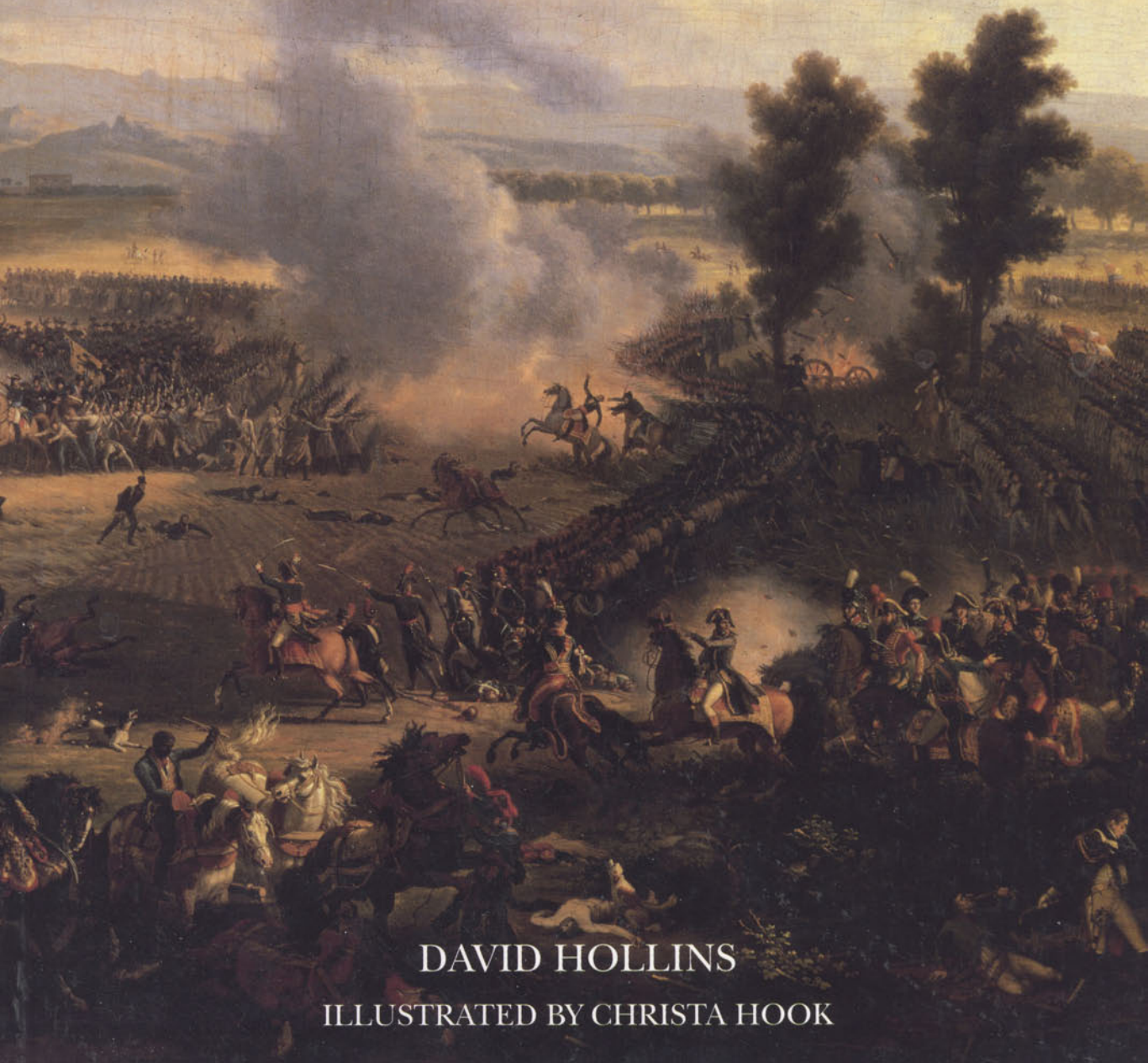


THE BATTLE *of* MARENGO 1800



DAVID HOLLINS

ILLUSTRATED BY CHRISTA HOOK

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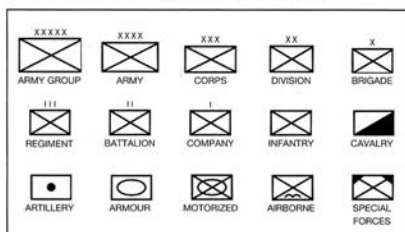
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KEY TO MILITARY SYMBOLS



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THE ROAD TO WAR

LEFT Napoleon Bonaparte as First Consul (1800-4). The Directory had been glad to see the young commander sail for Egypt in 1798. Exactly a month after his sudden return on 9 October 1799, Bonaparte had swept them away. (Giradet/ASKB)

Republican France and Imperial Austria had concluded peace at Campo Formio on 17 October 1797, ending the First Coalition War, but it was regarded as a mere pause by all the major Powers. Having secured the left bank of the Rhine, and as *la patrie* (the homeland) was no longer *en danger* (in danger of attack), the unstable Fructidor Directory continued a clandestine war for hegemony in western Europe. During spring 1798, France's conquests were incorporated into her territory (Piedmont and the Austrian Netherlands) or turned into satellites: the Roman, Ligurian (Genoa) and Cisalpine (Lombardy) Republics were established; Holland became an ally on 12 April. The First Coalition War saw the emergence of total war, devised by Lazare Carnot, but it created a huge drain on France's resources of men and materiel. Following Carnot's dictum, Revolutionary France decided to make war pay for war with huge 'contributions' demanded – and to plunder the conquests in peacetime; all the satellites financed their French occupation forces.

Prussia and northern Germany had been neutral since April 1795, allowing the French led by Charles Talleyrand to gain influence in Germany at the Rastatt peace conference at the expense of the Austrian Holy Roman Emperor, Francis II. To keep their Continental enemies busy, the Revolutionaries had also supported pro-independence rebels in Poland, but their actions in Switzerland would reignite conflict. In March 1798, the Directory engineered another supposed revolution, which changed neutral Switzerland into the Helvetian Republic. The new Helvetian government allied with France in August, giving them complete control over Switzerland's strategic position commanding the main roads linking Germany with Italy.

A firm believer in the domino theory, Austrian foreign minister, Baron Franz Thugut recognised that French expansion posed the greatest threat to Austria, but knew the Habsburg Empire could not face France alone. Relations between Great Britain and Austria had been strained since financial disagreements in 1797, so Thugut opened the door to Russian expansion in Europe by seeking the Tsar's military support. Distrusting the Austrian generals, Thugut pressed for Russia's greatest 18th-century general, Field Marshal Suvarov, to be appointed Allied commander in Italy.

Unable to assault Britain directly, France adopted an indirect approach. In May 1798, accompanied by veterans from his Italian army, General Napoleon Bonaparte led an expedition to Egypt, seizing the key staging post of Malta en route in June. In August, General Humbert sailed to support the Irish rebellion. The immediate effect of Bonaparte's capture of Malta was to renew British hostility. British foreign secretary Lord Grenville advocated fighting France both at sea and on the Continent, but British losses in the Caribbean campaigns

(greater than in the Peninsular War) and the troops tied down in Ireland and India rendered them unable to mount major land operations. Nevertheless, Britain's status as the supreme naval power was confirmed by Nelson's stunning victory at the battle of the Nile on 1 August 1798, which restored British control of the Mediterranean and trapped Bonaparte's army in Egypt. Having lost their Italian bases in 1796, the British seized Menorca in November 1798 from France's ally, Spain, which became the main base for the blockade of French Mediterranean ports. Britain was looking for bases in Italy, but her primary role was as paymaster of the Coalition.

Typical of his lack of diplomatic judgement, Napoleon's invasion of Egypt drove a long-standing friend, Turkey, into the Second Coalition. The Turks declared war in September 1798 and signed an Anglo-Russian treaty at the turn of the year. Rather prematurely, Naples, under the Austrian FML Mack, attacked the French in Rome in November 1798, but was quickly defeated; the French established the Parthenopean Republic in Naples early in 1799.

In Thugut's view, control of Switzerland was useless if the French held southern Italy, so northern Italy was to be the primary war theatre. His military adviser, FML Graf Heinrich Bellegarde, developed a plan based on a defensive posture on the Rhine and an advance into northern Italy, which would be the base for evicting French troops from both Italy and Switzerland. The Allied commander, Suvarov, was tasked with conquering Lombardy and Piedmont, although he received no precise plans.

The War of the Second Coalition

Driven by its need for money and expansion, the Directory ordered an advance on all fronts in the spring of 1799. French forces under Jourdan crossed the Rhine in March 1799, but were crushed at Stockach on 25 March by Archduke Charles, who then turned south to defeat Massena at the battle of First Zurich in June.

The interim Austrian commander in Italy, Paul Kray, halted the French at Magnano and on 9 April, was joined by Suvarov with 30,000 men, taking the Allied total in Italy to 90,000. GdK Melas now commanded the Austrian troops. By the end of the month, the Allies were back in Milan and advancing into Piedmont. These defeats forced the French commander, MacDonald, to evacuate southern Italy, reopening Naples and Leghorn (Livorno) to British ships. The Allies defeated MacDonald on the Trebbia in mid-June and Suvarov entered Turin on 20 June. Throughout the summer there were a series of battles in the flatter ground east of Alessandria as the French army was driven back down the road to Genoa and the Ligurian coast. Following the Allied victory at Novi on 15 August, the French were bottled up along this coastline. Suspicious of Austrian plans for expansion, the British and Russians secretly planned to attack Switzerland. Suvarov would cross the St. Gotthard into Switzerland, while Korsakov and the Austrian FML Hotze attacked Zurich. That same month, the British and Russians landed in Holland.

Hearing of French setbacks on the Continent, General Bonaparte decided to seize his chance and, abandoning his army in Egypt, 'vanished into thin air' on 23 August 1799. However, by the time he

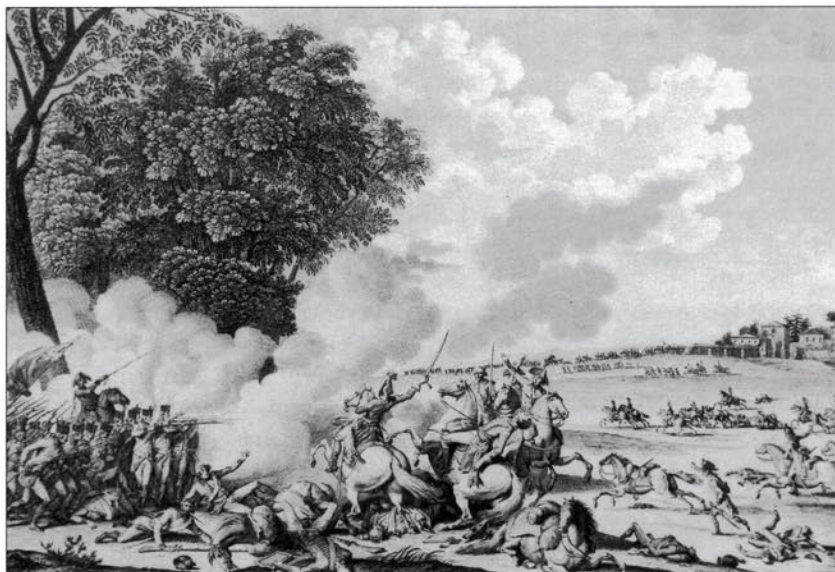


The coup d'état of 18 Brumaire (9 November 1799): despite a wobbly performance, Napoleon was installed as Consul with help from his brother Lucien and the army. Although the Consulate was confirmed by plebiscite, First Consul Bonaparte needed a glorious victory to consolidate his power. (ASKB)

RIGHT The death of General Joubert at Novi on 15 August 1799. The Allied victory under Melas and Suvarov pinned the French back behind the Apennines and removed a possible rival to Bonaparte. (I. Castle)



General Jean Victor Moreau (1763-1813), commander of the Army of the Rhine. A former lawyer, he had reached the rank of General de Division in Belgium under Dumouriez in 1794 and commanded the Rhine army in 1796, where he showed himself able but cautious. Under suspicion since Pichegru's treachery in 1796, he was later exiled by Napoleon in 1804. Joining the Tsar, he was killed at Dresden.



reached Paris after landing at Frejus on 9 October, the position had stabilised: Brune was driving the Anglo-Russian force out of Holland and Massena had defeated Korsakov at the second battle of Zurich in September, forcing Suvarov into Austria. Although Germany and Italy had largely been cleared of French troops, the Coalition rapidly fell apart over responsibility for the disaster in Switzerland. In early November 1799, Tsar Paul recalled Suvarov who marched home in January.

Nevertheless, the incompetent Directory was so unpopular that Bonaparte could move against it. Backed by a coalition of politicians, the army and its key commanders, Bonaparte seized power in a coup d'état on 18 Brumaire (9 November 1799) and rapidly secured prominence as First Consul. After seven years, France was war-weary. Bonaparte's overtures for peace in letters of 25 December 1799 were formally rejected by Great Britain, but Thugut was conciliatory. He believed that the volatile Revolutionary French government was spreading instability across Europe, but he was prepared to deal with Bonaparte, who could control the disparate factions. Thugut requested clear terms instead of vague assurances, but peace served no purpose for Bonaparte. He merely offered a repeat of Campo Formio and agreement became impossible.

THE COMMANDERS

Most Austrian commanders were distinguished veterans of the Seven Years War (1756-63) and the Turkish Wars (1789-91), who had defeated Frederick the Great and stormed the walls of Belgrade. The French leaders were generally younger and more adventurous, although many had trained in the royal army.

THE AUSTRIAN COMMANDERS

GdK Michael Friedrich Freiherr von Melas, was reluctantly recalled from retirement to assume command of the army in Italy in April 1799, aged 70. From an old Siebenburgen Saxon (German settlers in Transylvania) family of Lutheran priests, Melas learned the military arts at an early age on the wild Romanian frontier and joined the infantry aged 23. As a young Oberleutnant, he first saw action at Kolin in June 1757 and commanded a Hungarian grenadier company throughout the Seven Years War. After marrying into the Bohemian nobility in 1768, he was promoted to Oberstleutnant (Lieutenant-colonel) in the Thürheim Grenadier battalion in 1773. Five years later, he transferred to the élite 2. Karabinier cavalry regiment and fought in the War of the Bavarian Succession (1778-79), where he demonstrated his skills as a cavalry commander and was promoted to commanding colonel of the Trautmannsdorf Kurassier in 1781.

Commanding part of the siege force at Belgrade in 1789 during the Turkish War, Melas was promoted to the generalcy that same year. During the Revolutionary Wars, he commanded brigades on the Lower Rhine, recovering Mainz and Mannheim in 1795, before taking command of the Army Reserve in Italy in May 1796 and interim army command after Beaulieu's defeat. After Wurmser's arrival, Melas remained an able subordinate throughout the campaign and the defence of Mantua until February 1797. Despite illness, he took command in Italy in April 1799, his reward for crushing Joubert at Novi (15 August 1799) being the Commander Cross of the Maria Theresa Order.

The Chief of Staff fulfilled a broad remit, responsible for the planning and conduct of military operations, including intelligence gathering. Aged 52, **Generalmajor (GM) Anton Ritter von Zach**, born in Pest the son of a doctor, was the kind of technician who often held this key appointment. After training at the Vienna Ingenieurakademie, he joined the Engineers as a Kadett in July 1765, but demonstrating exceptional mathematical skills, he joined the General Staff. After a short period in the Pioneers during the War of Bavarian Succession, Zach taught fortress warfare and higher maths at the Wiener-Neustadt Military Academy.

During the Turkish Wars, he was attached to Loudon's headquarters, directing the battery that forced Belgrade's surrender in October 1789.



GdK Michael Benedikt Freiherr von Melas (1729-1806): A distinguished commander from the Seven Years War, he had transferred to the cavalry before taking brigade commands against the Turks and Revolutionary French. Reluctantly accepting command in Italy in April 1799, he won a famous victory at Novi. Despite poor health and age, he would spring back into activity at Marengo before finally retiring.



GM Anton von Zach (1747-1826) had originally trained as an Engineer and taught at the Wiener Neustadt Academy, before becoming a staff officer during the Turkish war. The target of junior officers' jokes, his enmity with his deputy, De Best, and Radetzky would isolate him and disable the Austrian staff throughout the 1800 campaign. He again served as Chief of Staff in Italy in 1805. (BA)

In early 1793, Major Zach raised a new *Pionierkorps* in Belgium, which served effectively through the early campaigns and earned him promotion. His bravery during the assault on the Mainz Lines in 1794 brought him the rank of Oberst (colonel). Zach joined Melas in Italy in 1796 on the Army Staff, and directed the mapping of Venetia in 1798. As Kray's Chief of Staff in Italy in 1799, Zach was promoted to Generalmajor in June after distinguishing himself in the initial battles, and directed the siege of Mantua during July. He rejoined Melas in August as Chief of Staff, where he gained recognition for his deep strategic insight; he received the Knight's Cross of the Maria Theresa Order for victory at Novi, and for Genola in November 1799, lifelong extra pay. Nevertheless, a combination of his technical background and his critical report to the Unterberger Commission on junior officers made him unpopular throughout the army.

Born in 1730 at Offenburg in Baden, the son of a baker, **FML Konrad Valentin, Freiherr von Kaim**, joined the French army aged 20, but transferred to the Austrian army in September 1770 as a Major in IR41. After promotion to colonel in November 1788, he was in Luxembourg at the time of the French Revolution, defeating local rebels as the Belgian revolt was crushed in May 1790. Known for his presence of mind and bravery, he led four infantry companies to take Orchies from 700 defenders on 15 July 1792. His ferocious attack on the French at Maudle on 7 September, driving them back on St Armand, which he took the next day, won him the Knight's Cross of the Maria Theresa Order. In 1793, he served at Mainz and distinguished himself in the assaults on the Weissenburg Lines on 28 July. Promoted to GM in December 1793, he moved to Germany, where he commanded the Grenadiers at Archduke Charles' crushing victory at Würzburg in September 1796. Having distinguished himself frequently, he was promoted to FML in February 1797.

