

The Three Battles of Landshut: 1745, 1757, 1760

By Peter Wilson

Introduction

The three hard-fought actions at the otherwise obscure Silesian town of Landshut allow us to glimpse the nature of low-level tactics with some clarity. What makes them particularly interesting is that all three took place on the same terrain with the same basic objective but involving widely varying forces which allows us to assess how different commanders tackled similar tasks. In each case, both sides sought to secure the town which gave access to several important routes across the mountains along the Bohemian-Silesian border. In the first instance, the Prussians scored a minor victory, with the roles reversed on the second encounter and the final action ending in complete Prussian defeat. As this last engagement is somewhat better known and involved far more troops, it will receive less coverage here in order to concentrate on the first two where the opposing forces were more evenly balanced and the conditions more alike.

The Terrain and Its Significance

Landshut's chief significance derived from its situation on the main road from Trautenau in northeastern Bohemia to Schweidnitz in northwestern Silesia. This road crossed the frontier at Liebau and reached the town by crossing the long, straggling village of Reich-Hennersdorf. Another, secondary road crossed the frontier at Schönberg to the southeast and ran along the Zieder stream to arrive at the eastern side of Landshut. The town itself lay in the valley of the Bober river which flowed out of the Bohemian mountains and then turned north-west to join the river Oder at Crossen. The main road turned northeast and ran past the high Zeisken Berg hill through the town of Freiburg and on to the important fortress and magazine at Schweidnitz. Whoever held Landshut also had access to roads leading north and west into southern Silesia and Saxony respectively. The town's strategic importance was heightened by its commercial activity as a center for Silesian linen manufacture with several of the firms based there trading as far afield as Spain and providing a valuable source of revenue to the Silesian provincial exchequer.

While Landshut may have been easy to reach, it was not simple to defend. The town itself was small and cramped in a bend in the Bober valley at the confluence with the Zieder. A badly built wall and ditch surrounded the buildings and the church yard which projected to the south east. There were narrow meadows to the east, south and beyond the Bober to the west, but these gave little room to deploy. The surrounding hills were often steep and were so close that they commanded the town and dominated all three actions. The area to the north was dominated by three hills (Castle Hill [Burg Berg], Thiem Berg and Leuschner Berg) stretching in a line southwest to north-east as far as the

village of Vogelsdorf. Another ridge ran almost directly south from this line as far as the Zieder and included three further high points (Mummel Berg, Book Hill [Buch Berg] and Zieder Berg). It continued as a further ridge on the south side of the Zieder curving gently westwards to stop at the Angenelli Berg at the Liebau-Landshut road. This high ridge was broken only by a gap at the eastern end of Reich-Hennersdorf which gave its name to the whole stretch. The Liebau-Landshut road crossed Reich-Hennersdorf and ran over the heights immediately to the south of the town by the Bober. These included the ominously named Gallows Hill (Galgen Berg) and Justice Hill (Gerichts Berg), as well as Church Hill (Kirch Berg), Rooster Hill (Hahn Berg) and Blue Star Hill (Blaustern Berg). The ground rose again south of Reich-Hennersdorf towards the mountains, beginning with Mill Hill (Mühl Berg) to the west of the road and then higher ground at the defile by Blasdorf. Open ground was limited to three areas: a narrow plain between the Reich-Hennersdorf ridge and the hills immediately to the south of Landshut; the wider plain of Kloster Grüssau in the Zieder valley; and the Liebau plain to the south of the Blasdorf defile. Much of the latter, as well as the ground to the west of the Bober was marshy and dotted with ponds, while a further extension of the Reich-Hennersdorf ridge separated the Liebau and Grüssau plains¹.

First Landshut 22 May 1745

The first action occurred during the preliminary maneuvers prior to the battle of Hohenfriedberg as the Austrians sought to recapture Silesia by invading from northeast Bohemia. Though the outcome did not change wider events, the engagement is noteworthy as a fiercely-contested clash between two unequal detachments, as well as an occasion when the young Captain Friedrich Wilhelm von Seydlitz, the future cavalry general, distinguished himself, and the Prussian foot Jäger received their first major test in battle.

King Frederick had split his forces in Silesia into three corps to cover the mountain passes. While he held the main body in the center south of Schweidnitz, a small detachment of 6,000 guarded the south of the province, while another screened the northern passes, including Landshut. The Austrian commander, Prince Charles of Lorraine, sent over 10,000 light troops which cut off the southern detachment in mid May. Frederick entrusted Zieten with the mission to bring the isolated Prussians back north to safety. In his famous "Zieten Ride," the hussar general cut his way through with 550 hussars and then back again with most of the southern corps. Covered by this diversion, the main

¹ The topographical information is taken from the description of the area by the British Ambassador Mitchell and from the maps in the Prussian General Staff histories. These are not entirely consistent and identify other hilltops not named in the accounts of the actions. The northern section of the Reich-Hennersdorf ridge is also labeled the Lange Berg (long hill).

Austro-Saxon army advanced through Trautenau towards the Landshut pass, intending to break into southern Silesia and trap all the Prussians in the province. Feldmarschalllieutenant (Lt. Gen.) Franz Leopold Count Nadasdy (1708-83) was sent ahead in two columns to scout the way across the frontier at Schönberg and Liebau, leading to the first of the three engagements.

Landshut was held by a detachment under Colonel Hans Carl von Winterfeldt (1707-57), a rising star and favorite of the king, placed there by Lt. Gen. Du Moulin, commander of the northern Prussian corps. Winterfeldt had four grenadier battalions, the new Foot Jäger, three hussar regiments and eight battalion guns. Major General Stille held the double dragoon regiment Alt-Mollendorf at Hartmannsdorf, a village about five km north of Landshut on the road to Schweidnitz, while Du Moulin had a further six grenadier battalions posted slightly further away. All the Prussian units seem to have been under strength and Winterfeldt claimed he only had 1,000 infantry and 1,400 hussars. He later estimated Nadasdy's forces as 2,800 infantry and 3,000 hussars which roughly accords with official Austrian figures².

