

The Napoleon Series

The Germans under the French Eagles: Volume III the Saxons in Our Ranks Chapter Four Part II: Campaign of 1813

By Commandant Sauzey

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CHAPTER IV

Campaign of 1813



UNIFORMES SAXONS — 1813

Hussard Chasseur à pied
Cuirassier de la Garde Grenadier du rég' de Rechten

SAXON UNIFORMS -- 1813

Hussar Foot Jäger
Cuirassier of the Guard Grenadier of the Regt. of Rechten

After the armistice.

The armistice was renounced by the Allies on 11 August. The Emperor, against whom came new enemies -- Austria with 200,000 men and Bernadotte with his Swedes -- the Emperor was ready to face all dangers.

The strategy he adopted was stated in the note of 12 August:

"...Here is the plan of operation that I can adopt, but I will definitively decide before midnight. Concentrate all my army between Görlitz and Bautzen, at Königstein and the Dresden camps... Send the Duke of Reggio with the 12th, 4th and 7th Corps to Berlin, at the time that General Girard will arrive with 11,000 men by Magdeburg, and the Prince of Eckmühl with 40,000 men by Hamburg."

"Apart from these 110,000 men who will march on Berlin,...I will have on Görlitz namely: the 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 6th, 11th, 14th and 1st Army Corps, 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th Cavalry Corps and Guard. With these 300,000 men I will take a position between Görlitz and Bautzen, so as not to be able to be cut off from the Elbe, to keep me in charge of the course of this river, to supply me by Dresden, to see what the Russians and the Austrians want to do and take advantage of the circumstances..."

On the same day, instructions were sent to Oudinot, who was in charge of commanding the three corps that will march on Berlin:

"...The Chief of Staff informed you that the 7th Corps commanded by General Reynier and composed of 3 divisions, 2 Saxons and 1 French, making 18,000 men present under arms, with a brigade of 1,600 Saxon horses, will arrive on the 16th or the 17th (August) at Luckau."

The 4th Corps, under the command of Bertrand, amounted to about 20,000 men (1 French division, 1 Italian, 1 Württembergers); the 12th Corps also had nearly 20,000 men present under arms (2 French divisions and 1 Bavarian division), and finally the 3rd Cavalry Corps commanded by Arrighi, Duke of Padoue, comprised 3 divisions, or 6,000 horses.

Oudinot was going to have to fight against the 100,000 men of Bernadotte, including 4 corps: those of Bülow, Tauentzien (Prussians), 1 Russian corps and the Swedish corps.

On the 17th of August, the Saxons brilliantly took the village of *Zossen* from the Prussians.

On the 21st, the army of Oudinot forced the defile of Trebbin; the 7th Corps flanked the city and the 12th entered it. The army resumed movement on the 23rd, with the defiles of Blankenfelde, Großbeeren, and Ahrensdorf in front of them, behind which Bernadotte retreated.

Großbeeren (23 August 1813).

Oudinot directed one of his army corps on each of these passages.

On 23 August, the 4th Corps marched on Blankenfelde, the 7th on Großbeeren, the 12th on Ahrensdorf. The Saxon 2nd Division set off at 10 o'clock in the morning, followed by the Cavalry Brigade, the Durutte Division, and the trains, the 1st Division closing the march. The 7th Corps occupied Großbeeren by its advance guard at 4 o'clock in the evening, and Reynier established himself at the bivouac on two lines: in front of the 2nd Saxon, behind and to the left, Durutte and the cavalry; finally the 1st Saxon.

At this moment Bülow attacked Großbeeren with 30,000 men and 1,200 Cossacks; 60 Prussian pieces of covered the Saxon 2nd Division, which took huge losses, while the 1st Division was formed in a large square, flanked by artillery, and the Saxon skirmishers threw themselves on the edge of the wood of Kleinbeeren. --The Prussian Division Borstell then arrived and outflanked the right of the 7th Corps, which lost Großbeeren where 3 battalions of the 2nd Saxon were destroyed.

The Prussian cavalry invaded the field of battle, but was driven back by the hussars and uhlans of General Gablentz: however, at nightfall, Bülow again launched his landwehr cavalrymen on the 7th Corps: the brigade of Saxon cavalry yielded terrain; -- Oudinot sent to its aid the squadrons of Arrighi; this whirlwind of cavalry fell on Großbeeren, sweeping away the Prussian hussars and uhlans: it was around the village, in the middle of the night, a stream of more than 4,000 horses; Reynier retired, supported by the Guilleminot Division of the 12th Corps; but he lost thirteen cannons and 2,000 Saxon prisoners.