Moved to Italy for the Second Coalition, Kaim commanded a division under Kray, was wounded at Verona, and won admiration for his fearlessness both there and at Magnano. He laid siege to Turin fortress, forcing it to capitulate on 20 June. His mature experience and extensive military skills made him an important adviser to Melas in all the war councils.

FML Karl Peter Ott Freiherr von Batorkez, was a typical Hungarian cavalry commander, now aged 62. After training in Vienna, he joined IR57 and was regularly mentioned in dispatches during the Seven Years War. Transferred to his native Hussars, Ott was wounded in the head at Leignitz but went on to lead the Hussars during the War of Bavarian Succession. As an Oberstleutnant, Ott distinguished himself leading his troops from the front against the Turks, often in combined attacks with infantry, which won him the Knight's Cross of the Order of Maria Theresa and ennoblement as a Freiherr in 1791. During the early Revolutionary Wars, Ott proved to be decisive and intelligent in both attack and defence. Promoted to GM, he held independent commands in Belgium, regularly demonstrating his bravery along the Lower Rhine. Ott went to Italy in 1796 as Wurmser's advance-guard commander and was besieged in Mantua. Returning to Italy in 1799, he was promoted to FML, distinguishing himself by his bravery at Cassano (26-27 April) and at the Trebbia (17-19 June) where he showed his ability and stamina. His skilled leadership of the left wing contributed greatly to victory at Novi.

One of the Austrian army's many Irish officers, **FML Andreas Graf von O'Reilly**, aged 57, was born in 1742 at Ballenlough in Ireland. He volunteered for the infantry at the end of the Seven Years War, but was quickly made a Oberleutnant. His marriage in September 1784 to a Bohemian countess brought him large estates and ennoblement as a Graf. His career prospered during the War of Bavarian Succession, as he rose to Major and then Oberstleutnant of the Modena Dragoons during the siege of Belgrade. The following year, 1790, he was promoted to Oberst and in 1794, to GM. Under Archduke Charles in 1796, he showed himself decisive and resolute, leading advance-guard troops in assaults on the French positions at Amberg. After joining Latour in southern Germany, O'Reilly launched a surprise attack near Ulm, which combined with effective direction of the artillery, scattered Desaix's French advance-guard. After the campaign, he was promoted to FML and fought with distinction at First Zurich in 1799.

Second son of the legendary Hungarian cavalry commander Andreas Hadik, 43-year-old **FML Karl Graf Hadik von Futak** (1756-1800) had joined the infantry aged 17. He became a Hauptmann with IR20 in March 1776, and distinguished himself at Gebersdorf in March 1779. Joining the cavalry as a Major in CR16 Hadik Hussars, he became an Oberst in July 1789. Although the regiment was not sent to the Balkans, he volunteered for the Turkish War, distinguishing himself at Belgrade. Returning to the Netherlands in 1790, he showed his sound judgement and decisiveness at Aldenhoven (1 March) and Gilles (2 September) 1793. On 29 September, he commanded Coburg's advance-guard and scattered the French from strong positions at Icumont with a mixed Hussar/infantry force in both open and wooded terrain. At Wattignes (15 October) he commanded the left wing flank force, vital for the protection of the main army. Some days later, he led the key assault into the French right, which forced them to withdraw. Promoted to GM and awarded the Knight's Cross of the Maria Theresa Order in January 1794, he was a brigade commander in Germany in 1795. Having distinguished himself at Wetzlar and Kircheip in 1796, he led a column which forced the French out of Amberg Forest in August. At Archduke Charles' decisive victory at Würzburg, Hadik led the main cavalry force as they carved up French infantry, earning the Commander's Cross of the Maria Theresa Order for his bravery. He was made a FML in April 1797, and went to Italy in May 1799 as a divisional commander, leading his troops intelligently and courageously. He led the righthand column at Novi.

THE FRENCH COMMANDERS

Aged 30, **First Consul Napoleon Bonaparte** (1769-1821) had prospered during the First Coalition. From a minor aristocratic family in Italian-speaking Corsica, he had trained and served as a gunner, first attracting fame at Toulon in 1793. Taking command of the battered Army of Italy at the age of 26, he swept across northern Italy to within sight of Vienna in a series of victories in 1796-7. In 1798 he was appointed to mastermind an abortive invasion of Great Britain, but instead led his troops to Egypt in May. In the minds of the French people, he had become associated with a policy of peace, but as the



Louis Alexandre Berthier (1753-1815) had served as Chief of Staff in Italy in 1796-7. Appointed Minister of War on 11 November, he was made commander of the Army of the Reserve on 2 April, although he was directed by the First Consul throughout. (A. Ferrari)

'Organiser of Victory', Lazare Carnot observed, Bonaparte was nothing without an army.

A constitutional technicality prevented Consuls commanding armies outside France, so **General Louis Alexandre Berthier** held nominal command of the Army of the Reserve. Another technician, he had joined the Royal Army in 1766 as a geographical engineer, but had volunteered to fight in the American War of Independence. On his return, Berthier was assigned to the new staff corps, studying the campaigns of Frederick the Great and testing new tactics. Siding with the Revolutionaries brought a series of staff appointments in the Armies of the Nord, Vendée and Italy, before Bonaparte selected him as Chief of Staff for the 1796 Italian campaign. His bravery was amply demonstrated at the head of the column crossing the Lodi bridge, but this quiet man was primarily an administrator and the chief instrument of Bonaparte's plans. Always calm, Berthier was firm with his subordinates and soon became indispensable to Napoleon.

Gascon **Lieutenant-general Jean Lannes** (1769-1809) joined the Revolutionary Army in 1792 and served as a sergeant-major in the Army of the Pyrenees. Highly talented, he had achieved the rank of Colonel only three years later. Lannes distinguished himself during Napoleon's first campaign and was promoted to General de Brigade in 1797, receiving divisional command on his return from Syria in 1799. He was a skilled leader of advance-guards, and this was his role in 1800. One of Napoleon's few close friends, who was always ready to offer direct advice, the plain-living Lannes was poorly educated, but had studied warfare in depth. Tough, hot-tempered and energetic, he was both witty and vain – one of Napoleon's best generals.

Lieutenant-general Claude-Victor Perrin (1764-1841), better known as Victor, was from southern Lorraine, where he joined the Volunteers of 1792, rising to General de Brigade in the following year. After distinguished service in Italy, Bonaparte made him a General de Division in 1797. Of moderate intelligence, with an audacious nature and fiery temper, Victor was an expert tactician and organiser.

General André Massena (1758-1817) had joined the Royal Army in 1775 after a few years at sea. Of Italian extraction, he was reputedly a smuggler along the Ligurian coast, and rejoined the army in 1791, reaching the rank of General de Division within two years. Known for his strength of character and indefatigable cunning, this brave, proud and ambitious soldier had excelled during the Italian campaign of 1796-7. Uninterested in politics, preferring women and money, he demonstrated his capabilities in independent command at Rome in 1798 and in the two battles at Zurich in 1799, before sharing his men's hardships at the siege of Genoa.

From minor nobility in Auvergne, the 31-year-old **Lieutenant-general Louis Desaix** (1768-1800) was known for his intelligence and education, but lived for war and glory, lacking the social graces despite his aristocratic background. Aside from his bravery, he was scrupulous over money, humane, conscientious and shy. His simple lifestyle was reflected in the plain simple blue coat, which he usually wore and slept in. Another of Bonaparte's few real friends, Desaix had no interest in politics: he had joined the Royal Army in 1783, but continued to serve the Revolution first on the staff and then as a General of the Germany



General de Division Andre Massena (1758-1817). His cunning and determined defence of Genoa followed an able performance as commander of the French forces in Switzerland in 1798-9, where he defeated the Allies at Second Zurich on 26 September 1799. (A. Ferrari)

Army until 1797, leading Moreau's advance formations. As a senior commander, he had developed an improved intelligence gathering system with his ADC, Savary. He first met Bonaparte in Italy after the First Coalition and the two men quickly struck up a close friendship. Desaix joined the Egyptian expedition, but was delayed in his return by Lord Keith at Leghorn during the confusion over the El Arish Armistice of 24 January 1800.

French troops in camp near Munich in 1800. The troops made good use of their old uniforms for off-duty wear. Under Moreau, this French army concluded the war at Hohenlinden in December. (Coburg Kunstsammlungen)



THE ARMIES

THE AUSTRIAN ARMY

Austria's army had engaged in a decade of war from 1788, first against the Turks and then against Republican France. When peace was concluded, the Unterberger Commission began to overhaul the army forged in the 1769 reforms.

Equipment and uniforms were improved and updated. Although a simpler uniform, with a leather helmet and smaller calibre muskets, was introduced, little had reached the field armies by 1800. Efforts were made to standardise equipment, but many units used a variety of musket and sabre patterns.

Army units were reorganised. The Hungarian regiments were reduced from four to three battalions, creating four new regiments, IRs 48 and 60-62. The western Grenz regiments fielded full strength battalions, but the central and eastern regiments had to assemble composite units. Employed more in the light function, these regiments had been removed from the line and renumbered as National Grenz Regiments 1-17. The Freikorps had largely been regularised into 17 Light Infantry Battalions with three of Jäger.

The cavalry, which continued to fight in three ranks, had also been reorganised. The Dragoons and Chevaulegers had merged into 15 Light Dragoon regiments, with a uniform of green jackets and helmets, and equipped with the 1798 Light Dragoon sabre and short Hussar carbine.



Bussy Jäger zu Pferd (Kobell). The Austrians had to resort to small Polish ponies (14.2-15.1 hands) from Galicia to mount the medium cavalry (Light Dragoons and Mounted Jäger). They would be at a considerable disadvantage against the French heavy cavalry. (BA)

One, 9. Lichtenstein, had been raised from a division of staff dragoons and new recruits. Two Hussar regiments were created from existing units and two more from irregular units to expand them to 12 regiments. The artillery remained unchanged: the battalions were supported by *Linien Geschütz* (light guns), usually four 3-pdr. and one 6-pdr. gun per regiment in intervals between battalions. Although these provided close-range fire support, 30 men were required from each battalion to service the guns as *Handlager* (labourers). In reserve were the light guns of the Cavalry Artillery batteries (four 6-pdr. and two 7-pdr. howitzers) and the Reserve batteries (6- and 12-pdrs. with some 7-pdr. howitzers).

Graf Bellegarde's 1799 proposal for 15 independent Legions had been rejected, so the regiments were formed up in brigades and divisions, which were assigned on an ad hoc basis to each army. In battle, the units fought in two main *Treffen* (battle lines): infantry in the centre, cavalry on the wings. At the rear in the Reserve were cavalry brigades and heavier artillery, although the veteran Grenadiers were used both in reserve and to reinforce the main battle line as required. The advance/rearguards were composed of light troops backed by Cavalry Artillery batteries and cavalry, sometimes augmented with line infantry.

Austrian success in 1799 was partly attributable to better training, but the army continued to rely on linear closed-up firepower and tactics prescribed in the 1769 regulations. The infantry fired in three ranks by Zug, half-company, company, division or battalion, with the front rank kneeling. Attacks were usually in a deployed line, advancing with fire by sub-units. Instructions issued by Chief of Staff General Zach in 1800 opposed the use of swarms of skirmishers, especially in attack, relying on a determined advance by the main body. Defence against cavalry was in three-rank-deep squares or by closing up columns. Occasionally, cavalry were fended off by bayonet charges in line.

The supporting artillery went forward to lay down fire and fell back on the line as the opposing troops closed. These guns were manhandled, although a 7-metre rope was used for longer distances. The mobile artillery provided by the Cavalry Artillery batteries was drawn by six-horse teams, with the crew mostly riding on the trail 'sausage seat', which allowed them to bring the gun into action more quickly.

The 1799 campaign had exhausted the Austrian army in Italy, casualties and disease reducing some regiments to 300 men. The largest component of the army was in Piedmont and the neighbouring Po valley; only a few units were moved to winter quarters in better-supplied areas. Long distances from the home bases, from which the regiments drew reinforcements, meant that troop transports had to endure miserable conditions, so only about 15 per cent reached the field army. The army of March 1800 was scarcely larger than at the conclusion of the 1799 campaign.



THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONARY ARMY

The pause in the wars had given the French some breathing space to establish a well-organised fighting force. At its core was a veteran army hardened by six years of campaigning, with many royalist officers still in



Under the 1798 reforms, Austrian infantry were supposed to be in the new simpler uniforms with helmets (Tranquillo Mollo). Little had been introduced, especially in Italy, as the contemporary illustration (left) shows.

its ranks. It was this professional army, fighting for itself and loot, which made Bonaparte First Consul.

Under Jourdan's 1798 Conscription Law, 200,000 men were called up over 1798-9, but the results were disappointing. Despite the introduction of a new standard uniform in 1798, with a tricorne hat and continued use of the Charleville musket, the Directory's inability to feed and clothe its troops worsened during 1798; arrears of pay only accelerated desertions. The government realised that most of the army would have to be supported on foreign ground and paid from the financial spoils of war.

The Revolutionary armies had been assembled from semi-independent divisions made up of brigades comprising a few demi-brigades (the Revolutionary term for a regiment). These divisions had been all-arms formations, but in 1800, both Bonaparte and Moreau began to group them into corps with their own staffs. Bonaparte also stripped out the heavier cavalry to form his cavalry reserve, leaving divisions of infantry and artillery supported by light cavalry units.

In 1799 the 36,000 French troops in Italy were in a desperate state similar to that at the end of 1795. Supplies of all sorts were inadequate, discipline was breaking down, desertion was increasing, and on a few occasions, whole formations marched to the rear in search of food. The survivors would be of limited combat value. In establishing the Army of the Reserve in France, Bonaparte's first move was to overhaul the supply system to provide the troops with regular food and decent uniforms. Lacking the large superiority in infantry and artillery enjoyed in many Republican campaigns, the core of Bonaparte's reserve was 30,000 men, mostly from Holland, who had been used under Brune to crush the rebellion in the Vendée. Additional veteran troops came from the remains of the former Army of England. Filled out with the best conscripts, by early May, 60,000 quality troops were based around Geneva, having marched through Dijon to collect these improved supplies.

Additional veteran troops under Moncey would join them from Germany, where Moreau had been given command of the 120,000-strong Army of the Rhine, which combined the former Armies of Germany and Switzerland with its right wing anchored on Lake Constance. The weakest demi-brigades driven from Italy and some cavalry regiments, were moved back around Dijon, forming the cadres for the 30,000-strong force, organised there as a diversion, which drew in more conscripts and returning convalescents. An extra division was formed from the Army of the Orient depots and a Legion of Italian Republicans. This real reserve force of 30,000 troops continued to be trained at Dijon, but would play little part in the main actions.

Bonaparte's veteran troops, raised from the Pyrenees and Vendée, gave his army a particular edge in mobility in the broken Italian landscape, especially in the Alps and the Apennines. The French armies used nine days' ration of biscuit instead of Austrian bread (two-three days), so the wagon trains could carry three times as much biscuit, allowing the French greater mobility and reducing the need for them to halt to prepare food. Operating outside France, the Revolutionary troops continued to have no qualms about appropriating supplies from local populations.

The French army had fought well in 1799 with a particular advantage in command and control. Although a new drill regulation had been



Gen. de Division Louis Desaix (1768-1800). Born into a minor aristocratic family, Desaix had come to prominence as deputy army commander on the Rhine in 1796-7. Left in Egypt, he made his way back and after a short imprisonment by Vice-Admiral Keith, he joined Bonaparte three days before he would die at Marengo, aged 31. (A. Ferrari)

introduced in 1791, it only differed from the 1776 regulation above company level. The veterans were proficient and the new conscripts were distributed across the army to learn their trade on the march. The new military doctrine emphasised the offensive, mobility and the bayonet in preference to linear firepower. The infantry formed in three ranks, but usually only used the front two for firing, with the front rank kneeling. The third rank loaded new guns, which could be rapidly used in the murderous *feu de deux rangs* (rapid rolling fire). To counteract the Austrian advantage in cavalry numbers, the mounted arm formed in two ranks for engagements, but it would not face Austria's best horsemen in Italy. The French horse artillery was more mobile on the field, but required more time to get into action.



French muskets in the Marengo museum. (L. Polastri)

OPPOSING PLANS

THE COALITION PLANS

The Coalition of 1800 was reduced to Great Britain, Austria, Naples and some smaller German states. In December 1799 Vienna proposed attacking Switzerland via Basle and entering France to force the French back from Lake Constance, while the army in Italy moved into southern France to draw more troops south. Thugut continued to negotiate with Talleyrand, but recognised that Bonaparte was gearing up for war. 'All the newspapers from Paris', he wrote on 10 January 1800, 'increasingly confirm that these French rascals are not wasting a moment in continuing their preparations to surprise us before we are ready.'

As the century dawned, Austrian plans changed: Kray, the commander in Germany, maintained that he lacked the men to attack Switzerland while guarding the Rhine, so he would remain on the defensive. With 85,000 men in Italy, Melas would take advantage of the fact that the Apennine Mountains were clear of snow six weeks before the Alps, to capture Genoa and pursue the French back to the Var, which marked the border. Aside from the garrisons, the remaining troops in Piedmont would then move against Switzerland to attack Moreau. This combination would draw enough French troops away from the Rhine to allow Kray to advance, at which stage France would probably come to terms, with Austria in control of northern Italy and southern Germany.

The British priority was to evict the French from Malta and Egypt, for which 10,000 troops were assembled in Menorca. In January, Vice-Admiral Lord Keith took command in the Mediterranean, intending first to tighten the siege of Malta. Moving his base to Leghorn, Keith would then continue the seaward blockade of Genoa, but London refused to allow the use of the troops based in Menorca.