As one of Nadasdy's columns moved up from Liebau, the other halted at Hermsdorf in the Zieder valley to rest on 21 May. His patrols were spotted by Winterfeldt's outposts that evening and the Prussian colonel immediately made preparations for a battle the next day, summoning General Stille to hold his dragoons in readiness and informing his superior, Du Moulin. At 1am the next morning, Winterfeldt left Landshut and took position on the heights to the south, deploying Grenadier Battalion Stangen on Church Hill to block the Zieder valley, and placing the other three battalions behind the ridge of Justice Hill. The Jäger were concealed in a small wood on a spur pointing south west from Justice Hill, while the bulk of the hussars were hidden behind that hill with only a few squadrons out front.

Nadasdy had also decided to attack and broke camp at 3.30am, sending Lt.Col. Franquini with the Croats and 350 hussars ahead as an advance guard. Franquini drove the Prussian posts from the Reich-Hennersdorf ridge at 5am, but as the main Austrian force was still strung out on the roads from Liebau and Hermsdorf, Franquini settled down to wait. Winterfeldt decided to entice him down onto the narrow plain between the ridge and the Prussian position and sent a few hussars forward. Franquini took the bait, moved down the steep slope, deployed on the plain and opened fire. His hussars then advanced through the Croats towards the main Prussian position on Justice Hill where Winterfeldt was waiting to surprise them. As the Prussian hussars fell back behind the hill,

² Winterfeldt's estimates come from his report cited in the Prussian General Staff history of the Second Silesian War, vol. II 198. The Austrian Staff History (vol. VII 438n1) gives Nadasdy's effective strength as only 4,300 seven days after the battle, but notes it was still drawing supplies for 6,200 men. See the order of battle for a full breakdown and note 4 below.

Winterfeldt advanced his grenadiers in a line over the ridge and down onto the plain, while opening fire with his battalion guns. A company of Prussian grenadiers left the main line and advanced to within 200 paces of the enemy to open platoon fire. Franquini's command took casualties and fell back towards the Reich-Hennersdorf ridge.

At this point the tables were reversed by the appearance of two of Nadasdy's three hussar regiments arriving from Zieder on the Prussian left at the top end of the plain. Winterfeldt formed his grenadiers into a long square and fell back up Justice Hill, firing as he went to keep the Croats at bay and losing only three men killed in the process. The Austrians now tried to force the Prussians off the hill by attempting to outflank them again, this time on their right as Franquini moved towards Rooster Hill. This brought him within range of the Jäger concealed in the wood who opened fire, forcing his men to retire on Reich-Hennersdorf village. Winterfeldt had another opportunity to attack the retreating Austrians and, despite the presence of the two hussar regiments on his right, decided not to waste it, sending three squadrons of Natzmer Hussars and one from the Soldan regiment. Captain Seydlitz led his squadron of Natzmers directly at the rear of the retreating Croats, sending them running for shelter. However, as they pounded after them, the Prussians became disorganised and it was necessary to reform the ranks so the "Appel" was sounded calling the men to regroup to the rear. At that very moment the Hungarian Esterhazy Hussar Regiment appear through Reich-Hennersdorf having arrived from the Liebau road. The Prussians were thrown into confusion and driven back³.

Lt. Col. Schütz managed to rally the hussars as Winterfeldt arrived with two fresh squadrons to cover their flank. Seydlitz led two squadrons forward again and managed to capture some of the pursuing Hungarians who now received reinforcements in the shape of Lt. Col. Simbschen's Temesvar Free Battalion⁴. Simbschen's men now chased the Prussian Jäger who had unwisely joined the hussar's pursuit of the fleeing Croats. The Temesvarer beat the Jäger back to their wood and promptly opened fire on the Prussian grenadiers only 50 paces

³ The event prompted Seydlitz to recommend that the Prussian cavalry always reform facing the enemy - a suggestion that received the king's approval on 27 Sept. 1747.

⁴ This unit first saw action in June 1744 and by 1745 had an official strength of 7 infantry companies of 140 men each and two hussar companies of 75 a piece (Austrian Staff history vol. I 396). Prussian accounts mention detachments of Banat and Temesvar hussars which are not listed separately in the Austrian account. It is possible that these were the hussar companies attached to this unit, and possibly the Croat regiment as well. Perhaps the 350 hussars of Franquini's command included these companies instead of comprising men drawn from the three regular Hungarian hussar regiments with Nadasdy. Simbschen's unit was later transformed into the Banat Grenzer Regiment.

away. The Croats also returned and now seized Rooster Hill covered by the Esterhazy hussars. As the other two Hungarian hussar regiments continued to work their way down the Zieder valley and round the Prussian left, Nadasdy's main body of infantry finally arrived through Reich-Hennersdorf in the shape of the Hungarian Infantry Regiment which deployed in the plain in front of Justice Hill.

Winterfeldt's position was looking critical, but while he called on General Stille for support, he decided not to wait for the inevitable attack and took energetic measures to hold his position in the meantime. Two companies and one gun were called up from the Stangen grenadiers which had remained till then on Church Hill to reinforce Battalion Luck facing the Hungarian infantry, while battalions Finckenstein and Lepel faced the Croats and Temesvarer to the right. Winterfeldt obviously hoped to repel the attack with musketry and his battalion guns, but noticed that the volleys of Finckenstein and Lepel were having little effect on the Croats who were sheltering behind rocks on Rooster Hill. He sprang from his horse, crying "don't shoot lads, at the scum with the bayonet!" Both battalions charged, driving the Croats from the hill. It's unlikely that this attack actually made contact and it's interesting to note that once they reached the open ground of the valley, the Prussians stopped their charge and opened fire again instead.

While they neutralized the threat to their right, the Prussians also faced an assault on their center from the Haller Regiment which advanced up Justice Hill in good order. However, the Hungarians only had their two battalion guns for support against the fire of the eight Prussian pieces in addition to musketry from the grenadiers. Suffering heavy loss, the right-wing Hungarian battalion retreated down the slope in disorder while that on the left flung itself on the ground and started to return fire.

It was now 10am and the Austrian attack had ground to a halt with their infantry stalled in a semi-circle in front of the Prussian position engaged in a long fire fight. Winterfeldt's position remained critical, however, as his hussars were too weak to launch a counter attack, while the Ghilányi and Nadasdy Hussar Regiments had now reached Landshut itself and pushed detached detachments north to the hills at Vogelsdorf to cut the line of retreat.