LE MARÉCHAL OUDINOT, DUC DE REGGIO
(D'après une lithographie de la collection Ambroise TARDIEU).

MARECHAL OUDINOT, DUKE OF REGGIO
(From a lithograph from the collection of Ambroise TARDIEU).

The next day the two parties withdrew: General von Sahr, commander of the Saxon 2nd Division, was wounded; Bülow, had lost, against this single division, 28 officers and 1,100 of his soldiers.

The *grenadier Pils*, in his curious "Journal de marche", thus tells us about this episode:

"The Duke of Reggio (Oudinot), coming to the cannon, arrived among the disbanded troops of the 7th Corps. He saw the Saxons fleeing from all sides, after throwing down their arms. Still pushing forward, he found the

commander of this corps (Reynier) resisting the efforts of two Prussian army corps, with the only French division (Durutte) he had at his command. The Marshal reproached his lieutenant for having attacked the enemy without waiting for him, and, throwing forth the Guillemot Division which was coming up, put the remains of the 7th Corps in the second line."

Oudinot brought the army back to Wittenberg (24 August).

On 4 September, he was relieved of his command in chief and replaced by Marshal Ney.

Jüterbog (6 September 1813).

Ney immediately moved to Jüterbog. After a partial success on 5 September on Tauentzien at Zahna and at Seyda, he was defeated the next day by Bülow.

The 4th Corps (Bertrand), with its 3 divisions: Fontanelli (Italian), Morand (French) and Franquemont (Württembergers) marched the 6th on Jüterbog; the 7th Corps was directed towards Rohrbeck, the Saxon 1st, then Durutte, the artillery on the flanks of each division, the cavalry on the wings, the Saxon 2nd covering the march of the trains; -- the 12th Corps followed the 7th.

Bertrand attacks Tauentzien at Dennewitz; he resists and calls Bülow, who arrives at half-past twelve, and throws the Thümen Division and the cavalry of Oppen against the left of the 4th Corps. Durutte supported the left of Bertrand, while the 2 Saxon divisions advanced on Gölsdorf where they arrived before the Prussians; the 2nd Saxon settles in echelon behind the 1st, and the artillery of Saxony opened fire: two battalions and a battery, on the left of the village, held in respect the cavalry of Oppen. Bülow then engaged the last troops he still had at hand, 3 battalions, and took Gölsdorf.

The battle continued with the arrival of the Prussian division of Borstell, which extended the enemy's right, and that of Oudinot, which brings the 12th Corps and takes Gölsdorf.

Marshal Ney then decided to send the 12th Corps of the French left to the right, in support of the 4th Corps. During the execution of this movement, Bülow made a general attack, taking advantage of the entry into line of a new division, that of Kraft: the Saxons lose Gölsdorf at 5 o'clock in the evening; Bertrand abandoned Rohrbeck: the 12th Corps can only cover the general retreat of the army, with its 3 divisions marching in square battalions, the Guillemot Division making up the rear guard.

"The 12th Corps," -- says Oudinot in his *Report*, -- "changing position made a considerable dust, which probably made the 7th believe that a cavalry charge was taking place behind them. Its troops shook and fell on four of my battalions which they placed for a moment in disorder."

Brought back to Torgau on the 7th, the army reconstituted itself there.

"Losses cannot be estimated," -- writes General Reynier; -- "Half of the infantry and artillery of the Durutte division are missing, one-third of the infantry and Saxon artillery. The cavalry lost little since it was in reserve, and opened the retreat."

Already, in his letters of the 10th and 12th of August to the Chief of Staff, Ney spoke with inexorable severity on the account of the Saxons; -- he prophesied the events of Leipzig with a prescience unfortunately misunderstood:

"The morale of the generals, and in general of the officers, is singularly shaken; to order thus is only to order half, and I would rather be grenadier."

"...Your Highness must also be instructed that the foreign troops of all nations manifest the worst spirit, and it is doubtful whether the cavalry I have with me is no more harmful than useful."

"...Such is the spirit of the Saxon army, and there is no doubt that these troops, especially the cavalry, do not turn their weapons against us at the first opportunity. If, as I believe, the government of this nation does not share the

principles of the army, it is to be hoped that it will immediately take measures to recall the most turbulent men, and to impose on them other."