FRENCH PLANS

Switzerland was the key to the French plan, as it provided them with a central position and control of the transalpine routes between Italy and Germany, vital for the despatch of reinforcements and matériel. Unable to order yet, Napoleon suggested to Moreau that his Army of the Rhine, positioned on the left bank from central Germany to eastern Switzerland, should concentrate to the right and move on Kray's communications, forcing him away from the transalpine routes. Believing that Switzerland could not support such a large force, Moreau spread his troops to attack across a broad front. Bonaparte always planned to repeat his 1796 victories in Italy and advance over the St. Gotthard and Simplon Passes to place French troops deep in the rear of the Austrian position. However, a combination of Moreau's dispositions



Gen. de Division Nicholas Soult (1769-1851) ably commanded Massena's right wing at Genoa until captured at Monte Cretio on 13 May during the last attempted breakout. Badly wounded, he was in Alessandria during the battle of Marengo. (A. Ferrari)

and fears of an Austrian attack over Mt. Cenis towards the depots at Chambery obliged Bonaparte to cross the more difficult St. Bernard Passes to reach Milan.

Napoleon and Moreau agreed the final plan on 22 March: Moreau would cross the Rhine in mid-April, aiming for the Austrian depots around Ulm. Once there, he would dispatch two divisions over the St Gotthard Pass. Meanwhile, the reserve would close up between Geneva and Martigny. From there, Napoleon planned to take Milan with its valuable depots, which would also place his army in a central position between FML Vukassovich, the Austrian commander in Lombardy, and the rest of Melas' army. Then he would cross the River Po to cut the primary Austrian line of communication from Turin to Mantua, running along the south bank of the Po, by positioning his army at Stradella, a narrow chokepoint on the main road where the steep Apennines came closest to the marshy Po. 'This position appears to have been created especially for the French army', Napoleon wrote. 'The enemy cavalry can do nothing against it as it is enclosed, studded with villages which were compact and strongly-built and the very great superiority of their artillery is less here than anywhere else.' Bonaparte hoped that Melas would be forced to fight his way out, while Massena pinned a substantial number of Austrian troops at Genoa and in the Apennines.

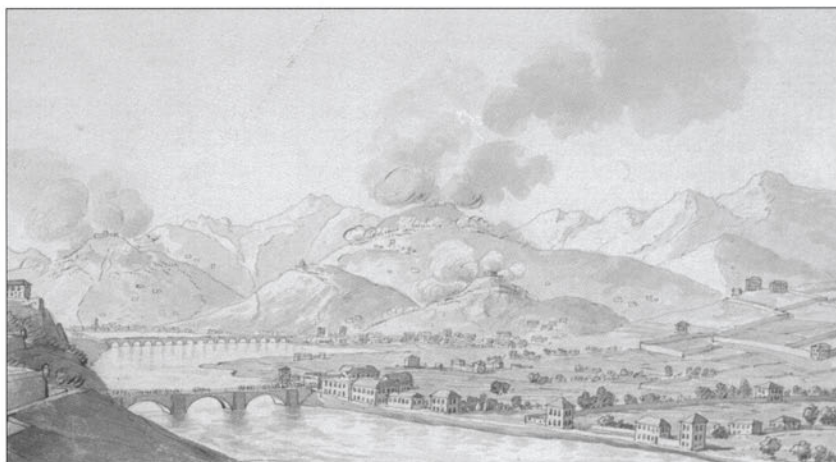
The key to this stage was the speed with which Melas could extract his troops from the Riviera, which depended on Genoa holding out. Massena had arrived to take command of the 35,000-strong Army of Italy in February 1800. Based in Genoa with his lines running west along the coast to the Var, he set about reorganising both the army and its supplies. With a promise to come to his aid late in May, Napoleon urged Massena to hold out until 4 June.

OPENING MOVES

Within three weeks of Bonaparte's decree establishing the reserve on 7 January 1800, Austrian scouts in the Alps established that French forces, while based at Dijon, were assembling in the Lower Valais canton (south-west Switzerland). Meanwhile GM Zach had drawn up an operational plan for a surprise attack into the Riviera, fixed for 25 February, but snowy weather closed in and the expedition was cancelled.

The Austrian offensive got underway in early April as the passes cleared of snow. Knowing that they had six weeks before Bonaparte could advance, Melas led 50,000 men into the Riviera on 6 April. Facing them were Suchet at Finale with the French left (12,000 men) anchored on the Col di Tenda; the centre under Soult (9,620 men) between Cadibona and Bocchetta; with the reserve and Miollis under Massena (5,900 men) at Genoa, as well as garrisons, support troops and sick.

Based around Acqui, Melas's army swept through Montenotte for the coast at Savona, splitting the French army in two and cutting off Massena's right in Genoa. The main column under FML Palffy attacked Altare on 6 April with GM Latterman's grenadiers on the high ground above and GM St Julien taking Montenotte. Palffy then directed IR51 Splenyi to storm the French earthworks on Monte Ajuto under heavy artillery fire, forcing Soult to withdraw as GM Bussy's brigade chased his troops into Savona. Leaving a small garrison in the citadel, Soult escaped north up the coast under cover of darkness. FML Elsnitz marched on Mallare, as GM Ulm made diversionary moves against Mount Settepanni. From there, Elsnitz would attack San Giacomo north of Finale to screen against Suchet, while Melas then led a general advance to the main coastal road with the right anchored on Mount Settepanni.



On 30 April, Ott tried to force the French external defences along the two rivers, Bisagno and Polcevera. Massena used his central position to drive them off, including here at the Bisagno, but the Austrians took Monte Fascio. (Bagetti/GAM)



**GDK MELAS AND HIS CHIEF OF
STAFF GM ZACH MEET THE SPY**

Assessing the flow of intelligence from patrols and scouts was a vital part of the Austrian Chief of Staff's role, although Bonaparte dealt with much of it personally. Spies also carried messages across the Italian countryside and one particular local spy would play a crucial part in the campaign.

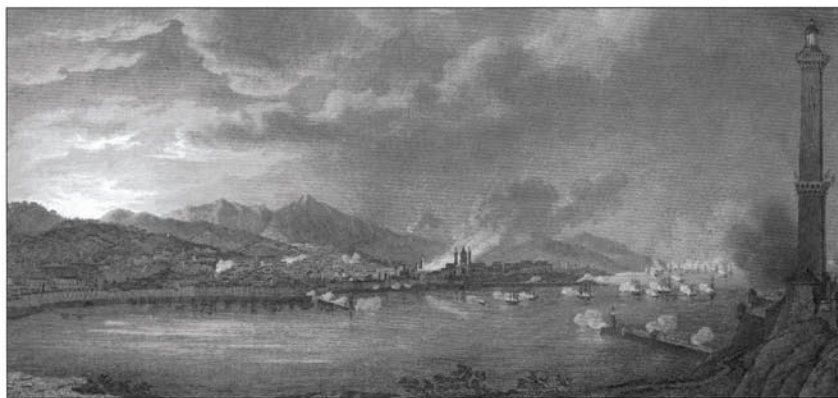
The intention was to force Massena to evacuate Genoa, but the Austrians did not directly assault the city. The French were expected to counterattack towards Montenotte, so Ott's task was to lead a diversion against Genoa to trap French troops in the city. Hohenzollern would march down the main road through Novi, while Ott swept in from further east to the Sturka, to give the impression that a major assault was being mounted on 7 April. As the attack began on 6 April, a British frigate bombarded Genoa, and Ott drove Petitot from Monte Fascio back to the Bisagno River.

The main Austrian army advanced as planned. On 7 April, FML Elsnitz formed up between Vado and San Giacomo to march towards the coast south of Vado, while the main column advanced towards Arbizola on the coast to anchor its right on the sea and its left on Montenotte. As Soult withdrew his left flank up the coast, Elsnitz defeated Suchet at the Col di Melogno and forced him out of Finale. Massena's centre had been pierced and his communications with Suchet snapped. Massena knew that to rejoin his left wing, he had to defeat the main Austrian column, in conjunction with Suchet. However, the immediate Austrian threat was to his right, so first he had to drive off Ott's column and then rapidly conduct his main attack to the south-west. At dawn on 7 April Massena ordered the brigades under Darnaud and Miollis to counterattack at Monte Fascio, which was held by General Gottesheim, driving Gottesheim, and consequently Ott's entire force, back.

The key Bocchetta Pass which carried the Genoa-Novi road was occupied by three French battalions with six guns, and blocked Ott's line of communication. A bright moonlit night assisted Hohenzollern's reconnaissance and at dawn on 9 April, two battalions from IRs 34 and 19 stormed over several lines of defensive earthworks and captured the pass after three hours' fighting. Three Austrian battalions guarding the Bisagno valley thwarted Soult's belated attempt to help Gazan's men. The Austrian lines were now closed to the north and east round Genoa. While Massena defended the city with Miolis, Soult directed operations outside the city with the divisions under Gazan and Gardanne. Massena wanted to relieve Savona and restore communications with Suchet, if only to disrupt the Austrian advance. On 9 April Massena ordered Soult to advance on Sassello with Gazan, and to Varaggio with Gardanne (accompanied by Massena). Suchet was to attack San Giacomo to get into Melas' rear and join Soult at Montenotte.



Chef d'escadron Franchesi-Delonne, Soult's ADC. Chased by a British frigate as he rowed out of Genoa on 27 April, reaching Paris on 5 May. Bonaparte despatched him on 14 May with the assurance that he would relieve the blockade of Genoa at the end of May. Forced to swim the last mile as he rowed back, Franchesi made it to Massena with the heartening, but false, promise on 27 May. (SAGEP Genoa)



As the Austrians placed Genoa under blockade by land, Royal Navy vessels pounded the city from the sea and largely prevented supply vessels getting through. (Bagetti/A.Ferrari)

With no sign of relief, Massena surrendered Genoa to Ott and Keith after a six-week siege. During the negotiations, French artillery opened fire when they mistook an Austrian band playing 'Turkish Music' for cannon fire. (Myrbach/ P. Haythornthwaite)



At the same time, Melas was heading for Genoa. As Soult tackled GM St Julien at Sassello on 10 April, GM Latterman moved up the coast to capture Varaggio, threatening Gardanne's rear as he marched inland to join Soult. The main Austrian column, strengthened with GM F. Bellegarde's column, moved inland: St Julien formed the left flank; the centre comprised the brigades under Bellegarde and Brentano, and the right was commanded by Palffy. From this column, Latterman was ordered to climb down to the coast road with four Grenadier battalions, as Palffy marched with Bussy's and Sticker's brigades along a coastal track, intent on joining forces at Varaggio. Palffy's move was intended to outflank the French through Monte Croce, which had been hastily occupied by Massena. The Austrian columns had climbed half-way up the mountain when the French descended against them, forcing them to withdraw with a combination of murderous fire and rolling rocks. A second attempt was equally fruitless. Melas ordered GM Sticker, who had reached the heights of Stella at the same time, to throw his brigade into the French rear, as he assembled attack columns, with IR51 Splenyi and the Grenadiers in the centre for a third attack on the mountain. These tough troops advanced through the devastating fire and rain of boulders, but would not be halted, forcing the French to abandon the mountain and withdraw. Joined by Latterman and the rest of Bussy's force, the pursuit became general as night fell. Massena hoped to join Soult under cover of darkness, but his troops, who were looting Varaggio, were now in disorder.

Soult drove St Julien back towards L'Ermetta on 11 April, and after a ferocious action, the Austrians fell back. Bellegarde's and Brentano's brigades were moved from Melas' centre to support him. However, without the reinforcements expected from Genoa, and unaware of Soult's advance, Massena abandoned his attack and withdrew towards Voltri chased by Melas' right. Reinforcements finally arrived on the 12th

6 APRIL-28 MAY: THE AUSTRIAN ADVANCE TO THE GENOESE COAST



and Massena could reassemble Gardanne's force, making a total of 4,000 men, while Soult carried Mount Fajale. Melas now withdrew Latterman on his right to Albissola and on the 14th, concentrated five brigades around Montenotte. They attacked Soult at Pontenivrea the next day as Massena moved forward again against Latterman. As the whole Austrian line advanced, Bellegarde nearly caught Soult in the rear, and by 17 April, all the French troops were back at Voltri.

Early on 18 April Melas climbed Monte Fajale himself to get an overview of the French positions. He then led Bussy's brigade, spearheading a co-ordinated assault on Voltri, but the last of Soult's troops quickly withdrew on Sestri and the entire French force fell back into Genoa. Despite losses of 8,310 between 6 and 19 April, Melas had concentrated his forces in the mountains and cut off Genoa from the supporting French forces. On 21 April St Julien laid siege to Savona castle.

FML Kaim, the Austrian commander in Piedmont, with the brigades under Nimbsch, Knesvich, La Marseille and de Briez took Mt. Cenis Pass on 8 April, capturing 300 French infantry and 16 guns. GM Gorupp remained at Cuneo with five battalions and 16 squadrons forming the western end of Kaim's army. Most of the cavalry under Hadik – the brigades under Pilatti and Festenberg – had stayed in Piedmont. FML Vukassovich held Lombardy with the brigades of Laudon and Dedovich

Map Key

16 April: Melas leads the main attack directed on Savona to split the French Army of Italy by attacking Soult's left. St. Julien clears Montenotte, Bussy chases Soult to Savona and places it under siege.

2 Elsnitz and Morzin attack Suchet around Finale to drive him west. Ulm attacks Mt. Settepani, defeating Suchet at Col di Melogno.

3 Hohenzollern leaves Döllér to besiege Gavi fortress. 9 April: Rousseau takes Bocchetta Pass.

4 Ott mounts a pinning attack on Genoa, taking Monte Fascio. 7 April: Massena retakes Monte Fascio from Gottesheim.

5 10 April: Soult advances on Sassello with Gazan, and Varaggio with Gardanne. Suchet attacks San Giacomo in support. Melas counters attacking Varaggio to outflank Soult's left. 11 June: Soult pushes St. Julien back on L'Ermetta and takes Monte Fajale.

6 10 April: Melas defeats Massena at Monte Credo. 11 April: Two brigades support St. Julien; Massena withdraws east. 14 April: Melas concentrates five brigades at Montenotte.

7 17 April: Massena driven back on Voltri. 19 April: Massena under siege in Genoa. 24 April: Keith's squadron begins regular bombardment supported by L'Espine's Austrian flotilla.

8 27 April: Melas marches west with Latterman to join Elsnitz to pursue Suchet back to France.

9 Elsnitz's main force marches down the coast road supported by Royal Navy ships. 1 May: Elsnitz takes Loano. Ulm advances further inland. 7 May: Elsnitz takes Oneglia.

10 6 May: Gorupp/Knesvich take the Col di Tenda from Lesuire.

11 11 May: Suchet behind the Var. 13 May: Melas sends Knesvich and Auersperg back to Cuneo. First Austrian assault on the bridgehead. 22 & 26 May: Supported by transhipped heavy guns, Elsnitz launches further attacks. 19, 24 & 27 May: Reinforced to 13,500 by St. Hilaire from Marseilles, Suchet counterattacks.

(7,647 men). GM Döllér joined him from the siege of Gavi with most of his cavalry (1,000 troops).

The siege of Genoa

The ancient port of Genoa was shaped like a crescent, arching round a natural harbour. Bounded by the mountain river valleys of Polcevera and Besagno, to the north of the city were the steep slopes to the Apennine ridges. The city had a double circuit of fortifications 12.25km long, shaped like a triangle whose two longer sides ran in from the coast to form a sharp apex, on which stood the Sperone bastion. To the north were two mountains, Due Fratelli, topped by the Diamante Fort which commanded the main road from Novi. Forts were built on all the high points, guarded in front by streams, and from where the guns swept the approaches.

After 12 days of fighting costing 7,420 losses, encumbered with sick and wounded, Massena was bottled up in Genoa with 9,600 troops. He formed two divisions: one under Miolis (4,500 troops) occupied the eastern side from Due Fratelli to the sea; the second under Gazan (3,500 men) occupied the western side. A 1,500-strong reserve remained in the city.

With 24,000 troops, Ott took command of the Austrian troops around the city. The main danger was a French break-out to the west, so on his right wing were GMs Schellenberg with 15 battalions and three squadrons (6,600 troops) and Vogelsang with 13 battalions (7,800). In the centre, from Turazzo to Ponte Decimo, stood Hohenzollern's Division (5,270 men in 11 battalions), and General Assaretto's peasant militia round to Monte Fascio, with his other brigade under Gottesheim (4,450 men in eight battalions and ten Jäger companies) forming the left flank to the sea. Ott found it difficult to deploy his guns effectively. Lacking both heavy guns (even with the Royal Navy's help) and sufficient numbers, he was limited to blockading the city to starve the French out. Inside Genoa provisions were gradually consumed: on 20 April bread was reduced to a rye-oats mixture and officers' horses were slaughtered for their flesh, each soldier receiving a quarter-pound (113g) of each as rations, although there was plenty of wine. Rats soon began to fetch a high price.

A Royal Navy flotilla approached Genoa early on 24 April and bombarded the city. It was followed by the first Allied demand for surrender, which prompted Massena to respond that 'he would rather be buried under the ruins of Genoa than surrender the city'. Crossing the Polcevera, Ott seized Rivarolo on 27 April, while Miollis tried unsuccessfully to break out east against Gottesheim. Three days later, Due Fratelli, guarding the main road, and Fort Diamante, near Monte Credo, were stormed, but they were soon retaken by the French. Unsuccessful Austrian attempts were also made to storm Fort Sperone and the Savanarola gate.

Melas' advance to the Var

With Latterman's brigade, Melas moved off on 27 April to support FML Elsnitz in his attempt to drive Suchet west to the Var. Massena was heartened by Melas' departure, which he interpreted as a sign that Bonaparte was advancing.

French troops dragged guns on sledges over the Great St Bernard and three other passes (Bagetti/A. Ferrari). Some soldiers risked sliding down the steeper southern slopes on gun carriages and limbers. With scouts in the passes and a spying operation, the Austrian command were aware of the French build-up and probable lines of attack in the early months of 1800.



Suchet had now withdrawn to Borghetto, south of Loano, determined to hold the coastal road. Melas was marching down the same road with his troops spread inland to Settepani. On 1 May, he took Loano and on the next day, advanced to Borghetto supported by a coastal bombardment from the Royal Navy.