General Stille now appeared at the head of the 1,000 man Alt Mollendorf Dragoon Regiment which had come up the valley at the trot from Hartmannsdorf in time to drive back the hussars by Landshut. Nadasdy now ordered a general retreat covered by his three hussar regiments and the remaining intact battalion of the Haller Regiment. As the broken Haller battalion retreated past Reich-Hennersdorf through the hamlet of Bethlehem, Stille's dragoons trotted through Landshut to form a second line behind Winterfeldt's three hussar regiments which now deployed behind Rooster Hill to the right of the grenadiers.

The Prussian cavalry now swept over the hilltop and down onto the plain. The Hungarian hussars evaded in the face of this assault and scrambled up the Reich-Hennersdorf ridge where the Croats hastily took position behind some bushes. Though the patriotic staff officers compiling the official history towards the end of the nineteenth century could barely credit it, the steep slope failed to deter the Prussian hussars who pressed on their charge at the gallop in time to catch the last few squadrons of Hungarians and the fleeing Croats. Col. Patatich commanding the Croats was wounded four times and taken prisoner; the rest of Nadasdy's force did not stop until it reached Kloster Grüssau. As one grenadier battalion moved onto the ridge in support of the hussars, the Jäger swept through the wood capturing the men (probably wounded) left behind by the Austrian retreat.

It was now midday and though Du Moulin arrived with another two grenadier battalions, it was decided to abandon further pursuit because Winterfeldt's men were exhausted and short of ammunition. The Prussians had lost 180 killed, wounded and captured, or about half the total loss of their opponents (366 men). Winterfeldt was promoted to major general at the age of only 38 for his determined seven-hour defense against the superior Austrian forces. Nadasdy retreated to Schönberg, but Frederick had already decided to retire on Breslau, hoping to entice Prince Charles onto the Silesian plain which would be more favorable to Prussian tactics than further actions in the mountains. Du Moulin and Winterfeldt abandoned Landshut on 25 May to rejoin the royal army, leaving the way clear for the Austrians and Saxons to concentrate there four days later. Prince Charles took the bait and left Landshut on 1 June, moving to meet the king at the battle of Hohenfriedberg.

Second Landshut: 13-14 August 1757

The second action occurred during the Seven Years War after the Prussian invasion of Bohemia had ended in disaster at Kolin in June 1757 and involved forces of approximately similar size to those engaged in 1745. Again a force of Prussian regulars faced a larger detachment of Austrian light troops, but this time the Austrians were already in possession of the town and the fighting took place on the hills to the north. The quality of the Prussians also did not match those who had resisted so stoutly twelve years before and they did not have the support of a sizeable force of cavalry.

These inequalities were indicative of the fairly desperate state the Prussians faced in the summer of 1757. The defeats in Bohemia had opened the way to Austrian advances towards Silesia and Saxony. As in 1745, a small Prussian corps had been left to protect the mountain passes by Landshut and to cover the vital fortress of Schweidnitz, but losses elsewhere meant that this force was weaker than that which had guarded the area in 1745. Fearing for the safety of Schweidnitz, the corps commander, Major General von Kreytzen, withdrew the men detached at Landshut opening the way to the Austrian light troops which

had been reinforced after Kolin and instructed to raid into Silesia. These numbered up to 4,000 men under the enterprising Major General Franz Jahnus who arrived to take command in July from Simbschen, veteran of the 1745 fight and now a full colonel in charge of a Slavonian Grenzer infantry regiment⁵. Together they seized the empty town on 10 July and made several destructive forays into northern Silesia.

Kreytzen had some success against these, forcing Jahnus to retire to Landshut by early August. The minister in charge of the Prussian civil government of Silesia, von Schlabrendorff, thought it now opportune to attack Jahnus in order to recover the valuable revenue from the Landshut area. Kreytzen accordingly pulled out troops from nearby garrisons to assemble a field force totalling 3,000 and set off, arriving at Hartmannsdorf on the evening of 12 August. He was reluctant to proceed further as he had little idea of Jahnus' positions which were screened by the woods north of Landshut, but urged on by the bolder spirits in his staff, he set out the next afternoon.

In retrospect it is easy to criticize this as a mistake. The woods were found to be full of Grenzer infantry, forcing the Prussians to move closer to the Bober river towards Vogelsdorf. Despite having only 70 hussars, Kreytzen managed to discover that the enemy's main force was stationed south of the Zieder stream with its left on Church Hill. The commanding Buch Berg (Book Hill) north of the stream was still unoccupied and Kreytzen decided to seize it despite the fact that it was already 7pm. His corps advanced in two lines but were unable to reach it before darkness fell and were forced to halt in difficult, wooded terrain immediately south of Vogelsdorf. Proximity to the enemy prevented any rest and the Prussians remained under arms in a large square with their baggage in the center.

As soon as dusk fell, Jahnus sent 50 volunteers from the Peterwardein Grenzer to snipe at the Prussians and keep them in a constant state of alarm. Thirty horses were captured by the Grenzer and a hundred impressed Saxons serving in Grenadier Battalion Diezelsky took the opportunity to desert⁶. Covered by the night, Jahnus moved men and guns into position on Book Hill

⁵ Whereas the 1745 action is well-covered by both the Austrian and Prussian staff histories, we only have the Prussian account for 1757. The estimate of Austrian strength comes from Jany's history, vol. II 445. Simbschen's detachment had included two Saxon Ulan pulks which were possibly still with the corps in August.

⁶ This unit was composed of the grenadiers of ex-Saxon IRs 53 (Manstein) and 57 (Jung Bevern) and had only been established on 11 February. Its disbandment had been ordered on 13 July but had been delayed, partly by the death of its commander at Striegau on 5 August. It was led by Captain von der Goltz in the action and eventually captured at the fall of Schweidnitz 12 November before the order to dissolve it could be carried out.

and Castle Hill north of the Zieder stream, placing batteries on both hills, covered by a battalion of Peterwardeiner on Castle Hill and another of Warasdiner in the wooded edge of Book Hill. The rest of Jahnus' men took station on this hill with the battery of 6 guns on their right covered by two grenadier companies.

Kreytzen decided to fall back to the heights east of Vogelsdorf (Leuschner Hill) at dawn, but was spotted by Jahnus who opened fire from Book and Castle hills causing the Prussians to abandon most of their baggage and retreat at the double out of range. Once on Leuschner Hill they formed a single line and advanced back towards Book Hill. Grenadier battalions Kreytzen and Diezelsky evicted the Warasdiner from the trees and opened up on the Austrian battery with their battalion pieces. Without orders, the other four Prussian battalions followed the grenadiers and all six units climbed in a line towards the summit. Despite heavy fire they broke over the abatis prepared at the top, pushing back the Grenzer there and capturing the six cannon.