The 12th corps was dissolved and distributed into the 4th and 7th Corps.

The 7th Corps received the division Guilleminot, and the two Saxon divisions, very weakened, which were united in one, under the number 24; General von Zeschau received the command of this division, while General von Mellentin took the command of the Saxon depots at Torgau.¹ This city became the center of the general depots of the army, and the Count de Narbonne was appointed governor, replacing the Saxon General Thielmann, passed to the enemy and placed at the head of a body of partisans and defectors.

While these unfortunate events succeeded each other on this part of the theater of war, the Emperor won the *Battle of Dresden*, where the Saxon cuirassiers distinguished themselves with General Latour-Maubourg, the 26 of August, on the road to Pillnitz and on the 27th, crushing the left of the Allies, between Cotta and Grumbach. It was Murat himself who led the carabineers and cuirassiers against the Austrian infantry.

"The King of Saxony and his family, who had remained in Dresden during the battle, had given the example of the confidence..." says the *Moniteur* of the 6th of September.

The Emperor, after the battle, instructed the Duke of Bassano to collect information on the families of Dresden who had suffered the most from recent and recent events.

The order arrived to draw up the condition of the inhabitants who had been wounded; according to the lists furnished by M. von Burgsdorf, chief of the police of the town, relief and pensions were immediately granted.

After which an order of the 3rd of September ordered the completion of the fortifications of Dresden.

Bernadotte flooded the country with proclamations, in which he invited our allies of the Confederation to leave the French ranks to enter the Bavarian, Saxon, Hanseatic, Elbe, and Vengeance legions that he created for them.

These provocations produced only too many effects.

On the 23rd of September, at the moment when Reynier -- on the orders of Ney -- was going to march on Oranienbaum, the Saxon Major von Bunau, of service at the outposts at Kemberg, passed to the enemy with the 1st Battalion of the Saxon Regiment of the King. As well as 2 officers and 40 Uhlans or Saxon hussars. Ney had to give up the planned attack.

The Major von Bunau sent an appeal to the Saxon army to invite him to follow his example, invoking the name of Bernadotte "so popular among the Saxons"

¹Composition and manpower of the Saxon division, as of 17 September 1813:

1 st brigade: 5 battalions and 1 fighter company.	}	Officers.....	129
2 nd Brigade: 6 battalions.....	}	Troops.....	5,354
Cavalry Brigade (Regiment of Uhlans and	}	Officers.....	37
Regiment of Hussars).....	}	Troops.....	1,224
2 foot batteries of 8 pieces.....	}	Officers.....	29
2 horse batteries of 4 pieces.....	}	Troops.....	1,192
Sappers and pontoons	}	Officers.....	4
	}	Troops.....	64

Total: 119 officers; 7,848 men; 2,413 horses.

(From a note taken from the papers of General Vanson.)

But the brave General Zeschau, informed of this event, immediately went to the Saxon camp, and gathering all the officers, made them feel the infamy of such an action; he had himself given by each of them, under his word of honor, the renewal of the oath of fidelity to the Emperor.

For his part, the King of Saxony sent his army a proclamation "full of the most touching and most honorable sentiments."

Nevertheless, Ney had warned Reynier in leaving the Saxons in the front line.

He wrote to Prince Berthier on 23 and 24 September:

"Whatever Mr. General Reynier says, the worst spirit reigns among the generals, the officers, and even the Saxon soldiers, since they have the certainty that the Prince of Sweden has a legion of deserters, and of prisoners of this nation... It is strongly to be feared that all are not carried away, and does not cause the defection of the other allied troops..."

The strength of Ney's corps had fallen from 28,000 men on the 13th of September to 22,000 men on the 24th of the same month...

However the Allied armies were getting closer. Blücher, who made his junction with Bernadotte, crossed the Elbe. The Russian reserves of Bennigsen arrived in Poland, and Schwarzenberg descended from the mountains of Bohemia into the plains of Saxony.

The Emperor left 30,000 men with Saint-Cyr, to hold Dresden and defend it. He went, on 7 October, between Magdeburg and Torgau with the Guard, the 11th and 3rd Corps, while Ney was on the lower Mulde with the 4th and 7th Corps. Murat was on the upper Mulde with the 2nd, 5th and 8th Corps; finally Augereau was on the Saale with the 9th Corps formed almost entirely of old bands of Spain. The King of Saxony accompanied the Emperor.