Kaim sent Gorupp and Knesvich to attack Suchet's left. In a three-column attack on 6 May, Knesvich evicted Lesuire's detachment from the Col di Tenda, and the next day, Elsnitz reached Oneglia, forcing Suchet to abandon the Riviera completely. Communication was established with Gorupp and Knesvich on 10 May, but there was little further activity as Suchet withdrew his 8,000 exhausted troops behind the Var on 11 May: after marching continuously for ten days across the high mountains, many of Elsnitz's men lacked shoes and the loss of draught animals had made supplies intermittent. Reports were also reaching Melas of French preparations for an attack into Piedmont, possibly over Mt. Cenis. As the Roja was prepared for defence, Melas decided to leave the brigades under Weidenfeld, Ulm and F. Bellegarde there, and sent Knesvich and Auersperg (with 12 battalions) back to Cuneo on the 13th. To cover the move, Elsnitz hurled Latterman's brigade at the Bausone bridgehead on the Var, but they were repulsed.

THE SIEGE OF GENOA APRIL 1800

AUSTRIAN ARMY: 2 APRIL 1800

(Pi: Piedmontese battalions)

Commander-in-chief: GdK Melas

FML Ott: on the Sturka

General Fenzel
3rd Am Ende Light Infantry Bn. (403)
4th Bach Light Infantry Bn. (344)
4th Bn. Banat District Grenzer (209)
6th Bn. Banat District Grenzer (575)
8. Nauendorff Hussars (4 sqdns., 551)

GM Eder

IR17 Hohenlohe (2 bns., 1,666)
IR28 Fröhlich (3 bns., 1,806)

GM Stojanich

IR14 Klebek (3 bns., 1,274)
3rd Ogulin Grenz Regt. (2 bns., 1,611)
Mariassy Jäger (6 coys., 827)

GM Gottesheim

IR59 Jordis (3 bns., 1,440)
7th Bn. Warasdin District Grenzer (575)
1st Bn. 11th (2nd Banal) Grenz Regt. (819)
D'Aspre Jäger (10 coys., 612)

Main column: FML Palffy: at Acqui

GM Latterman (Grenadier bns.)

Schiaffinati (631)
Kleinmayer (516)
St Julien (790)
Paar (618)
Weber (530)

GM Sticker

IR13 Reisky (3 bns., 1,011)
IR16 Terzy (3 bns., 1,150)
IR40 Mittrowsky (3 bns., 1,257)

GM Bussy

IR39 Nadasdy (3 bns., 1,892)
IR51 Splenyi (2 bns., 1,532)
Acqui (Pi:1) (861)
5. Hussars (4 sqdns., 580)

GM Graf St Julien

IR4 Deutschmeister (3 bns., 1,149)
IR45 Latterman (3 bns., 1,300)
IR48 Vukassovich (3 bns., 1,206)
IR57 Joseph Colloredo (3 bns., 3,079)

FML Baron Elsnitz and FML Morzin: at Ceva

GM Ulm

Mondovi (Pi:1) (858)
IR15 Oranien (3 bns., 2,086)
IR8 Huff (3 bns., 1,826)

GM F. Bellegarde

IR33 Sztaray (3 bns., 2,228)
IR32 Gyulai (3 bns., c. 2,200)

GM Auersperg

IR36 Fürstenberg (3 bns., 1,806)
IR18 Stuart (3 bns., 1,982)

GM Weidenfeld (Grenadiers)

Persch (446)
Görschen (468)
Pertusi (653)
Neny (587)
Weissenwolf (649)
Khevenhüller (527)

GM Brentano

IR10 Kheul (3 bns., 1,556)
9. Lichtenstein Light Dragoons (2 sqdns., 280)
2. Erzherzog Joseph Hussars (2 sqdns., 340)

FML Graf Hohenzollern: around Novi

GM Rousseau

IR19 Alvinczy (3 bns., 1,652)
IR34 Kray (3 bns., 1,445)
IR61 (1 bn., c. 600)
1st Bn. 5th Warasdin-Kreuz Grenz Regt. (918)
13th Munkacsy Light Infantry Bn. (450)
15th Mihailovich Light Infantry Bn. (435)

GM Döller:

Asti (Pi:1) (908)
Casale (Pi:1) (821)
Bussy Jäger zu Pferd (8 sqdns., 750)
5. Hussars (4 sqdns., 580)

FRENCH ARMY OF ITALY: 5 April 1800

Commander-in-Chief: General André Massena

Chief of Staff: Gen. de Division Oudinot

Lt. Gen. Soult (commander, right wing)

First Division: Gen de Div. Miollis

8e Légère (1 bn., 600)
24e demi-brigade (2 bns., 800)
74e demi-brigade (2 bns., 1,100)
106e demi-brigade (3 bns., 1,700)

Second Division: Gen. de Div. Gazan

3e demi-brigade (3 bns., 1,300)
5e Légère (1 bn., 500)
2e demi-brigade (3 bns., 1,600)
78e demi-brigade (3 bns., 1,300)
Piedmontese Grenadiers (90)
Artillery coy. (40)
Pioneers (3 coys., 90)

Third Division: Gen. de Div. Marbot

(commanded by Gen. de Brigade Gardanne)

3e Légère (2 bns., 900)
62e demi-brigade (3 bns., 1,500)
63e demi-brigade (1 bn., 500)
93e demi-brigade (1 bn., 500)
97e demi-brigade (3 bns., 1,300)

Reserve (Massena)

92e demi-brigade (1 bn., 500)
25e Légère (3 bns., 1,700)

Garrisons: Gen de Brigade Degiovanni

Genoa: 41e demi-brigade (1 bn., 350)
55e demi-brigade (1 bn., 250)
73e demi-brigade (1 bn., 500)
Gavi: 45e demi-brigade (1 bn., 500)

On the Riviera: General Suchet (12,000)

BONAPARTE'S ADVANCE INTO ITALY

In early April, Bonaparte increased the Reserve to 60,000 men: by 25 April four divisions under Loison, Chambarlhac, Boudet and Watrin, a total of 29,000 infantry, were ready to march. They were augmented by three divisions, mostly depots and conscripts, as well as the Cisalpine Legion totalling 22,000 men. Eleven regiments of cavalry (11e and 12e Hussars, 2e, 7e, 15e and 21e Chasseurs, 8e and 9e Dragoons, 2e, 6e and 20e Heavy Cavalry) comprising 7,000 troopers would bring the six Guard guns. Another 2,000 artillerymen and support troops followed with 48 guns. Thurreau would lead a 5,000-strong division from Savoy, and Bonaparte would bring the Consular Guard.

Moreau crossed the upper Rhine into Germany on 25 April. When the First Consul left Paris early on 6 May, Moreau's victories over Kray at Stockach and Moskirch had driven the Austrians into the Danube valley, giving Napoleon unobstructed use of the western Swiss passes. The First Consul anticipated reaching Stradella early in June, where he expected to receive reinforcements from Moreau, giving him the troops to screen Vukassovich's 7,500 troops and tackle Melas directly.

On 9 May, Napoleon established his headquarters in Geneva, with his army massed along the north side of the lake from St Maurice to Martigny. Orders had been issued on 27 April for the crossing of the St Bernard passes, which began on 14 May. As Chabran used the Little St Bernard, the first main part of the Army of the Reserve crossed the Grand St Bernard in five columns of 6,000 men at intervals of a day; at 2,450 metres, it was practically impassable for wheeled transport. The artillery had to be dismounted and dragged on sledges over the icy tracks.

The Val d'Aosta

With Watrin leading the advance-guard, Lannes marched down the valley meeting little resistance. After taking Aosta on 17 May, he defeated the 450-strong 1st Banat Grenzer Battalion at Chataillon, capturing their two 3-pdr. guns and 25 troops. Fort Bard, 18 km north of Ivrea, was the major obstacle, commanding the only road passable by artillery and held by Hauptmann Bärnkopf with a division of IR47 and ten gunners. Lannes led the infantry and cavalry over the narrow Albaredo track, followed over the next few days by the divisions under Boudet, Champeaux, Monnier, Murat, Loison and Chambarlhac. By 26 May six guns had been sneaked along the road at night, but the French had to remove Bärnkopf's division in order to avoid being at a disadvantage against Melas' artillery. After four companies of Loison's Grenadiers under Loison took the village during the night of 21-22 May, French infantry attacked the fort in three columns early on 26 May, but were scattered by well-directed Austrian guns. Chabran's conscript division blockaded the fort as French artillery began bombarding it at 5 am on 28 May. The barrage steadily increased for five days. With no prospect of help, Bärnkopf surrendered on 2 June.

As Lannes entered Ivrea on 22 May, facing little opposition from GM De Briey's brigade defending the valley, Thurreau descended from Mt. Cenis into the Susa valley. He attacked General La Marseille, forcing him back on General Nimbsch. Despite a defeat at Avigliano on 24 May, Thurreau would try again on the 27th.

Map Key

- 1 14-18 May: Three divisions and cavalry of the Reserve cross the Grand St. Bernard Pass. Chabran crosses the Little St. Bernard.
- 2 18 May: Lannes with the advance guard defeats 1. Banat Grenzer Battalion at Chataillon.
- 3 26 May: 1 June: Fort Bard besieged by Chabran. Most French artillery halted until fort surrenders.
- 4 22 May: Thurreau takes Mt. Cenis pass, headed for Turin. 24 May: Nimbsch and La Marseille defeat Thurreau at Avigliano. 27 May: Thurreau resumes his attack.
- 5 26 May: Lannes (Watrin & Boudet) defeats Hadik (De Briey/Pilatti) at Romano-Chiusella. 30,000 troops assembled under Bonaparte at Ivrea.
- 6 28-9 May: Lannes advances to Chivasso with Watrin to threaten Turin. Boudet rejoins Bonaparte.
- 7 25 May: Melas returns to Turin from the Riviera to concentrate his forces under Hadik and Kaim. 31 May: Elsnitz and Ott ordered to withdraw northwards.
- 8 27 May: Moncey (two divisions) crosses the St. Gotthard and drives Dedovich from Bellinzona.
- 9 29 May: After crossing the Simplon, Bethencourt drives the Le Loup Jäger from Domodossola and heads for Arona.
- 10 31 May: Murat leads Bonaparte's army over the Ticino at Turbigo and Dushesme (leading Boudet) crosses at Buffalora, defended by Vukassovich with Laudon, Festenburg and Döller.
- 11 a) 2 June: Bonaparte enters Milan.
b) Lannes reaches Pavia.
- 12 4 June: Vukassovich retreats to Cremona, Dedovich to Brescia, both headed for Mantua.

14 MAY-4 JUNE: BONAPARTE'S ADVANCE TO MILAN



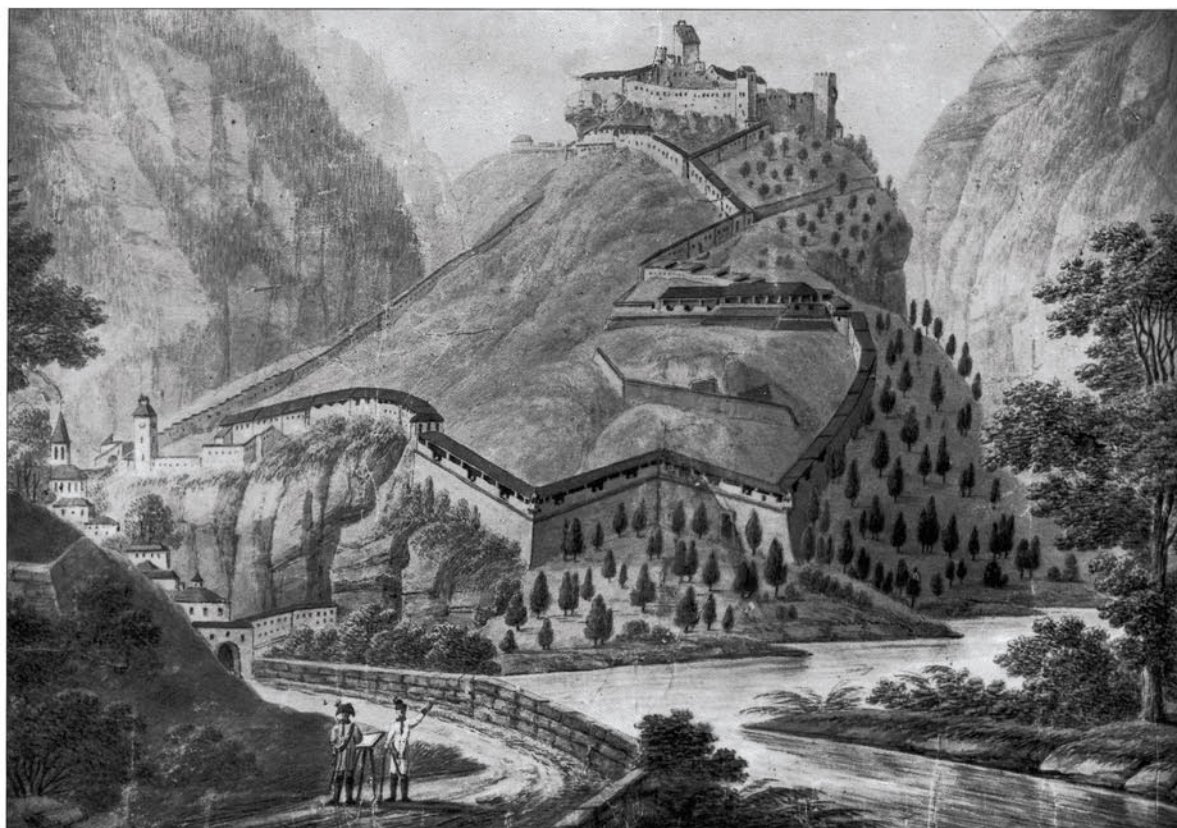
Somewhat less heroically than David's famous painting, Napoleon crossed the Alps on a donkey. The difficult Alpine tracks required the greatest effort to get men, supplies and equipment through, forcing Bonaparte to base his plans on capturing enemy magazines. (ASKB)

Battle of Romano-Chiusella, 26 May

Without guns, Lannes marched with Watrin's and Boudet's divisions towards Turin on 25 May. This was the key point in the First Consul's plan as it would confirm Austrian expectations that he was heading directly for Genoa.

As De Briey's brigade were pushed south, FML Hadik moved up the cavalry under GM Pilati to cover them. On the 25th, Hadik established a defensive position on the Chiusella River close to the village of Romano. Holding Boudet in reserve, Lannes ordered Watrin to attack at dawn on 26 May, targeting the stone bridge over the Chiusella, which was held by De Briey's three battalions with four light guns.

Supported by Rivaud's 21e Chasseurs à Cheval and the 12e Hussars, Watrin formed his infantry, the 6e Légère, 28e, 22e and 40e demi-brigades, in a deep column. The 6e Légère rushed forwards, but ran into murderous fire from the Austrian artillery. Nevertheless, they reached the narrow bridge, only to be bayonet-charged by the Austrian infantry. After the failure of a second attempt, Lannes launched a three-pronged assault: 22e and 40e demi-brigades marched west to cross the river upstream, while 6th Légère moved east and forded the river. The 28e charged the bridge once more and the Austrian infantry faltered – De Briey was ordered to withdraw. Two squadrons of 7. Hussars covered the retreat by

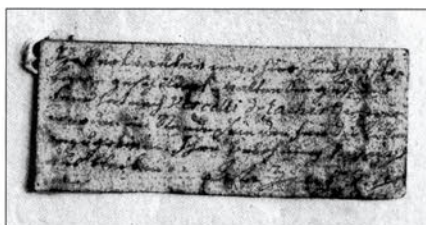


attacking the French infantry around the bridge, but were driven off by Watrin's volley fire and a small cavalry force.

As the Austrians pulled back from the riverbank, Hadik formed up his cavalry at Romano (which included two 6-pdr. batteries). As Watrin's 6e Légère and the 28e came over the hill, they were charged by 2,000 Austrian cavalry. The 1. and 3. Light Dragoons swept through, followed by 4. Karacsay, but they dissipated as they attacked Watrin's other two demi-brigades rushing up from the west, and Boudet's division advancing along the road. Disordered, Pilati's troopers could not withstand a counter-charge by Boudet's 11e Hussars, but they had captured 200 prisoners and bought time for Hadik to disengage his infantry. Boudet rejoined Bonaparte, as Lannes headed for Chivasso with Watrin. At his approach on 28 May, the detachment of the 10. Lobkowitz Dragoons guarding the Orca bridge promptly crossed and burned it. To maintain the pretence that Bonaparte was aiming for Genoa, Lannes remained in position on 29 May.

The armies realign

As reports of French columns in the Alpine passes arrived, Melas left Nice on 22 May to join Kaim in Turin. In Piedmont a force of 10,000 cavalry and 14,000 infantry were assembled to cover the outposts,



ABOVE Commanding the Aosta-Turin road, Bard fortress was protected by a series of earthworks and the village. For his defence of the fort with two companies of IR47 and some 10. Lobkowitz Dragoons from 19 May to 2 June, Hauptmann Josef Stockard von Bärnkopf was awarded the Knight's Cross of the Maria Theresa Order. (BA)

ABOVE, LEFT The secret message from GM Zach to Bärnkopf at Bard of 31 May was carried by Giuseppe Corneglia in his wig-box. Zach's response to Bärnkopf's request for help was merely to promise an attack on Vercelli. (BA)

The main route into Piedmont from the St Bernard passes ran through Aosta, which Lannes took on 17 May, and east into the valley of the same name. (La Cluse/M.Gioannini). Aside from a Grenzer battalion at Chataillon, the Austrians did not put up significant resistance in the mountains.



gradually withdrawing from the local valleys. The Austrian command recognised the advantages for the French in the mountains, so, confident in their cavalry and artillery, they had decided to face Bonaparte on open ground. Reports suggested only limited French forces were marching down the Aosta valley, and Thurreau's advance appeared to confirm that the French were coming down the most direct route to Genoa, running over Mt. Cenis and through Turin. Melas now began to concentrate his troops.

By 26 May, as Lannes fought on the Chiusella, 30,000 French troops were assembled at Ivrea, but the First Consul never intended to relieve Genoa. Believing Massena could hold out to pin down Ott's troops until early June, Bonaparte split the Austrian forces: instead of heading for Turin, the main column turned east towards Milan, securing his line of retreat over the St Gotthard. From there, Bonaparte intended to cross the Po and secure Stradella. By cutting Melas' supply line at this chokepoint on the Turin-Mantua road, Bonaparte would force Melas to fight while many of the Austrian troops remained tied down at Genoa.