By now the attack had lost its impetus and the Prussians recoiled in the face of a counter attack against their front and flanks. As they tumbled down the slope, six of their own guns got stuck in the wet meadows at the foot of the hill and had to be abandoned. Only the remnants of the Diezelsky grenadiers retained any order and provided a rear guard as the force fled back to Schweidnitz. In all 30 officers and 1,337 men were captured including the whole of the first battalion of Garrison Regiment Quadt. Jahnus claimed his own losses were only 3 officers and 96 men. He followed up his victory by resuming his raids into Silesia. It was not until December 1757 that the situation was reversed in the region by the Austrian defeat at Leuthen, allowing the Prussians to reoccupy Landshut.

Third Landshut: 23 June 1760

The importance of Landshut was now clear and for the next three years its defense was entrusted to Henri Auguste Baron de la Motte Fouqué (1698-1774), a Prussian general of Huguenot descent who had already fought in another skirmish there as the Prussians recaptured the town on 22 December 1757. Fouqué was, by all accounts, a rather disagreeable gentleman, but he was extremely diligent in carrying out his task. His corps was too small to protect the area effectively and was always subject to sudden changes in composition as Frederick recalled elements to meet emergencies elsewhere. Fouqué did his best to compensate by fortifying the position, constructing a network of over ten forts on the hilltops outside the town in 1758. The most extensive of these entrenchments stretched from Leuschner Hill to Mummel Hill, with a small redoubt on the latter and a further one on Book Hill just to the south. A string of three small fleches extended this line southwards to Zieder Hill, while a star redoubt capped Thiem Hill to the west. The heights south of the town were also fortified with another large entrenchment on Church Hill and a series of smaller

ones across Gallows and Justice hills. Further positions covered Blue Star Hill and Rooster Hill, with another line of small entrenchments on the ridge of Mill Hill in a line south of Reich-Hennersdorf. These positions were to receive their first major test in 1760.

The year 1759 had ended with a string of disasters for the Prussians and Frederick had great difficulty scrapping together an army for the following year. He commanded the main force of 50,000 in Saxony with his brother Prince Henry and a further 35,000 deployed at Sagan in the east to watch for the Russians. General Stutterheim and another 6,500 were posted opposite the Swedes in Pommerania, while Fouqué was given a field force of 14,500 to hold the Landshut area⁷. The main Austrian army totalled over 78,000, most of whom were concentrated near Dresden under Marshal Daun with a detached corps under Lacy pushed out towards the river Elbe and another at Zittau under Beck. While Daun waited for the Army of the Empire (22,500 men) to arrive from quarters in Franconia, another 45,000 men were sent under Feldzeugmeister Gideon Ernst Baron Loudon (171-90) to invade Silesia.

Owing to the Prussian position at Sagan which blocked the Russian advance and prevented direct cooperation through eastern Saxony, Loudon decided to attack via Glatz instead. The commandant of Glatz sent urgent messages in late May that the Austrians were now pouring across the frontier into central Silesia. Fearing for the fortresses, Fouqué abandoned Landshut and headed for Schweidnitz. As soon as he was gone, Loudon sent a detachment to seize the magazine there and then pulled his forces back to besiege Glatz. Minister Schlabrendorff urged Fouqué to retrace his steps and recapture the valuable town. As other orders arrived from Frederick who was also displeased by the precipitous retreat, Fouqué had no choice but to head back for the mountains. He arrived on 17 June, driving out the Austrian detachment there under Feldmarschallleutnant Count Gaisruck who retired to the Reich-Hennersdorf ridge.

Fouqué hastily repaired the entrenchments the Austrians had partially demolished and settled down to wait for reinforcements before pressing on to relieve Glatz. He decided to occupy the entire extent of his fortified line, despite the fact that it stretched for nearly 6 km. To make matters worse, he had to detach Maj.Gen Zieten⁸ with four battalions and two hussar squadrons to hold the Zeisken Berg hill on the vital road back to Schweidnitz. This left him only

⁷ The Prussian Staff history of the Seven Years War (vol. XII) and Jany, II 554-5 give a full break down of these forces. Four battalions were withdrawn from Fouqué's field force to reinforce the Silesian garrisons before operations began. Including these battalions, the fortress garrisons totaled 4,100 in Schweidnitz, 3,800 in Breslau, 4,000 in Neisse, 3,200 in Glatz, 2,200 in Cosel, 1,200 in Glogau and 800 in Brieg; a total of 19,300.

⁸ Not the hussar general, but another Zieten.

about 12,000 men to defend his extended position: Frederick later reckoned that this was only about a third of the number necessary⁹.

As soon as Loudon heard that Fouqué was back, he left 4,000 men to blockade Glatz and marched with the remaining 40,000, hoping to surprise him and capture his entire force. Reinforcements were sent under Feldmarschallleutnant Wolfersdorff join to Gaisruck on the Reich-Hennersdorf ridge to keep Fouqué pinned behind his entrenchments facing south while the rest of Loudon's men moved quietly up from Glatz to camp at Schwarzwaldau in the hills to the east of Landshut. General Beck was also requested to send a detachment from his positions near Zittau to close in from the west, while Jahnus, who was again in the area, was sent to neutralize Zieten on the Zeisken Berg and cut the line of retreat¹⁰.

During the night to 23 June Loudon's men moved into position on the high ground north of the Zieder stream. Eight battalions were posted on the hills to the north and east of the big entrenchment on Leuschner Hill covering gun batteries that enfiladed the Prussian right. Loudon's cavalry sheltered in the wooded ground behind these infantry, while the bulk of his foot took position on the slopes opposite Mummel Hill. Gaisruck and Wolfersdorff continued to line the Reich-Hennersdorf ridge with ten squadrons and eight battalions, including the two of Simbschen's regiment. General St Ignon and another five battalions and two cavalry regiments held the heights of the Blasdorf defile on the Liebau road.

⁹ In his History of the Seven Years War (p.300) Frederick places Fouqué's force at only 8,000 effectives, the number also given by Archenholz (p.211). However, strength returns listed in the Prussian Staff history (vol. XII, see also Jany, II 557) give about 9,500 to 10,000 infantry and around 1,900 cavalry, excluding the crews of 33 battalion pieces and 35 heavy guns and howitzers.

