, dated from Tilsit, 27 June 1807, announced the death of the general in these terms:

"Major General Teulié, commanding the Italian Division at the siege of Kolberg, who had been wounded in the thigh by a bullet, on the 12th, on the attack of Fort Wolfsberg, has just died of his wounds; he was an officer equally distinguished for his bravery and military talents ... "

IV. -- The surprise at Maikühle. -- The final assault. -- The armistice.

After these events, the regiment of the Duchies passed under the orders of the French General of Brigade Ruby, and had at that time permanently at "Fort Loison" had 1 captain, 2 lieutenants and 150 workers.

Two thousand Dutch infantry, under the command of Colonel Anthing (who was a native of Gotha, and died there in 1823, General of Division in the service of Holland) arrived before Kolberg on the 21st of June, and strengthened the siege; they were established to the left of the line of investment, and the large pieces of artillery which they brought with them were immediately employed against the town.

A few days later the Weimar contingent received a reinforcement of 168 men; finally, on 30 June, 4,000 men of French infantry came to complete the siege: established between the Dutch and the sea, to the west of the city, they completely finished the investment.

The second parallel had been completed the night before; all the batteries, fully armed, were supplied with the necessary ammunition. In spite of their repeated attempts, the besieged were gradually repressed on the main town; they sometimes succeeded in surprising and fighting with the workers of a few trenches, as they did in the night of

26 to 27 June in front of the redoubt "Angelo", with 200 Saxon workers, but these little successes were rapidly erased by the entry of the reserves of the siege corps, which took over the trenches and relocated the soldiers responsible for the works.

The siege corps then numbered about 14,000 men; its batteries of large pieces assured it of the superiority of the fire; General Loison resolved, therefore, to seize the Maikühle, and thus close the sea to the besieged; it was the operation preparatory to the attack by main force which would inevitably make the town fall in their hands.

On the 1st of July, at three o'clock in the morning, at the signal given by a cannon shot, six batteries opened against the town, and its works, a rolling and uninterrupted fire: bombs, shells and bullets rained on the city, thus diverting the attention of the besieged from Maikühle. While the garrison attempted to respond with a now inferior artillery, and to extinguish the fires ignited by the bombardment as well as by the explosion of two powder caissons which blew up near the church, 2,000 French and Dutch were launched at 4 o'clock in the morning, on the Maikühle in two columns, by the beach and by Werder; they took the work of the Salines, seized two pieces of cannon and penetrated by assault in the Maikühle after a short fight with the corps of Schill, in charge of its defense. The Prussians abandoned all their artillery, passed on the right bank of the Persante, from which they broke the bridge, and even burned, to cover their precipitated retreat, the two suburbs of the right bank, that of the Embouchure and that of Pfaunenschmied. The fire of the Swedish frigate and three gunboats did not stop the assailants; they were soon masters of the whole of the left bank, the port fell into their hands, and an English vessel there only had time to cut its moorings to reach the open sea, under the bullets which kill several sailors on the bridge ...

The next day, 2 July, the bombardment continued with regularity; fires broke out on all sides in the city; the Italian troops left Fort Loison and marched on the fort of the Mouth, followed by the regiment of the Duchies of Saxony. The Prussians came to the rescue of the threatened work, and the battle became fierce. At last, the assault columns were formed, and at three o'clock in the evening a French officer and a Prussian officer brought the news of the armistice concluded on 25 June at Tilsit between the Prussians and the French: fire was immediately interrupted on both sides.

After this unexpected suspension of arms, the two parties immediately set their lines of outposts, and under the clouds of smoke the powder which the wind has not yet fainted, besieged and besieging their shook hands as a sign of esteem and peace ...

It was the end of the siege; the peace was concluded on the 9th of July at Tilsit, and the besieged displayed the white flag on all the works of the town to mark the cessation of hostilities. Responding to the invitation addressed to them by the Prussian Major von Gneisenau, the commanding officer of the town, General Loison and the officers of the corps visited the town of Kolberg, and did not hide their admiration for the energy and value of its defenders.

The siege had fired more than 25,000 bombs, shells or bullets against the square; it had 429 killed, 1,093 wounded, 209 prisoners and 159 deserters. On the side of the besieged, the losses amounted to 2,855 men, of which 539 deaths, 1,629 wounded, 304 prisoners, 159 missing and 82 inhabitants killed or wounded.

If the news of the conclusion of the armistice had not come to stop our assault columns, Kolberg would most probably have suffered the fate of the other Prussian fortresses: once the fort of the Embouchure was removed, every hope of relief by sea disappeared, and the place should have capitulated like Stettin, like Magdeburg, like Glogau, like Brieg, like Danzig.

The King of Prussia had the honor of glorifying the fortunate defenders of the fortress. Gneisenau had a brilliant military career and became a marshal; the city was exempted from paying its share of the war contribution imposed on Prussia, and the infantry regiment formed later with the battalions which took part in the defense of the place received flags decorated with the inscription "Kolberg 1807" in testimony of national recognition.

The regiment of the Duchies, after the peace, remained still before Kolberg. In Tramm, where the Weimar battalion was quartered, a reinforcement of 167 from Weimar and 35 men from Hildburghausen arrived on the 6 August: a fire broke out in the village, and Colonel Egloffstein lost his three horses, and all his baggage, while the fire in the houses caused the exploding of cartridge pouches like projectiles. Much of the equipment of the light battalion was destroyed.

As an Anglo-Swedish landing still appeared imminent in Swedish Pomerania, the Duchies Regiment went to occupy this province. The Weimar Light Battalion was directed to the island of Usedom and Swinemunde (Świnoujście); as to the two battalions of Gotha, placed under the orders of the Dutch Colonel Van den Berg, and attached to the division of Grandjean, they held garrison in the island of Wollin (Wolin); a reinforcement of 60 men reached them at this distant station and filled the voids which the climate caused in their ranks.

At last, on the 12th of November, the regiment of Saxons left for Bayreuth. On the 3rd of December, it arrived at Hof with the two guns given to him by the Emperor Napoleon in thanks for the services rendered before Kolberg; it found in this town an order from General Legrand, Governor of Bayreuth, ordering them to return to the duchies: the contingents then returned to their homeland and arrived respectively 8 December in Weimar, Gotha and Hildburghausen, and 9 December in Meiningen.

Placed on the Napoleon Series: October 2015