The arrival of a spy in Turin on 30 May opened Melas's eyes to the size of the force behind Lannes. Zach's idea was to attack Vercelli to sever the line of communications over the St Bernard. Although an attack was mounted on 3 June, it was abandoned when reports from FML Vukassovich revealed Napoleon's full plan: Moreau had detached Moncey on 27 May with 15,000 men (Lapoye's and Lorge's divisions), who crossed the St Gotthard and chased GM Laudon, forming Vukassovich's right, from Bellinzona.

Vukassovich concentrated the rest of his troops at Buffalora, where the Milan road crossed the River Ticino. He was joined by GM Festenberg, who had been dispatched by Kaim with 6. Levenehr and 8. Württemberg Dragoons. On 31 May Boudet's division led the crossing of the Ticino at the Buffalora bridge, while Murat's cavalry crossed further north at Galliate. Facing 45,000 French, Vukassovich abandoned Milan and crossed the Adda, reaching Cremona on 5 June.

With most units in Piedmont, Melas decided to recall Elsnitz and Ott, but he knew he had to pre-empt Bonaparte by securing Piacenza and try

to reach Vukassovich. Orders to withdraw were dispatched to Ott and Elsnitz on 31 May, while Kaim and Hadik prepared to depart from Turin.

The fall of Genoa

Convinced that Genoa would surrender from hunger, Ott ceased his attacks in early May, leaving the Royal Navy to bombard the city. Despite the privations, Massena still launched raids to pin down Ott's forces. On 11 May, he attacked Monte Fascio on the Austrian left: Miollis attacked Gottesheim's positions on the mountain with three demi-brigades, supported by another demi-brigade, but was driven back over the Sturka by a flank attack launched by the Leib Battalion of IR53. Meanwhile, Soult marched up the Besagno into the rear of Monte Fascio. As his advance-guard pushed Gottesheim back towards Nervi, Soult captured the mountain with his main column and the whole French force was turned on Gottesheim as Miollis renewed his attack. In fierce hand-to-hand fighting, Gottesheim was pushed down the coast to Sori.

Next, Massena planned to roll up the Austrian left by taking Monte Creto, which would force Ott to abandon the blockade. With five demi-brigades, Soult marched north towards the mountain on 13 May. After two hours' fierce fighting, Gauthier reached the summit of Monte Creto with Soult's advance-guard to find that it was held by Rousseau with two battalions each of IRs 19 and 34. Suddenly, a storm shrouded the troops in cloud and heavy rain, reducing visibility to three paces and rendering muskets unusable. Gauthier spurred his men on to attack the first earthwork, supported by Poinot with the 2e demi-brigade. The trenches changed hands several times in ferocious fighting. Soult led the 3e demi-brigade in a renewed attack, but he was wounded and captured, and the column broke up and was chased down the Besagno valley by Oberst Frimont (with a battalion each of IR34 Kray, IR61, the 15th Light Infantry and the Piedmontese Asti and Casale battalions).

Three demi-brigades under Gazan, supported by the Due Fratelli forts artillery, attacked the Austrian fortifications at Turazzo, which were held by a battalion each of IR19 and Warasdin-Kreuz Grenzer with two battalions from IR17 and IR57. As the 97e demi-brigade led the

Commanding the entry to the Piedmont plain from the Aosta valley, Ivrea was the first major target for the French and would be Napoleon's staging area for his march on Milan. On 22 May, Lannes' advance-guard seized both the town and the citadel, which was taken by 22e and 40e demi-brigades. (Bagetti/GAM)





The first major clash was fought between FML Hadik and Lt.-Gen. Lannes on 26 May on the banks of the Chiusella, a tributary of the Dora Baltea (Bagetti/A. Ferrari). Lannes pursued the Austrians to launch a diversionary attack at Chivasso on 28 May to disguise Bonaparte's march east against Milan.

attack, Gazan sent small columns to the left and right flanks, while the 106e demi-brigade under Hector marched to attack the Austrian rear. Again, trenches were contested in desperate fighting until the weather closed in. After losing 1,000 men, Massena abandoned further attacks and fell back on Genoa.

In the early hours of the 15th, Neapolitan vessels pounded the harbour, stirring up popular disorder. Massena was forced to withdraw Miollis from Monte Fascio behind the Sturka to ensure Genoa's internal security. The garrison was reinforced and artillery positioned on the main squares. That same day, Savona fell to GM St Julien.

On 14 May, Chef d'Escadron Franceschi returned to Genoa with news of Moreau and a message from Bonaparte that he would march from Ivrea directly to relieve Genoa at the end of May. Relying on this, Massena mounted a last effort on 28 May against the Austrian fortifications in the Polcevera valley, but the French suffered heavy casualties. Another naval bombardment during the night of 30 May was followed by a demand for Massena's surrender. Massena's response to previous demands was always that Napoleon was coming to save him, but the grass and rats had finally run out: Genoa was starving. Massena sought terms on 1 June.

The same day Ott received instructions to withdraw to Alessandria and send a column direct to Piacenza. Ott wanted to delay, citing the time required to assemble his artillery and that Elsnitz would not reach Alessandria until 10 June, whereas it was only three days' march from Genoa. To keep delays to a minimum, he decided to allow the Genoa garrison to depart unhindered. Massena stalled, but after a failed bid to bribe Austrian troops for information, signed the agreement on 4 June. The following day, the French marched down the coastal road. Hohenzollern's 7,000 troops (Bussy's and Kottulinsky's brigades plus former POWs), of little use in the field, took over the city.

Suchet's advance from the Var

On 1 May Bonaparte sent reinforcements to Suchet, bringing his forces up to 13,500 men, and ordered him to advance in support of the reserve. He launched his first attack over the Var on 19 May. FML Anton Freiherr von Elsnitz commanding 13,000 men, mostly infantry, had been ordered not to get involved in serious fighting. If an attack seemed likely, he was to withdraw immediately on to the fortified Roja position. Instead, he threw his infantry forward in poorly co-ordinated assaults on 22 and 26 May against the bridgehead, which the French held with artillery. Discouraged by heavy losses, Elsnitz found himself on the defensive as the French attacked across the Var from 24 to 27 May. Reduced to about 9,000 men, he withdrew behind the Roja, pursued by Suchet with a larger and fresher force. Ordered to withdraw towards Turin, Elsnitz had his line of retreat cut, when after diversionary clashes along the Roja, Suchet evicted GM Gorupp from the vital Col di Tenda pass on 3 June. Elsnitz now had to withdraw across the treacherous mountain tracks, and his column rapidly broke up into small units under pressure from Suchet. On 6 June he reached Ceva with 6,206 men in a deplorable state, aside from the two Grenadier brigades. That day, Suchet had reached Mount Settepanni, 20 km to the south-east, just as Gazan's former garrison troops from Genoa approached Finale; they joined up and began marching north into the Apennines.

Napoleon in Milan

The First Consul arrived in Milan on 2 June with his main body to a muted reception. In one move, he had seized vital artillery and supplies, while splitting Vukassovich from Melas. Lannes, who had marched rapidly from Chivasso, reached Pavia on the same day. Three days later, Moncey's men marched into Milan. News of the fall of Fort Bard arrived, so that Bonaparte knew he would have his artillery shortly.

Bonaparte's next target was Piacenza, guarding the Mantua road and a main bridge over the Po River. To conceal their intended crossing point, the French camps were spread along the Po. Lannes was at Pavia, and by 4 June Duhesme was at Cremona after chasing Vukassovich's rearguard, screening against any Austrian move from the east. Murat led the way to Piacenza with his cavalry, arriving on the morning of 5 June. In support came Boudet's infantry marching from Lodi. Further west, Lannes marched to Belgiojoso, where his division began to cross the Po the following night aboard local vessels. After Genoa's surrender, Ott marched off: Gottesheim's brigade (IR14 Klebek, Ogulin Grenzer, Leib Battalion IR53 Jellacic, and three squadrons of 8. Nauendorff Hussars) marched north-west through the Trebbia valley towards Piacenza on the 5th, as Vogelsang's division marched towards Novi, followed by Schellenberg's on the 6th.

The race for Piacenza

GM Mosel was already marching along the Mantua road with the Treasury, followed by the artillery reserve and 50. Jäger zu Pferd. To save the Piacenza bridgehead, FML O'Reilly had taken the army advance-guard to join with Gottesheim's brigade there. Concentrated at Alessandria, the main army would follow, possibly to catch Bonaparte's army with Vukassovich beyond.

French horse artillery on the march. Although numerically inferior, French guns were mostly of heavier calibre than the Austrian guns. (SAGEP Genoa)



After clashing with Jäger zu Pferd outposts, Boudet's 11e Hussars reached the north bank of the Po opposite Piacenza around 2 pm on 5 June, as GM Mosel was passing through the town. Concerned about the garrison's capacity to hold the French, Mosel hurried across to the bridgehead with whatever men he could arm. As Boudet marched his men up in two columns, Mosel let them advance up to 800 paces and then fired canister, forcing them to fall back. Boudet deployed his guns and shelled the bridgehead, only to be silenced by a 16-gun battery moved up on to the south bank of the Po. Despite inflicting heavy casualties on Boudet as the French launched several attempts to storm the bridgehead, exhaustion amongst his troops forced Mosel to evacuate the bridgehead that evening. The cannon were moved to the right bank and ten pieces of bridge planking removed. They joined the other company of IR46 and the rest of the Jäger division in the citadel.

At dawn on 6 June, O'Reilly arrived with two squadrons of 8. Nauendorff Hussars and took command, as Mosel continued east. Behind the Austrian position, Watrin was crossing the Po with the 28e and 40e near Cipriano. Although the French were initially pushed back by the small Austrian force (IR13 Reisky, Ottocac Grenzer and a division of 10. Lobkowitz Dragoons), the rest of Lannes' 6,000 men crossed during the day and occupied the position.

It was 7 June before Boudet pushed Musnier and the 9e Légère over the river below Piacenza. Advancing west towards Piacenza, they chased off O'Reilly's hussars scouting down the Mantua road. Aware of Lannes' move behind him, O'Reilly decided to hold out until the artillery reserve could escape. The heavy guns had followed Mosel, but most of the lighter guns were withdrawn from the town back behind the Trebbia. Carabiniers from 9e Légère attacked the Parma (south-east) gate, which was determinedly defended by assorted Austrian troops and convalescents. After scattering these infantry into the town, two battalions of 9e Légère swept forwards. However, Gottesheim had sent 600 men of IR14 with a squadron of Nauendorff Hussars ahead. As they



The original 'Bravest of the Brave', as he was described by Desaix, Jean Lannes (1769-1809) led the advance-guard throughout the campaign. In 1808, he took Montebello as the title of his Dukedom. (A. Ferrari)

3-13 JUNE: THE ARMIES MARCH TO MARENGO



reached Piacenza, they were allocated to the Rivalta (western) gate, where they engaged in a firefight with Musnier's battalions. Although Austrian artillery fired in support, the third 9e Légère battalion had marched round the town wall and caught IR14 between two fires. After three hours, Musnier had secured the town, as IR14 broke up, most heading back down the road to Bobbio. The remains of the garrison and some of IR14, 280 men, of whom 120 were dead or wounded, withdrew into the citadel. Around 5 pm, IR43 Thurn marched up the Ancona road, but after a brief clash with part of the 59e, they withdrew towards Bobbio under cover of darkness, chased by the 11e Hussars.

The Stradella position

News of the French advance towards the Po had prompted further Austrian pre-emptive measures to secure their line of communication. However, it was unclear whether Napoleon would repeat his 1796 campaign by marching for Mantua or whether he would march west against the main Austrian army. Melas left Turin on 6 June with the troops under Kaim and Hadik, as well as the cavalry, heading for Alessandria. Approaching Novi on 7 June, Ott received Melas' order to advance 'in three marches to Piacenza' and rejoin Gottesheim in the bridgehead.

ABOVE, RIGHT The bridgehead at Piacenza protected both a key bridge over the Po and on the southern bank, the Turin-Mantua road. Murat began his attack on the small Austrian force on 5 June, but only took the town on the 7th, when troops crossed the river to either side. (Bagetti/GAM)

Map Key

- 13 June: Menard takes Col di Tenda. Gorupp withdraws on Cuneo.
- 24 June: Massena surrenders Genoa. 5 June: Gazan marches the garrison west down the coast. Hohenzollern commands the new Austrian garrison.
- 34 June: Duhesme reaches Cremona, pushing Vukassovich east.
- 43 June: Abortive Austrian attack on Vercelli.
- 55 June: Gottesheim marches towards Piacenza.
- 65 June: Moncey joins Bonaparte at Milan. Chabran sent through Pavia to march along north bank of the Po.
- 75 June: Murat with the cavalry and Boudet's infantry reach the Po opposite Piacenza. Mosel organises the bridgehead defence.
- 86 June: Elsnitz reaches Ceva as Suchet reaches Mt. Settepanni.
- 96 June: Melas leaves Turin for Alessandria with Kaim, Hadik and the cavalry.
- 106 June: O'Reilly with two sqdns of 8. Hussars takes command in Piacenza as Mosel marches east. The reserve artillery is sent back to Alessandria.
- 11 6-7 June: Lannes crosses the Po at Belgiojoso. Most of O'Reilly's force repels Lannes' advance troops long enough to save the reserve artillery before withdrawing.
- 127 June: Suchet joins with Gazan near Finale and they are joined by Massena.
- 13 a) 7 June: Boudet crosses the Po east of Piacenza and takes the town. b) Gottesheim's advance troops are repelled as are IR43 marching from Parma.
- 147 June: Ott marches towards Piacenza.
- 159 June: Lannes defeats Ott at Casteggio-Montebello. Ott withdraws west.
- 16 10-11 June: Melas' main forces reach Alessandria, joined by Ott and Elsnitz.
- 17 10-11 June: Bonaparte concentrates around Voghera.
- 18 13 June: Suchet and Massena reach Dego with outposts in the Bormida valley.
- 19 a) 13 June: Austrian bridges thrown at Valenza and Casale. b) 2. Hussars marched to Casale.
- 20 a) 13 June: Bonaparte assembles his army around Torre di Garrofoli. b) Desaix (Boudet/Guenand) sent south towards Novi; Lapoye sent north over the Po to guard against Austrian breakout north.
- 21 13 June evening: Victor seizes Marengo village and Pedrabona from O'Reilly.



It was already too late: FML O'Reilly was withdrawing from Piacenza with three squadrons of 8. Hussars and the light reserve guns to rejoin his infantry on the main road. Aware that Lannes was threatening his left flank, O'Reilly evacuated Stradella in the early hours of the 8th. Murat's engineers restored the Piacenza bridge, enabling the rest of the French army to march across to the Stradella defile, where they camped that evening. The focal point of Napoleon's operation was secured, as Lannes pushed Watrin's division down the road to Broni, while Murat's division, marching west from Piacenza, formed the rearguard. With Suchet in his rear and Vukassovich driven back to the Oglio, it seemed Melas would have to fight his way out.

However, the First Consul heard rumours about the fall of Genoa. Unaware of Ott's advance, he decided to keep his army positioned around Stradella until precise reports arrived. These arrived early on 8 June, in the form of Melas' dispatches captured by Murat at Piacenza, which detailed the surrender of Genoa. Still in Milan, Bonaparte realised the pin holding down a large part of the Austrian army had gone. The Austrians could now escape south to Genoa or north over the Po towards Milan. Instead of waiting at Stradella, Bonaparte ordered Lannes to advance down the main road towards Voghera and to destroy whatever he encountered, expecting him to find only light outposts.

Ott found that recent rains had swelled the Scrivia, so it was not until the morning of 8 June that his 12,000 troops could cross the river and march on Voghera. O'Reilly set up a position at Santa Giulietta with five light battalions and four squadrons. On 9 June Lannes advanced from Broni, with Victor still east of the village. Gency and the 6e Légère had been reconnoitring FML O'Reilly's outposts during the early morning. After a brief clash, the French light troops withdrew, prompting O'Reilly to report to Ott that the enemy before him numbered 6,000 men. The Austrian commanders planned to concentrate their forces, throw back the apparently small enemy detachment and relieve Piacenza.

THE BATTLE OF CASTEGGIO-MONTEBELLO, 9 JUNE

Around 9 am, the French suddenly returned and quickly drove back O'Reilly's men through Santa Giuletta to Rivalta (Romero) on the St Zeno stream. A substantial column under Watrin could be clearly seen following up behind. Ott was still moving up, so O'Reilly positioned his infantry and artillery at Rivalta and in the hills to its right, from where he drove the 6e off.

General Watrin arrived at about 11 am and decided to take the village by out flanking it. Four battalions headed for the high ground, while two moved north on to the flatter ground. After fierce resistance lasting half an hour, O'Reilly found himself out flanked on both sides and under fire from in front, so he abandoned Rivalta and pulled back down the road.

At the same time, the head of Ott's column was approaching Casteggio, 2km west. Unaware that the main French army was approaching, FML Ott decided to go to the aid of his advance-posts to halt the French progress. At midday, to cover O'Reilly's retreat, GM Gottesheim was directed with six battalions (IR57, Ogulin Grenzer and IR17) to march at *Sturmschritt* (attack pace) to occupy the hills south-east of Casteggio, which commanded the main road. The rest of Vogelsang's force, IR18, were left in reserve behind the village.

Their initial breakthrough into the village of Casteggio down the road on the left took the Hussars over the bridge. Here they were halted by Oberst Schustekh with his four cavalry squadrons. In the background are the foothills of the Apennines and the walls around the village. (BA)





FML Karl Peter Freiherr Ott von Bartorkez (1738-1809) was a Hungarian cavalry commander, noted for his bravery during the Seven Years War. Renowned for leading from the front, he won the Knight Commander's Cross of the Maria Theresa Order and held senior commands in Italy during the period 1796-1800. (BA)

The village and its small castle commanded a key defile on the main Turin-Mantua road, nestling below a small, but steep hill. The whole settlement was enclosed by small walls, forming a defensive position, which could be held provided control of the steep, high ground to the south was retained. The main road ran into the town over one bridge, which was surrounded by some fortified houses, an inn and an agricultural storehouse, before bearing right in a square over a stone bridge to continue west. O'Reilly's infantry fell back into Casteggio. The Grenzers and Jäger garrisoned the upper part, while two light infantry battalions guarded the first bridge with his battery.