¹⁰ Estimates of the Austrian forces also vary from 28,000 upwards. The returns listed in the Prussian staff history give the following strength for Loudon (including Wolfersdorff and Gaisruck):

regular infantry (25 btns., 6 gren btns.)	24,834
Grenzer (6 btns.) and 2 free battalions	7,008
regular cavalry (50 sqdns. + 11 coy elite)	7,494
hussars (16 sqdns.)	1,095
	40,431

Since these returns date from after the battle, another 2,918 men must be added, giving a total of 43,349. Jahnus had another 4,000 (4 btns., 3 btns. Grenzer, 5 sqdns.), while Unruh was left at Glatz with a further 4,000 (4 btns. and 10 sqdns. of cuirassiers). Beck commanded 6,600 (half of them light troops), but none of his units reached the area in time.

The attack began at 2am on 23 June with the main assault hitting the entrenchments on the Leuschner and Mummel Hills held by Infantry Regiment Fouqué under Colonel Baron Rosen, and the first battalion from Regiment Mosel. A secondary attack was launched from the Reich-Hennersdorf ridge against the positions on Mill Hill and the heights to the south defended by three free battalions, one of grenadiers and the Werner Hussars. The rest of the Prussians were entrenched on the heights immediately south of Landshut, with one free battalion and two companies from the Fouqué regiment in the town itself. The Malachowski Hussars were in reserve behind Book Hill, with part of the Platen Dragoons and a garrison battalion positioned behind Leuschner Hill. Grenadier Battalion Arnim was detached in the valley by the hamlet of Ruhbank, covering the escape route north.

Heavy fighting ensued as the Prussians fiercely contested every hilltop, retiring from one position to the next, firing as they went. The situation got desperate as Fouqué spotted the Austrian cavalry moving to cut the road north of the town. Major von Owstien managed to break over the Bober with 900 cavalry and escape westwards via Kupferberg to reach Breslau. Fouqué collected the remnants of the infantry, brought them across the river to Leppersdorf and placed himself at the head of a square formed by volunteer battalion Below¹¹. The Austrian cavalry closed in and repeatedly summoned him to surrender. Each time he answered with a hail of bullets, until his men were finally scattered, his horse shot under him and himself wounded three times. His conduct and that of his men spared him the wrath of the king who subsequently praised his defeated troops, comparing them to the ancient Spartans. No less than 27 officers and 1,900 men had been killed and a further 8,051 captured along with 34 flags, two standards, the silver kettledrums of the Platen Dragoons and all but one of the 68 cannon. Around 1,100 infantry and artillery had got away in addition to the 900 cavalry, while Zieten's detachment managed to leave the Zeisken Berg in time and escape to Schweidnitz. The fact that the Austrians lost 2,918 men is a further indication of the Prussians' stiff resistance. The same could not be said for the garrison in Glatz to which Loudon turned after his victory, for it mutinied and surrendered without significant

¹¹ Fouqué's corps included two "volunteer battalions" composed of men drawn from other units under his command. That of Major von Borck had been formed in April 1759 and totalled 240, while that under Captain von Below consisted of thirty men each from the four grenadier battalions and been established in May 1760. The Borck volunteers were amongst the three battalions initially stationed on the heights south of Reich-Hennersdorf, while Below's unit had stood in reserve on the northern slope of Gallow's Hill next to the rest of the Platen Dragoons.

resistance on 26 July¹². The worsening situation in Silesia caused Frederick to abandon the siege of Dresden and head eastwards, redressing the situation in his victory over Laudon at Liegnitz on 15 August.

Conclusion

The Austrians did successively better in the three engagements, scoring a decisive tactical victory over the Prussians in the last which had some impact on the wider strategic situation. All three actions posed considerable problems for commanders on both sides. The dictates of geography and strategy placed the Prussian entry point at the northern end of the area, facing Austrian forces to the south and east. Though not impassable, the Bober acted as the western boundary on all three occasions, with the fighting taking place on and around the hills east of the river. Though Landshut was ringed by hills, these were surrounded in turn by more high ground. The long Reich-Hennersdorf ridge was too far from the main position to be held by the Prussians defending the town in 1745 and 1760 and so served as a convenient screen for the Austrian deployment. The heights to the south and north of the town also faced further hills which served as collecting points for the Austrian attacks, notably the high ground by Reich-Hennersdorf itself. Nonetheless, it was difficult to deploy from these heights as the Austrians discovered in 1745, especially as the Prussians were defending a more compact position centering on Justice Hill closer to the town. When the roles were reversed in 1757 the ground decisively favored the Austrians as the Prussians had to approach Landshut up the cramped Bober valley from the north. Here, the Austrians could not only deploy on the heights immediately north of the town, but on those flanking the valley to the east, forcing the Prussians to operate on the difficult ground closer to the river. Nonetheless, the Prussian assault up Book Hill came close to success, indicating the relative flexibility of 18th century line troops who were clearly capable of fighting in such difficult terrain.

Orders of Battle First Landshut 1745

Prussians

A) Winterfeldt
 Gren Btn. Luck (grenadiers of rgts. 12/29)
 Gren Btn. Finckenstein (19/25)
 Gren Btn. Lepel (20/26)
 Gren Btn. Stangen (IR 34/Garrison Rgt 5)
 Foot Jäger (1 weak company - probably about 100 men)
 Hussar Rgt Natzmer (HR5) 10 sqdn.s

¹² Loudon praised the Prussians' bravery. Frederick was not so charitable, claiming in his history of the war that the Austrians plundered the town on the orders of their generals after the battle.

HR Ruesch (HR5) 10 sqdns.
 HR Soldan (HR6) 8 sqdns.
 8 battalion guns

B) Stille
 Dragoon Rgt Alt Mollendorf (D6) 10 sqdns.

C) Du Moulin
 Gren. Btn. Hagen (called Geist, 13/37)
 Gren. Btn. Jeetze (5/36)

Austrians

Grenzer Rgt Col. Patatich (also called "Land-Croaten")
 Battalion Simbschen (Temesvarer)
 Inf. Rgt. Haller 2 btns., 2 battalion pieces

HR Ghilányi 7 sqdns.
 HR Nadasdy 7 sqdns.
 HR Esterhazy 7 sqdns.