Blücher and Bernadotte fell back. Reynier, with the 7th Corps, moved in forced marches on Wittenberg, in fact raised the siege, repulsed Billow, and seized the bridges of Aachen and Röslau. The 4th Corps (Bertrand) recaptured from Blücher the bridges of Wartenburg (11, 12 and 13 October).

On 9 October, during the march of the 7th Corps on Düben, the Emperor approached the Saxon columns and spoke to the troops:

"He reminded them of the confidence he had shown them the year before at Dresden, where only they had formed his guard, and the word of honor which they had just given to their respectable chief, General von Zeschau: he presented their homeland, ready to be shared and enslaved by the Allies; finally he summoned them to fulfill the duty of the soldier to its sovereign, and he who bound them to their companions in danger and glory..." (*Odeleben.*)

After reviewing the Saxons, the Emperor granted them 25 decorations:

"The enthusiasm of the officers and the soldiers, their shouts of joy, their cheers, deceived Napoleon on their dispositions; could one indeed believe that these same troops, who seemed so affectionate and faithful, would spend nine days afterwards in the ranks of the enemy, and would turn their arms against us, even on the field of battle..." (*Odeleben.*)

Napoleon was about to cross the right bank of the Elbe and put the Allies between France and himself, when the defection of Bavaria changed this gigantic plan: Reynier and Bertrand, en route to Berlin were recalled; the whole army met below Leipzig.

The Emperor to the Chief of Staff.

Düben, 14 October, 3 o'clock in the morning.

"The King of Saxony will march with Generals Lefebvre and Curial. General Lefebvre will give the king the necessary escort to drive him from Taucha to Leipzig..."

Battle of Leipzig.

FIRST DAY (16 OCTOBER).

The day of 16 October, the first act of the "Battle of the Nations", was going on without the Saxon troops of the 7th Corps, still marching towards Eulenburg, to take part in the action. Only the Saxon cuirassiers fought there, at *Wachau*, with Latour-Maubourg, who had a thigh carried away... the right of the Allied infantry was pushed in and a battery of 26 pieces was taken by the 1st Cavalry Corps.

The General Count de Bordesoulle, who commanded in the 1st Cavalry Corps of Latour-Maubourg the 1st Division of Cuirassiers (brigade of Berckheim, 2nd, 3rd, 6th Cuirassiers -- brigade Bessières, 9th, 11th, 12th Cuirassiers, -- Saxon brigade of Lessing), gives us, in a letter written on 23 March 1827, interesting details on the participation of the Saxon cuirassiers with the shining charges of this day:

"...The brave Latour-Maubourg had had his leg carried away more than one hour before the charge I made on the Allied infantry and artillery... I first engaged against more than 7,000 to 8,000 infantry men and against the 26 pieces of enemy artillery which at this time were not supported by the cavalry... my 1st Brigade composed of the 2nd, 3rd and 6th Cuirassiers, and the 3rd Brigade formed from the cuirassiers of the Guard of the King of Saxony and the Zastrow Regiment, of the same nation. M. the General Bessières was left in reserve. While these two brigades penetrated into the squares and seized the pieces, I perceived a rather strong column of Allied cavalry which ran to my left flank to the aid of the infantry and the artillery which was in my power... The intrepid Bessières went with all his brigade at the head of this cavalry..., overturned all that was found in his path and penetrated even to the Allied sovereigns... But during this brilliant operation, the enemy cavalry having rallied, and no cavalry having come to rescue me, I was obliged to retire without being able to profit... It was in my retirement movement that I found General Drouot with his batteries of the Guard, and I was the first to engage him to fire at the enemy, *as on some of my liveliest cuirassiers* who had not obeyed the rallying..."

On the morning of the 17th, Ney informed the Emperor from Schönefeld that he had ordered Reynier to arrive at Leipzig by Eulenburg. No news of the Saxon Corps reached the general headquarters: Napoleon never ceased asking for it: he sent General Lefebvre-Desnouettes to Stetteritz in the morning of the 17th, with the mission of dispatching officers to Reynier and to press his march.

The Emperor had decided to retire, but he did not want to begin it before the arrival of the 7th Corps, and before the parks and the army were united in front of Leipzig. The day was used to restoring ammunition.