After taking Rivalta, Watrin marched on Casteggio, but his advance was soon halted by the fire raining down from Gottesheim's men in the hills above. However, the Austrian right flank was unprotected, which gave Watrin his opportunity: he took a battalion of the 6e Légère plus the 40e demi-brigade up on to the hills to his immediate south. From there a track led into the right of Gottesheim's line.

Unaware that the Austrians were moving up in strength, Lannes wanted to keep the momentum going. As Watrin marched into the hills, he directed a battalion of the 22e demi-brigade across the high cornfields in an inadequate attack on the front of Gottesheim's line. It was only necessary for the Austrian artillery to increase its canister fire before the 22e broke up in some disorder. Simultaneously, to put pressure on Gottesheim's other wing, Lannes headed down the road towards the village. General Gency moved the other two battalions of the 6e Légère to the north to draw off some of the defenders' fire, leaving two battalions of the 22e demi-brigade and the four artillery pieces in support. The 12e Hussars charged down the road, scattering the Austrian cavalry vedettes and the two Light Infantry Battalions holding the eastern edge of the buildings, sweeping through the lower village and towards the second stone bridge. However, beyond it, protected by a high quickset hedge, which had some gaps in it, stood Oberst Schustekh with O'Reilly's squadrons (8. Nauendorff Hussars and Bussy Jäger zu Pferd), which had been moved back on to the flatter ground in reserve. One squadron fell into the enemy's rear as the rest charged and the French were quickly surrounded. Those who escaped fled back through the village, some only to be felled by soldiers from the 3rd Bach Light Infantry hidden in the houses.

Just as prisoner interrogation confirmed that Bonaparte was advancing in this direction with the main French army, Chief of Staff Zach arrived from Austrian headquarters at the bridge with his staff officers. Realising that a report brought by a local spy was accurate, they urged Ott to withdraw, but many of his own staff were for holding their ground. A determined cavalry commander, Ott decided on the more dashing action. Messengers galloped to hasten the march of Schellenberg's division, which had broken camp from Voghera half an hour behind Vogelsang's division.

The urgent priority was to stabilise the right wing, which was buckling under pressure from Watrin's flank attack. As General Mahler reached the Austrian crestline, General Mainoni arrived along the road with 28e demi-brigade, which Watrin immediately directed to support Mahler's attack. The reinforced French were soon driving Gottesheim's right westwards across the high ground south-west of Mairano. In response,

2nd Ottocac Grenzer reinforce Casa il Giardiana. GB Rivaud takes the Casa, breaking the Austrian right. Second French attempt to storm the village is beaten off

1200: GM Gottesheim takes six battalions into the hills

28e demi-brigade attack the Austrian flank. IR18, 10. Lobkowitz Dragoons and a battery reinforce the Austrian line

GB Mahler leads four battalions into the Austrian right. Lannes sends a battalion of 22e demi-brigade in support, but they are repelled



LANNES

1400: GD Victor arrives. GB Rivaud directed up the slopes

6e Légère move north; 12e Hussars charge through the village

FML Schellenberg moves six battalions to face GB Gency

Austrian and French lines extended north along the Coppa

Last Austrian reserves moved up from Montebello to either side of Casteggio. GB Gency supported by 24e Legere breaks the Austrian left

Third French assault on Casteggio, held by FML O'Reilly's rearguard. GB Rivaud advances round the rear of the village

GD Watrin drives FML Vogelsang across the hills south of Casteggio

1700: Lannes pursues Ott to Montebello. Fighting continues until dusk. IR40 guard the main road to Voghera

FRENCH UNITS

- A 12te Hussars
- GB Mainoni
- B 28e demi-brigade (3 batts)
- Gen de Division WATRIN
- Gen de Brigade Mahler
- C 22e demi-brigade (3 batts)
- D 40e demi-brigade (3 batts)
- Gen de Brigade Gency
- 6e Légère
- E 1 batts
- F 2 batts
- Gen de Division CHAMBARLHAC
- Gen de Brigade Herbin
- G 24e Légère (3 batts)
- Gen de Brigade O. Rivaud
- H 43e demi-brigade (3 batts)
- I 96e demi-brigade (3 batts)

AUSTRIAN UNITS

- OBERST SCHUSTEKH
- 1 8. Nauendorff Hussars (3sqdns)
- Bussy Jäger zu Pferd (1 sqdn)
- 2 2nd Ottocac Grenz Rgt (1 batt)
- 3 5th Warasdin-Kreuz Grenz Rgt (1 batt)
- 4 3rd Bach
- 4th Am Ende
- FML VOGELSANG
- GM Gottesheim
- 5 IR57 J. Colloredo (2 2/3 batts)
- 6 IR18 Stuart (3 batts)
- Oberst Lizzany
- 7 3rd Ogulin Grenz Rgt (1 batt)
- 8 IR17 Hohenlohe (2 batts)
- FML SCHELLENBERG
- GM Sticker
- 9 IR28 Frohlich (3 batts)
- 10 IR40 Mittrowsky (3 batts)
- 11 IR51 Splenyi (2 batts)
- 12 IR13 Reisky (3 batts)
- 13 10 Lobkowitz Dragoons (2 sqdns)
- 14 Cavalry artillery battery

CASTEGGIO-MONTEBELLO

9 June 1800



IR18 were dispatched with their battery to reinforce this flank and although firing continued at close quarters, Gottesheim's line was able to fall back and re-form. With IR18 in front, the Austrians marched forward again. The ferocity of their attack broke up a battalion of the 40e demi-brigade, which fled back down the hill. In a last desperate move, Lannes had committed two reserve battalions of the 22e demi-brigade to support their colleagues, but before they could engage, Vogelsang's division had once again reached the hills overlooking the road.

Once the French hussars had been beaten off, O'Reilly's light troops around the village engaged in a firefight with the larger part of 6e Légère, who had been positioned particularly well to pour a flanking fire into the Austrians. Fortunately for O'Reilly, the first six of Schellenberg's battalions (IRs 28 and 40 under GM Sticker) were now arriving, somewhat out of breath from their forced march. They were promptly directed to occupy the left bank of the Coppa to counteract Gencey's men. Unsure of how the French force would develop, Ott left the other five battalions (IRs 51 and 13) in the village of Montebello as a reserve.

Rittmeister Sardagna's division of the 10. Lobkowitz Light Dragoons with a cavalry artillery battery had been moved quickly up the local tracks to support IR18 in restoring Vogelsang's right. As Mahler's men broke up, it was only the 28e demi-brigade on the far French left, which was hindering Vogelsang's advance. When the cavalrymen arrived, they found themselves facing a bayonet charge by the French Grenadier companies, from which they fled. It was only when the Austrians trained their gun line on Mainoni's men that the 28e had to fall back east, but they had gained precious time for Lannes.

The French advance-guard commander soon appreciated that this was no small rearguard and that his hasty advance had placed him in a

The upper part of the river Coppa from the south-west flowing north past Montebello in the background (Bagetti/A.Ferrari). The river was a significant obstacle and the few trees provided little cover. The Appenine foothills descend down on to the floodplain of the Po to the north.

precarious position. After the two attacks had been repelled, he was vulnerable to being cut off along the main road by Vogelsang. As Austrian resistance stiffened, a message had been hastily dispatched to Victor, who had just reached Broni, which arrived about 1 pm. Led by Oliver Rivaud's brigade, the French reinforcements headed off down the road at *pas de course* (quick march). In the meantime, it was left to the tired remains of Watrin's men and the 22e demi-brigade to re-form and protect Lannes' vital line of communication as growing numbers of Austrian troops appeared on both French flanks.

2 pm: The second French line arrives

Ott had held his positions, but Victor's men were now arriving and Lannes decided to clear this bottleneck by launching a renewed assault with the remains of the Hussars and part of Victor's force, the 96e demi-brigade and 24e Légère. Gency's 6e Légère were still engaged around the village, but were now under fire from Schellenberg. Meanwhile, Chambarlhac renewed the assault on Vogelsang in the hills guarding the Austrian right, where the 28e were still engaged on Gottesheim's flank.

Chambarlhac's assault was led by 43e demi-brigade under General Rivaud; they tackled the front of Vogelsang's position, under continuous fire from canister and musketry. In response, Rivaud dissolved two battalions into skirmish formation either side of the third in column. The remains of Watrin's four battalions marched in support, and the 22e demi-brigade were held in reserve. Simultaneously and to exploit the French numerical superiority, Mainoni renewed his attempt on the Austrian right with the 28e demi-brigade. This time, IR17 was not able to hold, as the whole line came under fierce assault. Mainoni began to roll up IR17, taking large numbers of prisoners. Behind the Austrian troops, Oberstlt. Hromada with IR18 was again trying to shore up the flank and realised that Watrin's men were trying to out-flank his second Treffen as well. Immediately he set about collecting several broken units from Gottesheim's retreating line and threw them against the enemy advancing in column across the slopes of the hills. Halting the lead French units, Hromada gained time for Gottesheim's right to withdraw. The Austrian troops held off two French advances, but enemy numbers were increasing.

In the centre of the French line, Rivaud was now leading his men over the stream running south-east of Casteggio, but his crossing was blocked by the large farm complex, Casa il Giardiana. As a stopgap, the Ottocac Grenzers had extended their line out to the Casa, 500 metres south-east of the village and hastily garrisoned it. To clear this key obstacle, Rivaud sent two companies of the 43e demi-brigade to assault it as fire was poured into the stone buildings. After a desperate struggle, 150 Croats lay dead and the link between O'Reilly in the village and Vogelsang's division was severed. Although the Ogulin Grenzers and the Leib (1st) Battalion of IR57 were holding their ground, Vogelsang was now also out-flanked to his right, where both IRs 17 and 18 were losing large numbers of prisoners. Vogelsang knew he had to withdraw, even though this opened the way for Rivaud's men to get behind the village of Casteggio. In order to evacuate the artillery west over the undulating tracks, the 2nd Battalion of IR57 managed to put up a final ferocious defence against the French advance.



IN THE STREETS OF CASTEGGIO

Casteggio was a key chokepoint on the Turin-Mantua road. As both sides' advance-guards took up the fight, the French 12e Hussars charged through its narrow streets defended by two light infantry battalions, enabling Lannes to seize the initiative early in the battle.



As Lannes hurled his infantry across the fields, they came under heavy artillery fire from the hills above. The fields here and around Montebello were later seen by the locals covered in bodies and one street close to Montebello church was named Via dei Morte (Street of the Dead). (Philippeaux) (Bibliothèque National, Paris)

As the line of fire swung west across the hills anchoring his position, Ott realised that Lannes really was spearheading the Army of the Reserve, and it was time for him to depart. Advancing down the road, Lannes was surprised to see O'Reilly's troops evacuating the eastern buildings, which only served to spur on his men. The French were led by the 24e Légère who were coming across the fields north of the road, initially to relieve the 6e. Now the light infantry stormed the village bridges again. This time the way over the first was clear, but beyond was an Austrian battery, whose canister fire had inflicted heavy casualties during Lannes' first effort. In a surprise strike, Sergeant Mayeux and 25 chasseurs from the 1st Battalion ran at the guns; their crews fled for cover, opening the way for the rest of the regiment to charge through the village to the second bridge in a closed column, running straight into another hail of canister. Lannes would never forget the sound, as 'the bones cracked in my division like glass in a hailstorm'. In a repeat of the first attempt, Schustekh led his cavalry forward and surrounded the head of the column, driving them back out of the village. The 12e Hussars charged again to support the 24e and managed to cut their way through, but as the battered 6e Légère faltered, the French fell back. The 24e moved to the north of the road as the 96e advanced for a third attempt.

Fire from the 16 guns lined up down the Coppia was a major factor in halting the French attempts on the bridges. As Herbin's 24e Légère moved to the right, they took over engaging Schellenberg, which allowed Lannes to move 6e Légère north to a small wooden bridge downstream on the Coppia to out flank the Austrian left wing. From the Austrian bank, Schellenberg could now see the French light infantry moving across the fields, and to protect his flank, IR40 was also moved north beyond the bridge to maintain a flanking fire against the French right wing and anyone trying to cross the Coppia. To his front, IR28 engaged the 24e. There was now firing along the entire line.

With his lines spread very thin and his right wing crumbling, Ott was preparing to retreat before Rivaud could advance round the back of the village to cut the line of retreat on Montebello. To protect his exhausted men, Ott called his last reserves, IRs 51 and 13, forward from Montebello village. After a hurried 2km march, IR51 marched to the left and IR13 towards the village. The reserves had no time to deploy properly before the French tide engulfed them.

On the left, Schellenberg's tired troops were overwhelmed as General Gency crossed the Coppa bridge with 6e Légère. Once across, the French headed between Schellenberg's two regiments, virtually surrounding IR40. Taking a heavy toll in casualties, IR51 and the remnants of Schellenberg's men managed to maintain order as they fell back, preventing Lannes from surrounding Ott's left.

On the hills above Casteggio, FML Vogelsang had repelled a series of attacks by Chambarlhac's division, but his troops were exhausted. Cut off from the village, they fell back along the local tracks over the upper Coppa towards the safety of Montebello, but the battalions were increasingly losing their cohesion.

As Ott pulled out, O'Reilly's brigade was left to hold Casteggio with a single battery. As the firing lines of both his wings advanced, Lannes hurled his next fresh regiment, the 96e demi-brigade, against the defenders. Advancing with two battalions and one in reserve under another hail of canister, the 96e charged with bayonets lowered. Led by the Ottocaner Grenzer, the Austrian rearguard put up a murderous fight. The Grenzers sustained heavy losses, but eventually O'Reilly was forced to evacuate the village and withdraw over the second bridge, covered by the guns positioned on the left bank of the Coppa. Reisky's IR13 had been moved up into the village to help the defenders, but as Vogelsang was driven back, Rivaud's men bypassed the upper village and descended towards the track leading to Montebello, where the 96e were now pursuing the remains of O'Reilly's light battalions. Finding their line of retreat blocked, IR13 fought their way out, but lost 400 prisoners in the process.

It was now about 5 pm as Ott's entire force fell back west down the road and tracks, as the artillery and Schustekh's cavalry fought desperately to protect the increasingly broken-up infantry. Located on a key cross-roads on the tracks just 600 metres south of the main road, Montebello became the next Austrian line of defence. Vogelsang's men followed the hill tracks to the village, to find IR51 leading the defence of Montebello village with what remained of the Austrian right which had faced Mainoni and Watrin. Scattered Grenzers took up sharpshooting positions among the trees and hedgerows, as they observed the 96e advancing in open order either side of the track. Further north, on the main road, Schellenberg was hastily establishing defensive lines, and despite being pushed steadily back, three companies of the 3rd Battalion IR40 fought a major rearguard action on the Gamberi stream. Fighting continued in the area until night fell, when Ott's scattered force had coalesced into two groups, which retreated to Voghera, 8km west down the main road. The action had cost about 2,100 casualties, 2,500 prisoners and two 3-pdr. guns, with comparable casualties on the French side. As dawn broke on 10 June, the two Austrian columns marched back through Tortona and Castelnuevo across the Scrivia.

CASTEGGIO-MONTEBELLO, 9 June 1800

(All numbers approximate)

AUSTRIAN FORCE

Advance-Guard: FML O'Reilly

(3,515; one Cavalry Artillery battery)

Oberst Schustekh

8. Nauendorff Hussars (3 bns., 455)

Bussy Jäger zu Pferd (1 bn., 165)

2nd Ottocac Grenz Regt. (1 bn., 870)

1st Bn. 5th Warasdin-Kreuz Grenzer (795)

3rd Bach Light Bn. (420)

4th Am Ende Light Bn. (460)

Mariassy Jäger (6 coys., 350)

FML Ott (11,115)

GM Vogelsang

GM Gottesheim

IR57 J. Colloredo (2 2/3 bns.; 1,645)

IR18 Stuart (3 bns., 1,770)

Oberst Lizzany

Leib Bn. 3rd Ogulin Grenz Regt. (720)

IR17 Hohenlohe (2 bns., 1,370)

FML Schellenberg

GM Sticker

IR28 Fröhlich (3 bns., 1,770)

IR40 Mittrowsky (3 bns., 1,260)

IR51 Splenyi (2 bns., 1,320)

IR13 Reisky (3 bns., 1,000)

3rd/4th sqdns. 10. Lobkowitz Light Dragoons (2,600)

FRENCH FORCE

Commander: Lt-Gen Lannes (12,520)

12e Hussars (500)

Gen. de Brigade Mainoni

28e demi-brigade (3 bns., 1,250)

Gen. de Division Watrin

Gen. de Brigade Mahler

22e demi-brigade (3 bns., 1,320)

40e demi-brigade (3 bns., 2,000)

Gen. de Brigade Gency

6e Légère (3) 1,350)

Lt-Gen Victor

Gen. de Division Chambarlhac

Gen. de Brigade Herbin

24e Légère (3) 2,000)

Gen. de Brigade Rivaud

43e demi-brigade (3 bns., 2,100)

96e demi-brigade (3 bns., 2,000)

THE BATTLE OF MARENGO, 14 JUNE

EVENING OF 13 JUNE TO THE FIRST AUSTRIAN ATTACKS

FML Ott pulled back to San Giuliano on 10 June. As the French approached during the afternoon of 11 June, Ott withdrew west across the plain to Alessandria, where Kaim, Hadik and the cavalry had just arrived from Turin, to be joined by the wreckage of Elsnitz's force. The bridgehead on the Bormida had been fully fortified on 9 June with 14 guns, connected by a boat bridge. Small rearguards were left at Acqui and Asti, awaiting signs of Suchet's advance. Guarding depots and escape routes required garrisons from Ancona and Florence through to Cuneo and Turin, significantly reducing the force at Melas' disposal at Alessandria to 23,295 infantry and 7,779 cavalry.