Second Landshut 1757

Prussians (from right to left)

First Btn. Garrison Rgt Quadt (no.8)
 Second Btn. Inf.Rgt. Sers (no.48, the pioneer rgt)
 Gren Btn. Kreytzen (28/32)
 Gren Btn. Diezelsky (SIR53/SIR57)
 Garrison Rgt Mützscheffahl (no.5) 2 btns. plus 70 hussars

Third Landshut 1760

Prussians

Infantry

Gren Btn. Sobeck (24/34)
 Gren Btn. Koschenbahr (Standing Gren Btn. no.5)
 Gren Btn. Wobersnow (17/22)
 Gren Btn. Arnim (28/32)
 Inf. Rgt Fouqué (no.33) 2 btns.
 IR Bülow (no.46) 2 btns.
 1 btn. IR Braun (no.37) (the II btn. was with Zieten)
 1 btn. IR Markgraf Heinrich (no.42)(ditto)

IV btn. Garrison Rgt Mellin (no.11)(the II + III btns. were with Zieten)
 Free btn. Le Nobel (no.1)
 FB Lüderitz (no.5)
 FB Collignon (no.2)
 Volunteer Btn. Borck
 Volunteer Btn. Below
Cavalry
 DR Alt Platen (no.8) 4 sqdns. (the fifth was detached at Neisse)
 HR Werner (no.6) 5 sqdns.
 HR Malachowski (no.7) 6 sqdns. (two more sqdns. were with Zieten)
Artillery
 33 light guns (32 x 3pdrs, 1 x light 6 pdr), 35 heavy guns (including 9 howitzers)

Austrians

A) Main Force

infantry

Grün Loudon (free battalions) 2 btns.
 IR Waldeck 2 "
 Starhemberg 2 "
 Los Rios 1 "
 Loudon 2 "
 Esterhazy 2 "
 Wallis 2 "
 Marschall 2 "
 d' Aberg 1 "
 Deutschmeister 2 "
 Platz 2 "
 Grenadiers 5 "
 Grenzer 2 "

cavalry

Löwenstein cheveaulegers 10 sqdns.
 Sachsen Gotha chev. 5 "
 carabiniers and horse grenadiers 11 companies
 DR Kolowrat 5 sqdns.
 KR Trautmannsdorff 5 "
 KR Schmerzing (?) 5 "
 HR Bethlen 6 "
 HR Nadasdy 6 "
detached (moving to cut road to Hartmannsdorf)
 DR Erzherzog Joseph 2 sqdns.
 IR Moltke 2 btns.

B) Wolfersdorf and Gaisruck
 IR Königsegg 2 btns.
 IR Leopold Palffy 2 "
 IR Simbschen 2 "
 grenadiers 1 "
 DR Althann 5 sqdns.
 KR Alt Modena 5 "

C) Jahnus
 IR Batthiany 2 btns.
 IR Andlau 2 "
 Grenzer 3 "
 Württemberg Chev. 5 sqdns.

D) Unruh (at Glatz)
 IR Baden 2 btns.
 IR Salm 2 "
 KR Ansbach 5 sqdns.
 KR Karl Palffy 5 "