A dispatch arrived at the general headquarters at half-past twelve, at last announcing that at noon Reynier arrived at Schönefeld with his cavalry. But the infantry did not arrive until about four o'clock, and stopped at Paunsdorf. Ney left it there as a reserve. The Saxon and Württemberg cavalry bivouacked in the plain, entered Paunsdorf and Neutzsch, near Heiterblick.

SECOND DAY OF THE BATTLE OF LEIPZIG (18 OCTOBER).

While our brave troops were covering their eagles with an imperishable glory in the defense of Probstheida, about two o'clock in the evening, the Emperor wrote to the Duke of Bassano, his Minister of Foreign Affairs, who had remained with the King of Saxony at Leipzig: Maret was to announce to the King the success of the day, the intention of the Emperor to continue the retreat; lastly, he had the mission of engaging our old Ally in sacrificing his attachment to Napoleon to think only of the interests of his subjects: "The King of Saxony was to treat with the Allies while the victory still smiled on us, and make them feel that the weight of the Saxon army, still today in the French ranks, was an argument likely to render a possible and honorable arrangement for Saxony..."

General Pelet gives us an interview with the Duke of Bassano and King Frederic-Auguste, a most moving account:

"The minister, on receiving the Emperor's letter, immediately surrendered (it) to the King: he found him unshakably ready to remain faithful to our alliance until the end: no reasoning could succeed in making him change his resolution... In the end, squeezed and pushed to the end by the Duke of Bassano, the King said to him: "You, who see things so high, and who are such a good judge of sentiments, do you advise me?" "I advise your Majesty," replied the Duke, "and I do more, I ask him in the name of the Emperor." -- The King sent for M. von Einsiedel, and said to the Duke: "Repeat your words to my minister; I want a witness of what has just happened..."



**Bataille de Leipzig. — Défense de Probstheyda.
(D'après la France militaire.)**

Battle of Leipzig. -- Defense of Probstheida.
(After *Military France*.)

But just as our generous ally was deciding to follow the advice of the Emperor, an abominable betrayal put him at the mercy of his enemies: the Saxon army had just passed to the Allies on the battlefield of Leipzig.

Defection of the Saxons.

Blücher, fearing that Napoleon would obtain upon the Austrians a decisive success before the arrival of Bernadotte and the Russians, had just launched Langeron's corps on the troops of Marmont; at that moment they supported their right at Paunsdorf, occupied by Reynier's corps.

"When the brigade of Saxon uhlans and hussars, established near Heiterblick, saw the Cossacks of Langeron approach, they advanced towards them, as if to charge them... But soon they turned around, and took their artillery against the troops that came to support its movement..."

This dishonorable perfidy was punished on the spot, for Blücher, refusing the defectors the honor of fighting in his ranks, sent the light Saxon cavalry brigade on the other side of the Parthe, behind the corps of Yorck "on a place where she could no longer betray anyone..."

The village of Paunsdorf was then evacuated by Reynier; the latter, warned by the disloyalty of his cavalry, placed Durutte's division in the front line behind Sellerhausen, and mounts the Saxon infantry, reduced by war and desertion to a single division, behind the village occupied by Durutte, and as reserved.

Bernadotte's army has crossed the Parthe; Ney starts in front of it, he arrives at the 7th Corps and prevails against Reynier, to whom he orders to deploy the Saxons and to take back Paunsdorf.

Reynier explains to him the reason of his conduct and asked not to execute this order. The Marshal persisted and forced Durutte to send a battalion to Paunsdorf: the village, reoccupied by them, was immediately beset by the Allies; it was necessary to engage all the French division of Durutte who, a moment after, was in the grips of the two corps of Bubna and Platov.

"As soon as the Saxon infantry saw itself free by the distance of Durutte, it was running to the columns of Bülow that Bernadotte led onto the plain of Paunsdorf... the brigade of Rissel was in the lead, with four artillery batteries: General von Gressot, chief of staff of Reynier, ran after the Saxons to moderate their ardor in an attack that Reynier did not order them on... He finds only enemies. The least guilty cry to him: "Get away, General! it is not your place... it is no longer time!..."

In vain the Saxon generals von Zeschau and Lecoq made the last efforts to retain their soldiers: 12,000 men with 40 guns enter the ranks of the Allies; Bernadotte, less generous than Blücher, immediately asked them for their artillery to increase the effect of his, a part of which is still behind. With horrible coolness, the Saxon artillery commander replied:

"I have just consumed half of my ammunition for the French; I will use the rest against them!"