In all, Bonaparte's operational army numbered 28,169 men, with another 52,000 elsewhere in Italy. On the morning of 10 June, he met a spy at Pavia, who brought news of Melas' dispositions. Over the next two days, the First Consul concentrated his forces around Voghera: Desaix with the divisions under Boudet and Molitor, Lannes with Watrin's division, Victor with the divisions under Chambarlhac and Gardanne, Murat with the Guard and the bulk of the cavalry under Champeaux and Kellerman. Although a number of Austrian garrisons obstructed his route, Suchet was marching north across the Apennines from Finale, joined by the former Genoa garrison and Massena.



Napoleon established his headquarters in this large farmhouse at Torre di Garrofoli on 13 June. He would remain there until 11 am on 14 June, awaiting news of Desaix.
(L. Polastri)



Dominating the flat terrain around it, Alessandria fortress lay at a key junction on the roads from Mantua and Genoa to Turin. Two battles had been fought near here in 1799 and the Allies had besieged the citadel. Now, Melas assembled his troops here ready to breakout north or tackle Napoleon directly. The fortress has been well preserved. (G. Massobrio/MCA)



Final plans

GdK Melas reached Alessandria on the 10th. His initial idea was to offer battle and he asked Admiral Keith to keep Hohenzollern supplied in Genoa, should it be necessary to retreat there. However, following a council of war on the 11th, Melas adopted a new plan. Aside from French patrols at Casale, there appeared to be few enemy troops north of the Po, but their main force was coming down the road from Montebello. Retreating to Genoa would be arduous and expose the Austrians to attack by Massena and Suchet, who were now advancing into



Gen. de Division Claude-Victor Perrin, known as Victor (1764-1841), had fought around Marengo village in May 1799. Unsympathetic to Bonaparte's coup, his able defence of the village was never properly recognised by Napoleon, although Victor was appointed a Marshal in 1807. (A. Ferrari)

the mountains south-west of Alessandria. That afternoon, orders were issued to cross the Po at Valenza and Casale during the night of 12-13 June on two pontoon bridges. Ott, still watching the Scrivia, was to pull back into Alessandria to cover the movement. From the Po, the Austrian army would head for Milan and Pavia to regain the main road east near Piacenza.

Suddenly, the intelligence picture changed dramatically. The outpost at Valenza reported that French forces under Chabran were building up on the north bank of the Po. The Austrian commander's nightmare of encirclement by French forces was taking shape: Bonaparte sat astride the Mantua road; Thurreau observed Turin with his division; Chabran held the Po from Valenza to Pavia; Moncey blockaded key citadels including Milan and Piacenza with two divisions and the Cisalpine Legion. To the east, Duhesme screened Vukassovich's force, which was now behind the Oglio. At the same time, the local spy arrived in Alessandria from Bonaparte's headquarters. He reported that the First Consul wanted to know whether the Imperial Army were crossing the Po at Valenza and Casale, when Hohenzollern would advance from Genoa and by which route, and whether Elsnitz had reached the main army.

Melas and Zach now changed tack. They would fight a decisive battle to break out east along the main road to Mantua to rejoin Vukassovich, even though this would involve a confrontation with the First Consul's army. GM Zach developed a ruse which he believed would lure the French on to the plain open east of Alessandria. The spy was sent back to tell Bonaparte that, after the losses sustained at Casteggio, the Imperial Army would cross the Po and force their way through Pavia. He also took a false march programme showing that Hohenzollern would move his 7,000-strong force north from Genoa, reaching Novi on the 13th and joining the main army on the 14th.

To confuse French scouts, the bridge would still be thrown at Casale and boats assembled at Valenza. On 12 June, a 16-pontoon bridge was thrown on the Bormida 35 metres upstream of the boat bridge. To encourage the French commander, the spy was to suggest to him that if he moved quickly via Sale, he could still catch the retreating Austrians near Alessandria.

Final preparations, 13 June

Bonaparte crossed the Scrivia on 13 June and cleared Tortona, while Suchet descended into the Bormida valley. During that day, the divisions under Desaix (Monnier and Boudet), Lannes (Watrin and Mainoni), the Guard and Chambarlhac moved up to camps around the French HQ at Torre di Garrofoli, with Gardanne's division led by Victor forming the advance-guard.

During the morning, the spy returned to Bonaparte's headquarters with Zach's false plans. Intelligence from the north bank of the Po confirmed Austrian activity on the river, while cavalry scouts reported no Austrian units on the plain. To a certain extent, Bonaparte was taken in, concluding that Melas was pulling out. Flank forces would have to cover both the retreat to the north and Hohenzollern's move from Genoa: Chabran was ordered to watch the Po, while Desaix with Boudet's division was sent south-west to Rivalta, headed for Novi on the Genoa road. However, the First Consul wasn't entirely deceived: he was surprised at the emphasis on Sale, close to the River Tanaro, and thought that Zach's plan was an attempt to extend the French to their flanks. Suspecting that not all was as it seemed, he preferred to maintain a closed-up central position, so the main part of his army were ordered towards Tortona and San Giuliano. Most French troops did march through Sale, but there they headed south to the Turin-Mantua road. Victor's command headed off over the plain to establish Austrian activity there.

As torrential rain fell, the Austrian army concentrated in a new camp east of Alessandria, either side of the bridgehead. FML O'Reilly, leading Ott's rearguard, was pulling back into Marengo village with outposts spread along the Fontanone, but aside from a few cavalry patrols, the open ground east of the Bormida was empty.

The spy returned to Alessandria during the late afternoon with the news that French troops were marching down the main road to Sale. Zach was delighted and completed his plans: Ott, who would already have marched over the Bormida late on the 13th, would march with the left wing through Castel Ceriolo direct to Sale and attack the French wherever he met them. The main column led by Melas would march on the main road through Marengo towards San Giuliano, falling on the left of Bonaparte's force, expected to be marching along the south bank of the Tanaro. The first objective would be Tortona fortress, still held by GM Brigido's garrison. O'Reilly would take his light troops south-west to guard against Suchet's lead units expected to be around Novi.

The original plan required the troops to march off at midnight for an hour to get to the edge of the better ground and then rest until dawn at about 4.30 am before continuing. Morale was good and the troops were ready for battle, although the Order of the Day both encouraged the troops to fight for the Fatherland, while threatening deserters with instant execution. However, Zach felt it necessary to guard against French moves north of the Po: the 2. Erzherzog Josef Hussars (1,097 men) were dispatched to Casale and only part of the Asti rearguard was called in. The rest continued to watch the roads to the west.

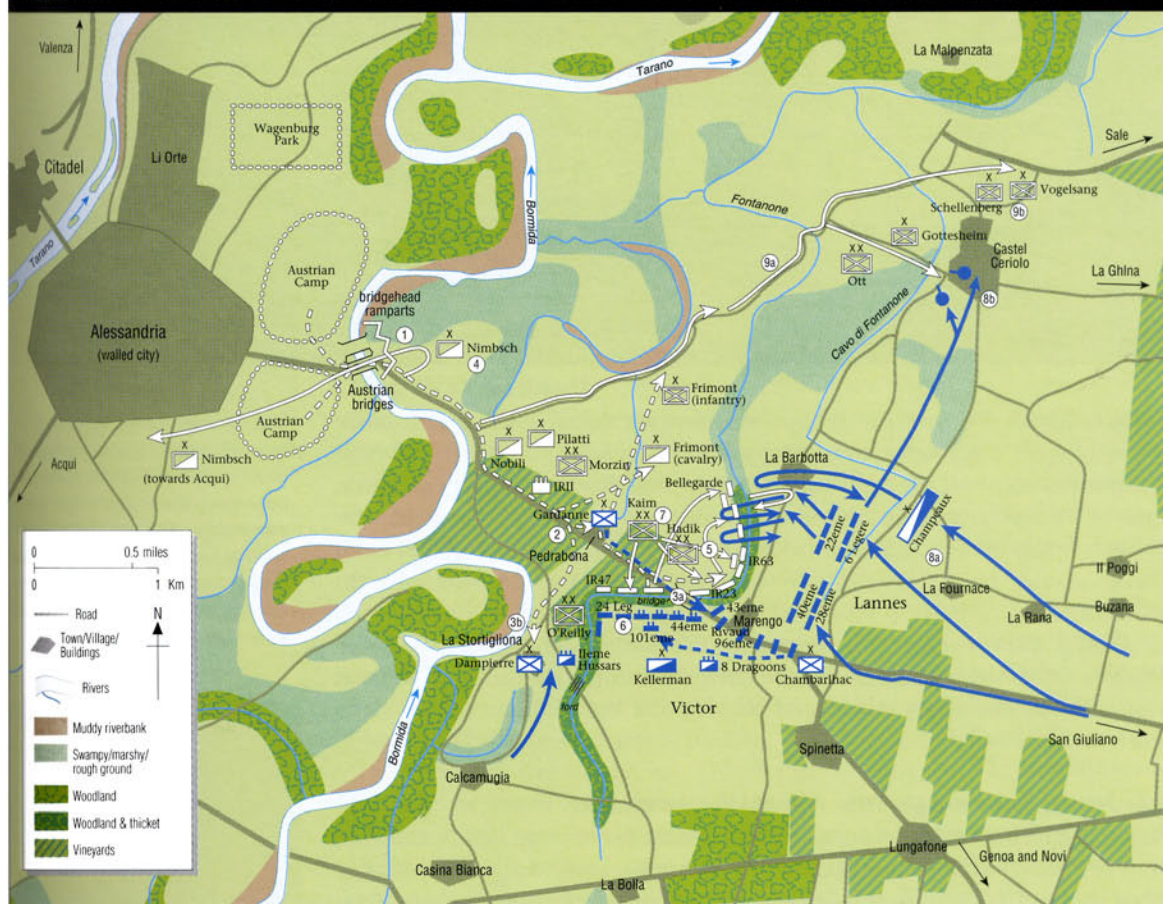
Map Key

- 1 0800: Led by O'Reilly, Austrian troops start to cross the bridges.
- 2 0830: O'Reilly swings right as Frimont's advance-guard attacks Pedrabona held by Gardanne.
- 3 a) 0900-1000: Gardanne moves up to the Fontanone to the left of Victor. b) 0900: Kellerman arrives. Dampierre defends La Stortiglione.
- 4 0900: Melas sends Nimbsch's brigade back south-west towards Acqui.
- 5 1000: Hadik's attack (Bellegarde's brigade). 1st Batt 43e defend Marengo farm. Rest of Chambarlhac's brigade in reserve on the road. Frimont moves north. His cavalry and battery support Hadik.
- 6 24e Légère halt Hadik's attack and then arrive on Gardanne's left.
- 7 1045: Second Austrian assault: Kaim attacks the bridge. Bellegarde is to the north. Supported by Bussy Jäger zu Pferd, some infantry take Barbotta.
- 8 a) 1100: Lannes arrives on Victor's right. 6e Légère on Victor's flank; 22e anchor the flank after clearing Barbotta. b) Some 6e Légère garrison Castel Ceriolo. 28e and 40e in reserve.
- 9 a) Delayed by Nimbsch, Ott finally crosses and marches up the track to Castel Ceriolo. b) 1200: Gottesheim's advance-guard advances on the village, as Ott moves up the Sale road.

Evening battle for Marengo village

Suddenly, the sound of artillery in the bridgehead around 6 pm heralded Bonaparte's decision to tackle the supposed Austrian

14 JUNE 0800-1200: THE FIRST AND SECOND AUSTRIAN ASSAULTS



rearguard to pin them in position. During the afternoon, Victor's division had marched across the plain, reaching the road fork, north-east of Cascina Grossa, around 4 pm Gardanne's division was dispatched up the old road, supported by Chambarlhac and the 11e Hussars, to attack O'Reilly's line, but Dampierre with part of the 44e demi-brigade and 12e Chasseurs à Cheval marched down the New Road, which would take them over the Fontanone and behind the Austrians. After a short downpour, Victor attacked the Austrian lines. The Grenzers put up determined resistance and Gardanne's surprise bayonet attack on the village left casualties everywhere. As Dampierre emerged to the south and Austrian losses reached 250, O'Reilly knew he had to withdraw or be cut off from the main army.

Following up, Gardanne established his main position around Pedrabona Farm, a swarm of skirmishers leading the way to the banks of the Bormida. IR51 Splenyi and 10. Lobkowitz Dragoons, who had camped nearest to the Bormida bridges, marched over and assailed Gardanne. They were supported by three batteries which opened up together with the guns in the bridgehead, forcing Gardanne back to Pedrabona, as Vogelsang's brigade joined in.

Nevertheless, Victor's attack disrupted Austrian plans completely: the vital chokepoint on the Fontanone ditch at Marengo village was in



French hands. Putting the troops under arms delayed the attack until 8 am to give the troops time to cook food before marching off. The Austrian command met during the night and Radetzky proposed that one of the pontoon bridges be moved downstream to out-flank the French right, but it was already too late. Confident that the main French force would be at Sale, Zach believed the plan should remain unchanged.

In the darkness and smoke, many French scouts failed to see the bridges over the Bormida. These defective reports and the limited resistance at Marengo reinforced Napoleon's belief that the Austrians were not coming that way.

14 June, morning: the Austrian advance

As first light broke on 14 June, the Austrians formed up, while the odd shot fell either side of the Bormida. It was a beautiful bright day, a cool westerly wind mitigating the sun's heat. At 8 am, the lead units moved on to the two Bormida bridges. They were close together as they led into the bridgehead, which had only one exit along a road bordered by swampy ground. The battlefield wasn't going to be any easier: although the ground between Alessandria and Tortona was almost flat, it was difficult to manoeuvre in. Enclosed, cultivated fields, broken up by ditches, pastures and bushes, restricted the line of sight in all directions, made lateral communication and unit co-ordination difficult. Vision was further obscured by vine plantations, where many were slung between high trees. Corn growing over 1.8 metres (6ft) in June and hedges alongside the few roads made the direction of troops more difficult. Off the hard surface roads, movement of troops across the waterlogged meadows was going to be slow. The poor road network was the key to troop movement: even on the plain, cavalry could only operate in small units and artillery could only be effective on or near the roads.

O'Reilly's column led the way: a squadron of 8. Hussars and three Grenzer companies launched the first attack on the French outposts, which fell back on Gardanne's position at Pedrabona, the first of many small fortresses to be dealt with that day. As the main column advanced under Oberst Frimont came up into line, O'Reilly headed south and left it to Frimont to clear the farmstead. The Austrians opened up a fierce barrage on Gardanne with 14 guns, soon forcing the French to withdraw back on the rest of Victor's force, based around Marengo.

ABOVE The village of Marengo from the east painted by Bagetti shortly after the battle shows how open it was from the French side compared with the high walling on the west side. The Inn by the main road is in the left centre, but the Villa Marengo now stands here. (MCA)

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BELOW The famous brick Tower of Marengo commanding the east side of the Marengo farm complex. Used to farm silkworms, it doesn't appear to have been used as a lookout point during the battle. (L. Polastri)



Chased by Austrian cavalry, Gardanne's men raced over the Fontanone bridge and took up a position along the stream facing north.

Around 9 am, an hour after the advance began, news arrived from the nervous Rittmeister Civrani at Acqui that the head of a French column had reached his position and was driving him back on Alessandria. Thinking this was Suchet attacking in force, when in fact his main body was 50km short of Acqui, Melas diverted the two hussar regiments from Nimbsch's brigade, which had just crossed the bridge, to reinforce the outpost, but fatally weakening his cavalry. At the same moment, Napoleon was despatching orders to Desaix, confirming his march towards Novi and to Lapoype, sending his Division from Pontecurone north over the Po towards Valenza.

The first assault

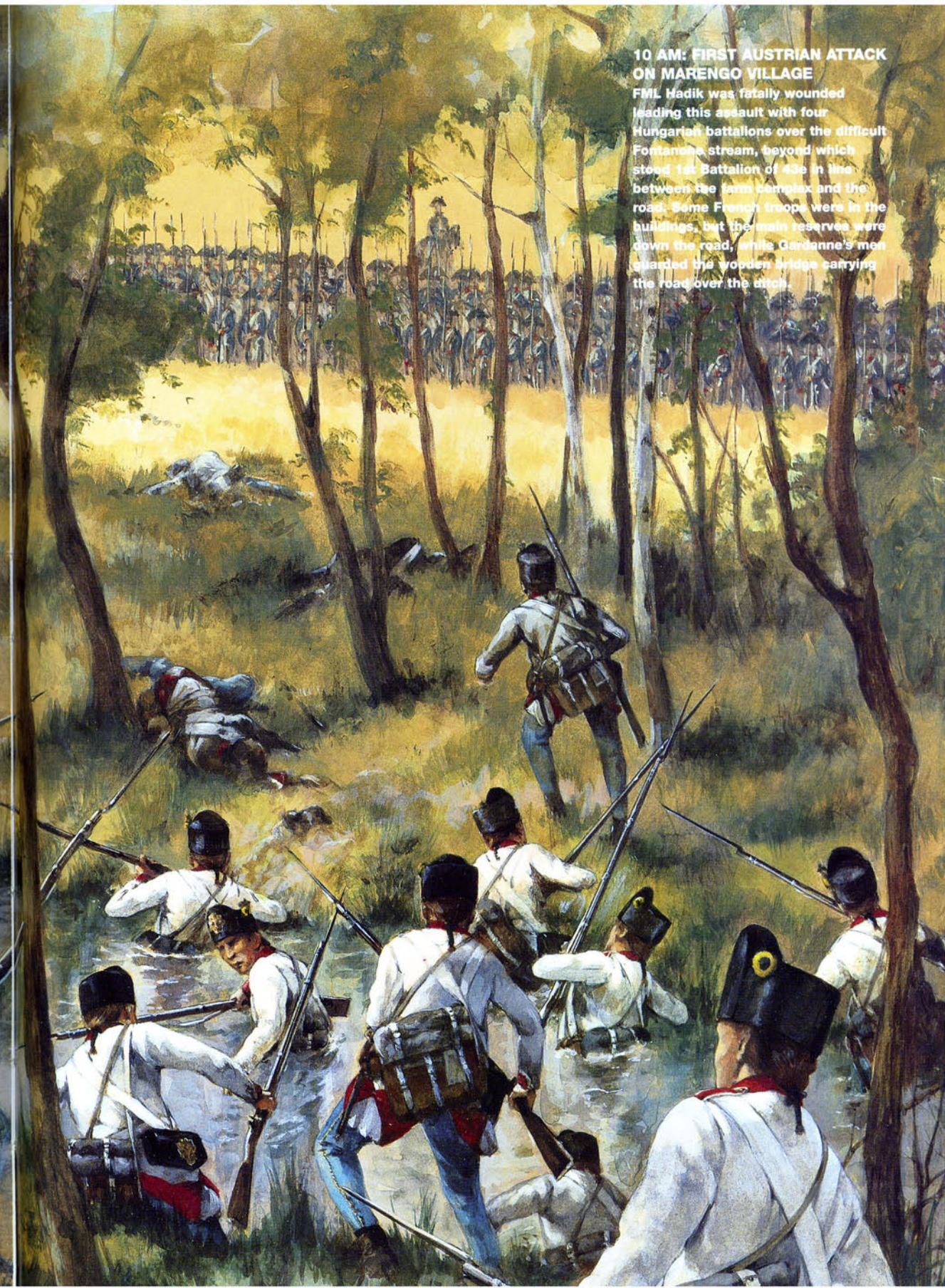
Berthier ordered Victor to hold his position to keep the Austrian attack bottled up and to establish how serious it was, while he rode off to fetch Napoleon. Lannes' division was being hastily marched up, but most of the army was still back around Torre di Garrofoli. A series of messengers arrived there during the morning, but Bonaparte still refused to believe the Austrian move was any more than a feint.