Total
 50 btns.
 86 ½ sqdns.
 124 guns

Sources

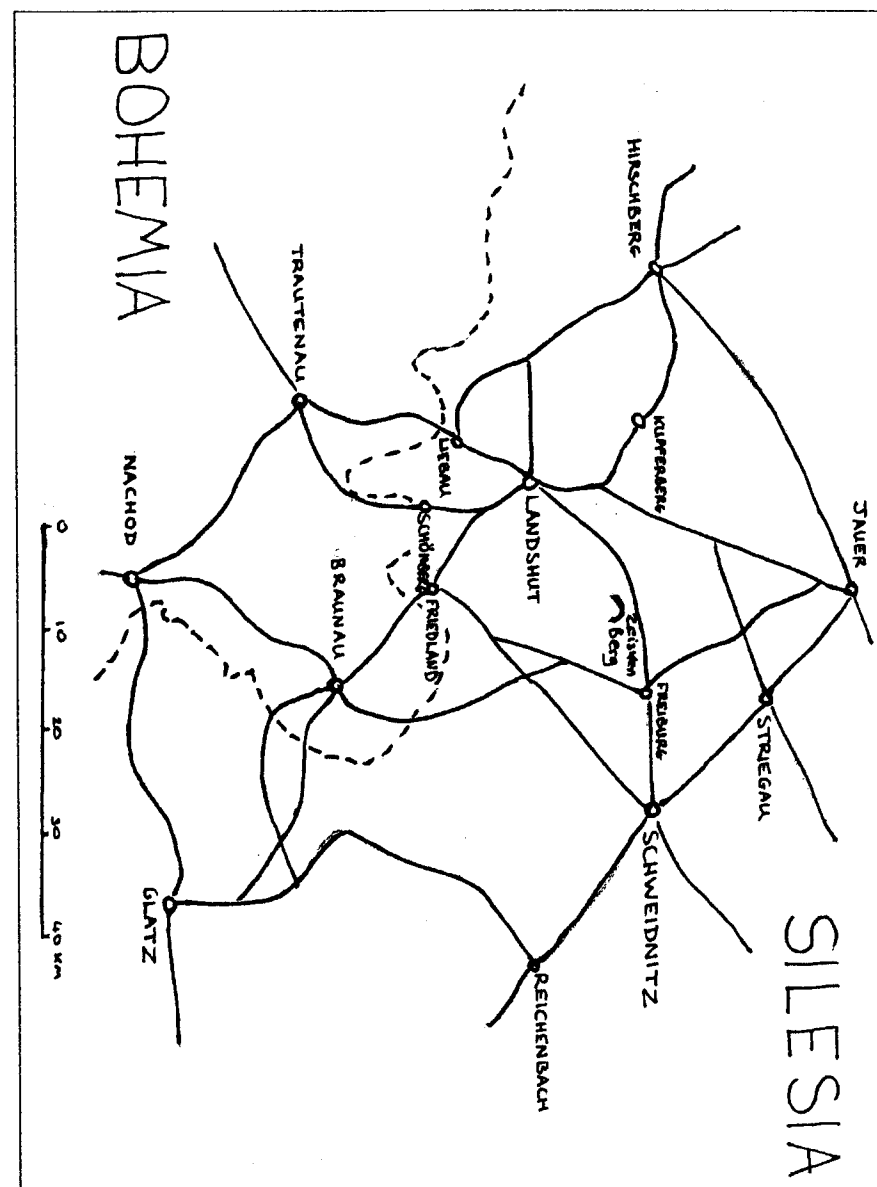
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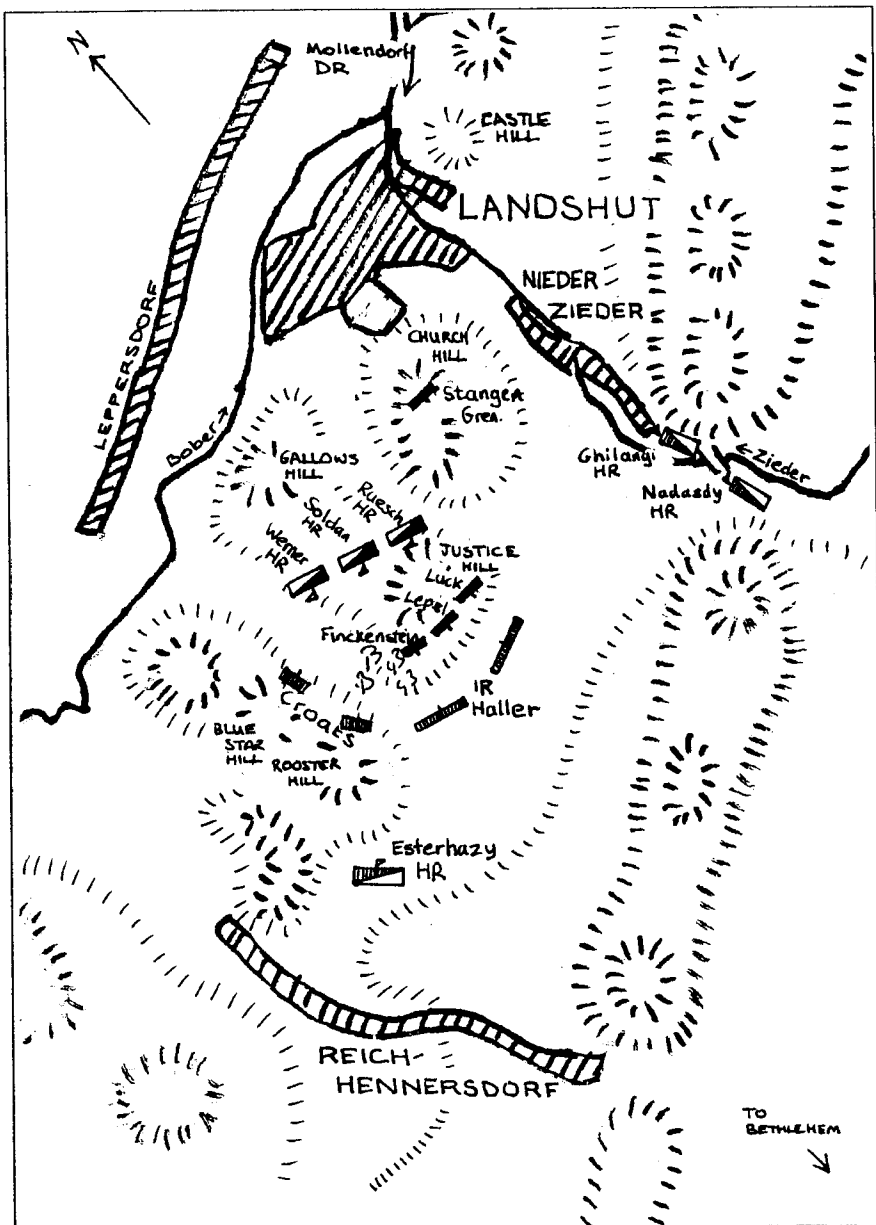
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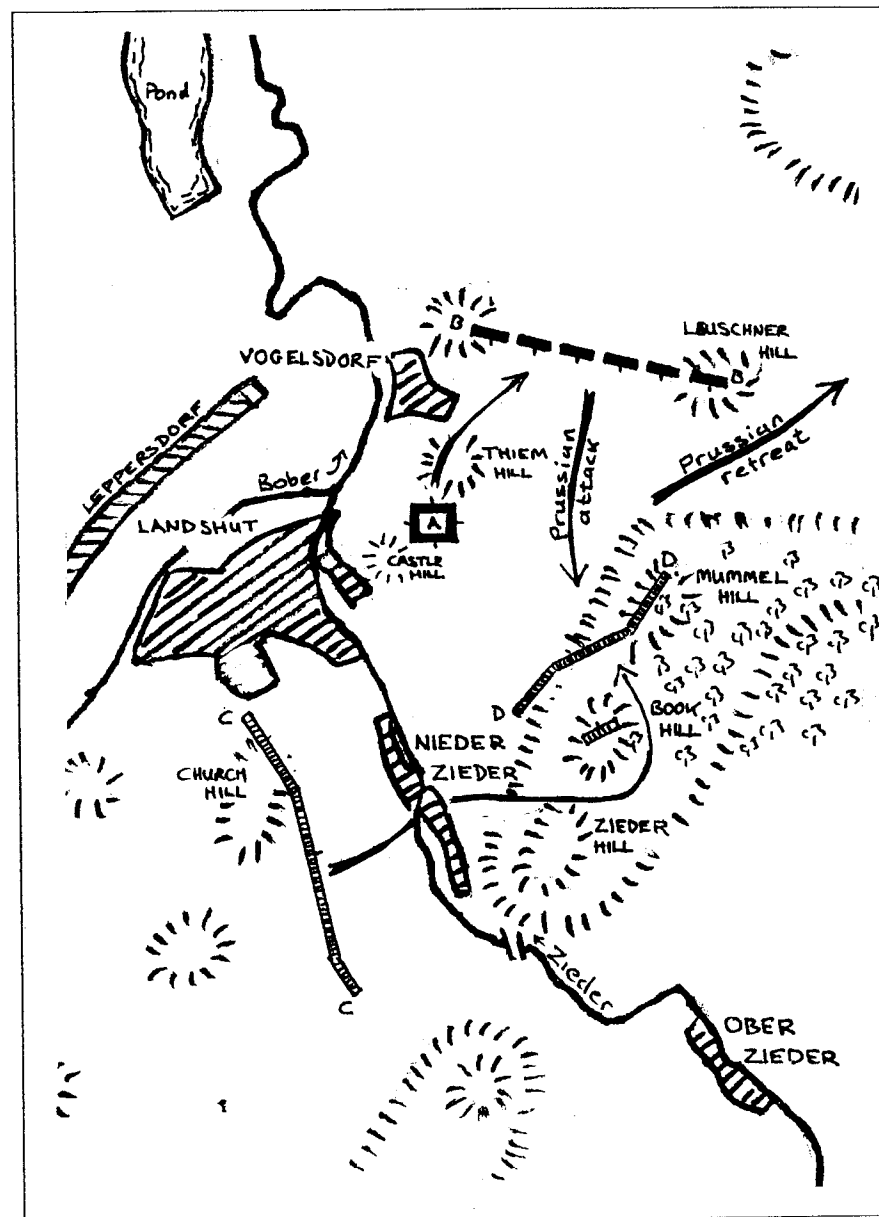
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Map Showing the Theater of Operations for the Three Battles of Landshut