And the Saxon plays are immediately turned against the Durutte and Delmas divisions, which they covered grapeshot at half-range: General Delmas and entire lines fall under the Saxon shells...

The Württemberg cavalry of General Normann, following the example of the Saxons, passed at that moment to the enemy.

In his "*Memories*", Marshal Macdonald, commanding the 11th Corps, recounts the episode as follows:

"...I was marching under fire... when I saw the enemy fallback and the corps of General Reynier formed on two lines, carried forward; the first was composed of the Saxon contingent, the second of French. I had my troops ready to carry them forward: but what was my sorrow when I saw this first line stop at the position which the enemy had just left, turn around and fire on the second! Never has history reported such treason; when, the year before, I felt the betrayal of the Prussians, at least for the moment they had the modesty not to fire on us. Astonished and surprised, the second line dropped and was immediately pursued by the same line which, a moment before, was under our banner. As there was connivance, the enemy supported this movement, and it would have been decisive for him if the Emperor did not hasten on this point to stop him and join the second line."

The Saxon Major Odeleben, who was with the Emperor at the moment when the latter learned of the defection of the Saxon army, expressed himself in these terms:

"This setback did not produce any change in his bearing, although symptoms of discouragement could be observed on his face." (II, 32.)

"In spite of the defection of the Saxon army during the battle" -- writes for his part Sir Robert Wilson in 1817 (*Tableaux of the Power of Russia*, 320), -- "in spite of the ardent courage of the Allied troops, they could not take from the French a single village they had proposed to keep as essential to their positions..."

The *Moniteur* of Saturday, 30 October 1813 announced the event in the following manner:

"...At 3 o'clock in the afternoon, the Saxon army, infantry, cavalry, Württemberg artillery and cavalry passed entirely to the enemy. There remained of the Saxon army only General Zeschau who commanded it in chief, and 500 men. This betrayal not only emptied our lines, but delivered to the enemy the important outlet entrusted to the Saxon army, who pushed infamy to the point of immediately turning its forty pieces of cannon against the division of Durutte."

"The King of Saxony was mounted on a tower to follow events; seeing the French army surrounded on all sides by the numerous lines of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, which the enemy was developing around the city, he could not conceive how this handful of brave men resisted with so much perseverance..." (*Odeleben*, II, 331.)

The Emperor returned at 9 o'clock in the evening to Leipzig. He ordered General Drouot to send to the King of Saxony the battalion of Saxon grenadiers who served with the Imperial Guard. General Reynier having asked this sovereign for his orders for the Saxon troops who had remained faithful (500 men), the king replied that the Emperor would dispose of them as he wished; the last 500 Saxons of the 7th Corps were thus also directed to Leipzig, where they were placed with the Durutte Division at the most important post at Pfaffendorf and the suburb of Halle.

The 7th, 8th, and 2nd Corps were in charge of the rear guard under Macdonald's orders.

THIRD DAY OF THE BATTLE OF LEIPZIG (19 OCTOBER).

It had been proposed to the Emperor, to cover the retreat of the French army, to put 6,000 men and 60 pieces of cannon in the city of Leipzig, which had ramparts; -- to occupy this city as the head of the defile, to set fire to its vast suburbs in order to prevent the enemy from lodging there, and to give play to our artillery placed on the ramparts.

"However odious the betrayal of the Saxon army was, the Emperor could not bring himself to destroy one of the most beautiful cities in Germany, to deliver it to all sorts of disorders, inseparable from such a defense, and that under the eyes of the King who, since Dresden, had wished to accompany the Emperor, and who was so afflicted by the conduct of his army. The Emperor preferred to expose himself to losing a few hundred wagons, than to adopt this barbarous party." (*Moniteur* of 30 October.)

"At seven o'clock in the morning, the Emperor mounted his horse and went to the King of Saxony. He thanked him for the faithful affection he had preserved for him, and the last proofs he had wished to give him. He strongly urged him not to abandon his people to the spirit of madness which had invaded the Germans, and to join crowned brothers who were to treat him as a king... showing him that how Austria was obtaining what she desired most, supremacy of the German Empire, wasn't interested in protecting the secondary states. Napoleon put his trust in the heart of his generous ally."

"When the shooting approached Leipzig, the Emperor took leave of the King and his worthy family; their farewells were very touching..." (*General Pelet*.)