First Battle of Landshut



Second Battle of Landshut

A Spy Game on the Eve of the Seven Years War

By Chris Engle Copyright 1999

PREVIOUS ARTICLES

The first article in this series gave an overview of spying during the Seven Years War and suggested that it could be gamed. The second article presented a spy scenario set in Dresden a year before the beginning of the war. The scenario included a brief outline of Matrix Game rules that can be used to run such a game. This article presents a word for word example of play so that you can see exactly how this game is played. This is as close to playing a Matrix Game as you can get without actually playing one. I think that you will know 90% of the rules of the game by the end of the article! [NOTE: The rules provided in the last game are not the complete rules of play. The complete rules are ten pages long. I will be mentioning rules not mentioned in the previous article, but when I do they will be accompanied by explanation.]

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Count Hesselbach: Lieutenant of Police

Baron Von Blucher: Provost

The Provosts: A mounted force commanded by Von Blucher

The Dragoons: A mounted force commanded by Hesselbach

Colonel Balbi: A Genoese engineer, working for Prussia, a fool

Colonel Louven: A Dutch engineer, working for Saxony

Sir Fritz Von Maxen: Officer on the general staff

Lady Von Maxen: Fritz's wife, an Austrian

Captain D'Angelo: A Venetian mercenary, heavily in debt

Captain Herental: A Walloon Mercenary

Captain Sudrovich: A Polish Mercenary

Baron Von Munchausen: The Austrian Ambassador and notorious liar

Kunagunda: A buxom Mädschen

Sister Maria: A nun

Magdalena: Daughter of a merchant

Hans: The stable boy

Zorba: A Gypsy

Karl: The postman

Minister Ludwig: A Lutheran minister

Private Dog: A Saxon soldier, not too bright

LOCATIONS

The Fortress of Dresden
The Palace
Dresden City

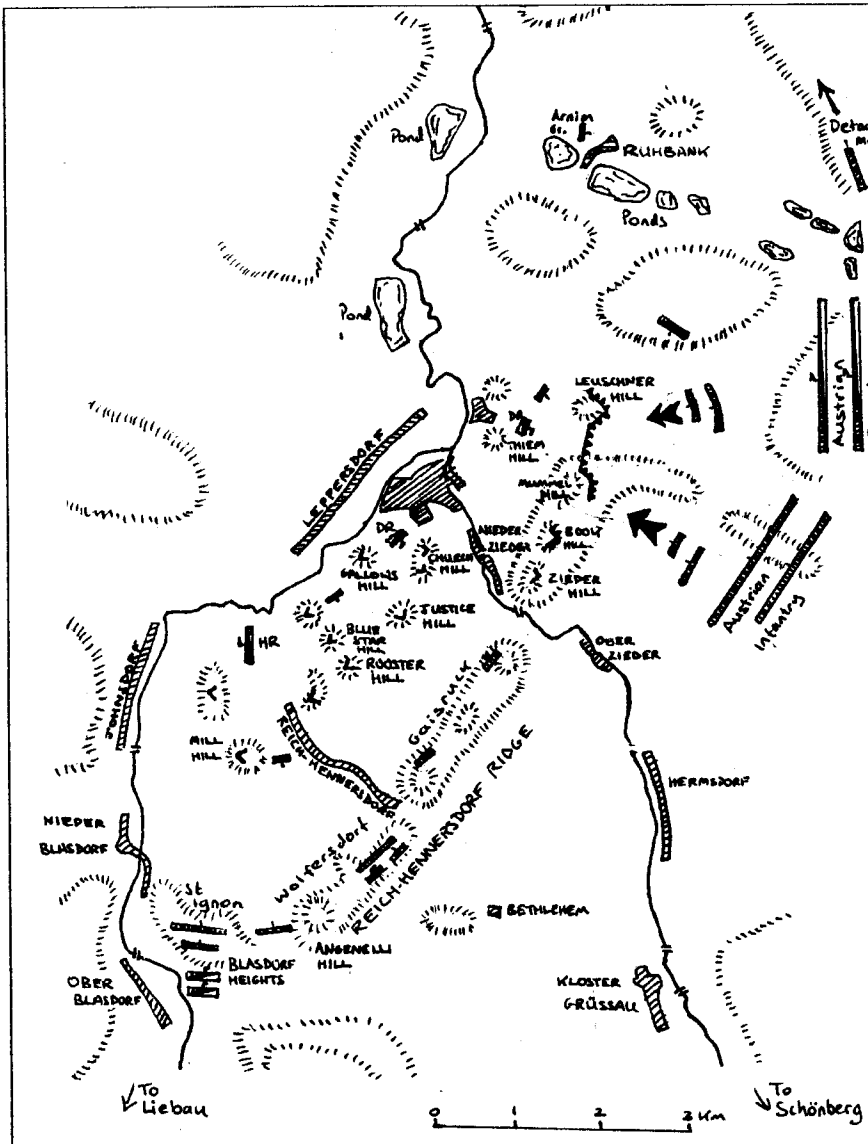
Saxony
Prussia

TREASURES

Plans of the fortress - found in the palace.
The organization table for the Saxon army - found in the palace.
The Saxon defense plans - found in Von Maxen's head.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

Five gamers gather at Chris' house. They have come over to play a Seven Years War spy game. Before they arrive, Chris copies the character, location



Third Battle of Landshut