The Saxon grenadiers had been ranged before the King's palace to serve as his guard, and to shelter him from the first movement of the enemy.



Les frontières de la Saxe en 1815.

(D'après Vidal-Lablache).

The frontiers of Saxony in 1815.

(After Vidal-Lablache).

While Durutte defended the suburb of Halle, gunshots are heard behind him, and his unfortunate division already more than decimated, suffered by this fire new losses; it was the Saxons in charge of the defense of the walls, who took in the back the defenders of the suburb... At the same time, the Baden delivered to the Allies the gate of Saint-Pierre which they had guarded.

The 7th, 8th, and 11th Corps retreated to the Elster by the crowded boulevards; Reynier, Poniatowski, and Macdonald, at the head of their rear-guard, still stopped the enemy in front of the bridges, when a sapper blew up the mine of the great bridge of Hohe-Brück ...

Macdonald crossed the Elster with great difficulty, Reynier remained in the hands of the enemy, and Prince Joseph Poniatowski, wounded, found death in the waves!

The Allied sovereigns and their generals-in-chief, assembled on the main square of Leipzig, complimented each other on their success in the face of the unfortunate King of Saxony, whom they declared a prisoner of war, and sent for Berlin.

It was not until after the Congress of Vienna that the King of Saxony found his capital and a part of his states: he had paid dearly for his unshakeable fidelity to him to whom his dynasty owed a royal crown.

Napoleon was more generous than his enemies; just after leaving Leipzig, he sent back to the King of Saxony his two regiments of cuirassiers, who had not ceased to fight gloriously in the ranks of the First Corps of Cavalry; he wrote to them write that he did not want to take them further and that he released them from their military duties towards the French army.

Arriving at Fulde on the 23rd of October, the Emperor observed that the two officers whom the King of Saxony had given him to act as interpreters in the course of the campaign, continued to follow the headquarters: the Saxon officers, the non-commissioned officers, and the soldiers, decorated with the Legion of Honor, did not want to leave our ranks either; among them was a colonel of cavalry, to whom the Emperor had, in the preceding wars, given his

own cross of the Legion of Honor, after a very brilliant charge. Napoleon charged the Grand Equerry to send them all to their king, thanking them for their good service. Colonel Odeleben, who had often approached the person of the Emperor, received a reward of 10,000 francs, a life pension certificate, and the Officer's Cross of the Legion of Honor.

Saxon artillerymen had been left at Dresden, under the orders of Gouvion-Saint-Cyr. At the news of the battle of Leipzig, the retreat of the army and the defection of the states of the Confederation of the Rhine, the Marshal wanted to ensure the spirit of his German troops: the commander of the Saxon artillery was told him he would answer for his gunners. But a few days later, he made known to the Marshal their loyalties as his world was very shaken. The next day, Saint-Cyr had them taken up in their different posts, after making them deposit their arms in the arsenal. "We owe praise," -- he writes in his "Memoirs," -- "to the frank conduct of the Saxons who remained in Dresden."

Finally, the last Saxons to leave our ranks were the gunners of the garrison of Glogau. This town, blockaded since 15 August 1813 by the 7,000 Prussians of General Heisler and the 3,000 Russians of General Rosen, was governed by the brave Laplane, who had only 6,000 men, only half French and the rest Croats, Frankfurters, Spaniards and Saxons: these last formed an artillery company and attended a park of 28 loaded caissons. Despite attempts to subvert by the enemy, Laplane managed to keep the position entrusted to him. On the 3rd of January, the Saxon Major Huthstemer had asked the governor to leave the city with his artillerymen; but he did not grant him satisfaction until the 24th of the same month, when the troops of Frankfort and Saxony left the place; the Croats came out the next day; -- and the remaining 1,200 French only capitulated on 17 April 1814.

Thus ended the alliance of Saxony with France.

The Emperor had elevated them to the rank of the great powers, from the simple electorate he had found; -- it had more than doubled its territorial area and the number of its inhabitants; in favor of Saxony, to whom he had confided the suzerainty of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, he had renounced the restoration of the Kingdom of Poland.

Of all this, what has remained? A king's crown on the head of a German Catholic prince, and the memory of the great victories of the Empire, in which the bloodshed in common makes for a common glory: why must the fanfares of triumph of Friedland, of Wagram and Moskowa not prevent us from hearing the cannon of Leipzig and the acclamations of the Coalition!...

Placed on the Napoleon Series: August 2019