Frimont moved north to allow FML Hadik to deploy the first Treffen under cover of his battalion guns, with Frimont's battery in support preparing for the advance. They were followed by Kaim's division forming the second line, behind which came the remaining cavalry under Elsnitz and the reserve guns, snaking their way out of the bridgehead.

Defending the village was Oliver Rivaud with the 43e demi-brigade. Initially, he positioned the 1st Battalion between the substantial farm complex and the main road. The other two battalions, along with Chambarlhac's brigade (96e and 24e Légère), were held in reserve down the road towards the inn. It was essential that he held the area, as the farm dominated the road and the wooden bridge over the Fontanone. Further east were the few buildings that formed the village itself. Champeaux's dragoon brigade was deployed in the open ground behind the village, while Kellerman's weak regiments were to the south-west behind Gardanne's new line on the Fontanone.

After softening up the village's defenders with howitzer shells for about an hour, Hadik personally led forward the four Hungarian battalions of Bellegarde's brigade just before 10 am. They reached the boggy ground lining the Fontanone, but came under increasing fire, both from the 1st Battalion of the 43e south of Marengo, but more so from Gardanne's force, who poured musketry into the right wing from the safety of the Fontanone. Nevertheless, IR52's two battalions scrambled into the ditch, while IR53 moved right to face Gardanne. Initially, chasing the last of 101e Grenadiers over the bridge, Hadik thought the French were pulling out from the village and urged his men on. However, the Austrians could make little progress in the bloody fighting, so when Victor led 24e Légère up the main road, the Austrian advance faltered. Just as he ordered the withdrawal, Hadik was severely wounded by a musket ball and would die in Alessandria ten days later.

The 24e Légère took up a position on the left of Gardanne, from where they could also fire on O'Reilly's small column, now moving against Dampierre, who had remained as Gardanne's left with his



**10 AM: FIRST AUSTRIAN ATTACK
ON MARENGO VILLAGE**

FML Hadik was fatally wounded leading this assault with four Hungarian battalions over the difficult Fontanone stream, beyond which stood 1st Battalion of 43e in line between the farm complex and the road. Some French troops were in the buildings, but the main reserves were down the road, while Gardanne's men guarded the wooden bridge carrying the road over the ditch.



ABOVE Oberst Johann Maria Frimont (1759-1831) was born in Lorraine, the son of a French army officer, but he joined the Austrian cavalry in 1776. A brave and decisive cavalry commander, he was Oberst of the Bussy Jäger zu Pferd throughout its existence and as an FML, he commanded V Korps in Germany in 1813. (BA)



detachment of the 44e and a light gun based at the key chokepoint of La Stortiglione. Dampierre established his position in this farm, which nestled in a narrow gap between the Bormida and Fontanone with vineyards covering its front. At noon, he was rejoined by Ismert's 11e Hussars, who had been ordered back from the far left.



Gen. de Division Oliver Rivaud (1766-1830). Having led the decisive assault on the hills at Casteggio, Rivaud now conducted a desperate defence of Marengo village with his 43e demi-brigade. (A. Ferrari)

The second Austrian assault

Kaim's Treffen allowed Hadik's troops back through to re-form behind them. Around 10.30 am, in a larger and better co-ordinated attack, Kaim directed his division on Marengo, IR47 covering the right and Austrian guns spraying the French around the bridge with canister. French troops who had ventured across the Fontanone were smartly evicted at the point of the bayonet, but from their steeper side, the Austrians again made little progress in crossing the deep and swampy ditch. Bellegarde's men



LEFT Austrian artillery in action (Seele). Although numerically superior, the Austrian guns were mostly light 3-pdrs. and 6-pdrs. Their effectiveness was also greatly reduced by the difficult vegetation around the Fontanone. (P. Hofschröder)



ABOVE Major Vincenz Krapf, commander of the Engineers, was attached to Melas' staff when he was killed by a cannonball. (BA)

RIGHT As O'Reilly swung south, Dampierre based his position on La Stortiglione farm and the undulating ground to the east, which formed a key chokepoint between the Bormida and Fontanone, with vineyards to the north. The north wall shown here was a formidable obstacle. (L. Polastri)

had rallied on Kaim's left, where elements of the brigade found it easier to cross into an area that was unguarded by Victor. Supported by the Bussy Jäger zu Pferd, the infantry headed for Barbotta farm, but Bellegarde was wounded, another casualty in the growing list of senior officers being picked off by French sharpshooters.

The Austrian hold on Barbotta was short-lived. Around 11 am, the lead elements of Lannes' division arrived to shore up Victor's exposed right. The 6e Légère joined Rivaud's right nearest Marengo. The 22e initially headed up to clear Barbotta of Bellegarde's men, who then anchored the right of the French line. A detachment from the 6e Légère was dispatched north to the village of Castel Ceriolo to watch for Austrian flanking moves. As Watrin's division pushed the Austrians back and in places crossed the Fontanone themselves, Lannes held the 28e and 40e in reserve.

The increasing sound of fire from the west and Berthier's arrival at headquarters finally changed Napoleon's mind: at 11 am messengers were sent to both Desaix and Lapoype to recall them urgently, as Monnier's division was sent forward down the road. At Rivalta, 15km south-east of Marengo, Desaix's planned crossing had been delayed by the rising waters of the Scrivia. The 9e Légère had crossed, but it was 10 am before Guenand's infantry and the artillery could start. As Melas' preparations began for a third assault around noon, a desperate message from Bonaparte reached Desaix: 'Melas has attacked me first. For God's sake, come up if you still can!'



LEFT Although very close to Marengo, the thick vegetation around the Fontanone made even seeing it very difficult. This area was initially watched by Lannes' left, anchored on the north corner of the farm. The high walls of the west side of the farm meant that no Austrian move was expected at this point. (L. Polastri)

THE BATTLE OF MARENGO: EVENING 13 JUNE 1800

AUSTRIAN ARMY

Commander-in-Chief: GdK Melas

Chief of Staff: GM Zach

Right Column: Field Marshal O'Reilly

GM Rousseau

- 8. Nauendorff Hussars (2 sqdns., 300)
- 5. Hussars (2 sqdns., 230)
- 4th Bn. Banat District Grenzer (533)
- 1st Bn. 5. Warasdin-Kreuz Grenz Regt (755)
- 2nd Ottocac Grenz Regt (1 bn., 298)
- 1st Bn. 3rd Ogulin Grenz Regt. (1 sqdn., 602)
- 8. Württemberg Light Dragoons (1 sqdn., 113)
- Cavalry Artillery Battery (4 x 6-pdrs., 2 x 7-pdr. howitzers)

Main Column: Oberst Frimont (Advance Guard)

- 3rd Bach Light Inf. Bn. (277)
- 4th Am Ende Light Inf. Bn. (291)
- 1. Kaiser Light Dragoons (2 sqdns., 312)
- Bussy Jäger zu Pferd (2 sqdns., 186)
- Pioneers (1 coy., 115)
- Cavalry Artillery battery (4 x 6-pdrs., 2 x 7-pdr. howitzers)

FML Hadik

GM Pilatti

- 1. Kaiser Light Dragoons (3 sqdns., 460)
- 4. Karaczay Light Dragoons (6 sqdns., 1,053)

GM F. Bellegarde

- IR53 Jellacic (2 bns., 956)
- IR52 Erz. Anton (2 bns., 855)
- 8 x 3-pdrs.

FML Kaim

GM de Briey

- IR47 F. Kinsky (2 1/3, 1,640)
- 4 x 3-pdrs.

GM Knesvich

- IR23 Grossherzog von Toscana (3 bns., 2,188)
- 4 x 3-pdrs.; 1 x 6-pdr.

GM La Marseille

- IR63 Archduke Joseph (3 bns., 1,111)
- 4 x 3-pdrs.; 1 x 6-pdr.

Reserve: GM Saint Julien

- IR11 M. Wallis (3 bns., 2,209)
- 6 x 3-pdrs.

FML Morzin (Grenadier Battalions)

GM Latterman

- Paar (357)
- St Julien (580)
- Schiaffinati (408)
- Kleinmayer (378)
- Weber (393)
- 10 x 3-pdrs.

GM Weidenfeld

- Khevenhöller (384)
- Pieret (226)
- Pertusi (555)
- Perss (293)
- Gorschen (291)
- Weissenwolf (491)
- Pioneers (4 coys., 575)
- 12 x 3-pdrs.

FML Elsnitz (Reserve Cavalry):

GM Nobili

- 3. Erzherzog Johann Light Dragoons (6 sqdns., 859)
- 9. Lichtenstein Light Dragoons (6 sqdns., 1,059)

GM Nimbsch

- 7. Hussars (8 sqdns., 1,353)
- 9. Erdödy Hussars (6 sqdns., 988)



Reserve Artillery

5 x Cavalry Artillery Batteries (4 x 6-pdrs., 2 x 7-pdr. howitzers)

Left Column: FML Ott

GM Gottesheim (Advance-Guard)

Mariassy Jäger (4 coys., 245)
10. Lobkowitz Light Dragoons (2 sqdns., 245)
IR28 Fröhlich (1 bn., 523)
Cavalry Artillery battery (4 x 6-pdrs., 2 x 7-pdr. howitzers)

FML Schellenberg

GM Retz

IR28 Fröhlich (2 bns., 1,046)
IR40 Mitrowsky (3 bns., 853)
Pioneers (1 coy., 115)
6 x 3-pdrs.; 2 x 6-pdrs.; 2 x 12-pdrs.

GM Sticker

10. Lobkowitz Light Dragoons (4 sqdns., 495)
IR51 Splenyi (2 bns., 737)
IR57 J. Colloredo (3 bns., 1,369)
8 x 3-pdrs.; 1 x 6 pdr.

FML Vogelsang

GM Ulm

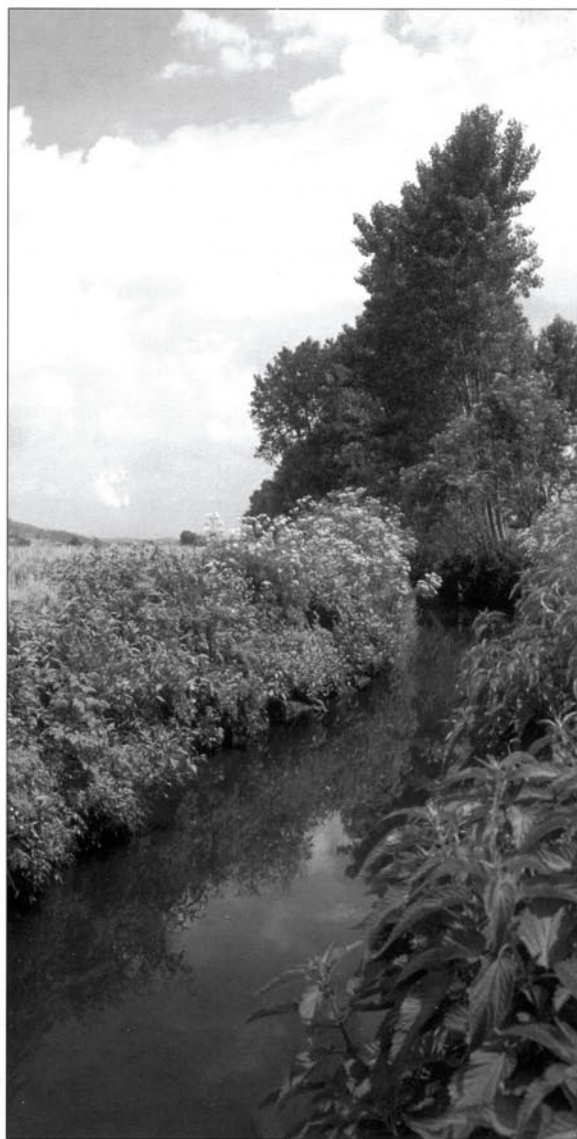
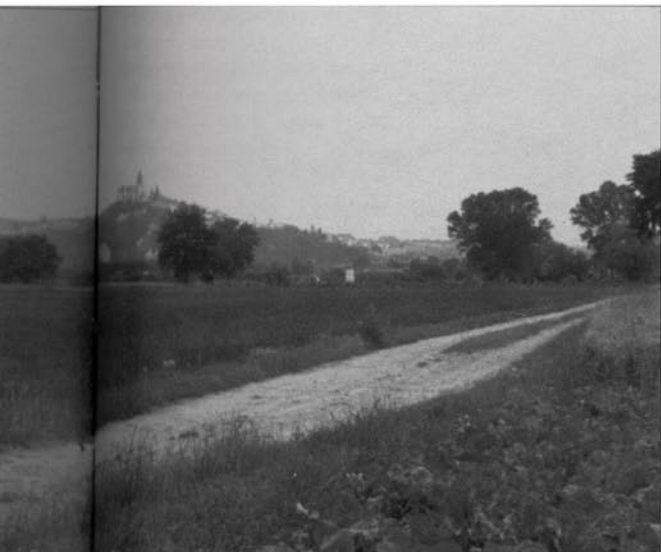
IR18 Stuart (3 bns., 1,282)
IR17 Hohenlohe (2 bns., 912)
6 x 3-pdrs.; 1 x 6 pdr.

Engineer Troops (Major Krapf)

Pontoonier (1 coy., 60)
Sappers (1 coy., 91)
Miners (2 coy., 96)

Outposts

Novi: 8. Nauendorff Hussars (1 sqdn., 126)
Acqui: 5th Sqdn. 1. Kaiser Dragoons (45)
Asti: 1st Bn. Banat District Grenzer (482)
2nd C. Rohan Light Inf. Bn. (578)



ABOVE Although more regulated now, the Fontanone west of Barbotta still shows what a difficult obstacle this ditch was, even when less than half full of water. The uneven bottom meant that it could be crossed easily in some places but was too deep in others. Around this point, Bellegarde's men crossed in the second assault, but pushed back by Lannes' reinforcements, found themselves under attack as French troops crossed the ditch from the eastern side, where the slope was less pronounced. (L. Polastri)

LEFT Halfway between Marengo and Castel Ceriolo, Barbotta farm and the north-south track it controlled form the anchor for the French right under Lannes. In the background is Monte Castello, which lies just across the Tanaro. Bellegarde's brief advance over the Fontanone in the second Austrian assault seems to have got as far as here, but his few troops were unable to hold it for long. (L. Polastri)

FRENCH ARMY

Commander-in-Chief: General Berthier

Chief of Staff: Lt.-General Dupont

Lt.-Gen. Victor

Gen. de Div. Gardanne

44e demi-brigade (3 bns., 1,748)

101e demi-brigade (3 bns., 1,890)

detachment from 102e demi-brigade (53)

Division: Gen. de Div. Chambarlhac

Brigade Dohl

24e Légère (3 bns., 1,801)

Brigade O. Rivaud

43e demi-brigade (3 bns., 1,901)

96e demi-brigade (3 bns., 1,586)

Artillery: Demarcay

4th coy. 5e Regt. artillerie à cheval (4 guns)

10th coy. 6e Regt. artillerie à cheval (3 guns)

Train (Paillard)

1st bataillon de train

Division: Gen. de Div. Lannes

Domangot: 5e Dragoons

Brigade Mainoni

28e demi-brigade (3 bns., 998)

Division: Gen de Div. Watrin:

Brigade Gency

6e Légère (3 bns., 1,114)

Brigade Mahler

22e demi-brigade (3 bns., 1,255)

40e demi-brigade (3 bns., 1,716)

Artillery: Pernety: 2nd coy. 2e Regt. artillerie à cheval

(2 x 6-pdr. gun s) from the Guard: 1 x 8 pdr., 1 x 7 pdr. howitzer

Lt-Gen. Desaix

Division: Gen. de Div. Monnier

Brigade Schilt

19e Légère (2 bns., 914)

Brigade Cara St-Cyr

70e demi-brigade (3 bns., 1,460)

72e demi-brigade (3 bns., 1,240)

Artillery: 2 guns detached from Boudet

Division: Gen. de Div. Boudet

Brigade Musnier

9e Légère (3 bns., 2,014)

Brigade Guenand

30e demi-brigade (2 bns., 1,430)

59e demi-brigade (3 bns., 1,872)

Artillery Duport: 4 coys. 2e Regt. Artillerie à Cheval (6)

Cavalry

1er Hussars (4 sqdns., 120)

3e cavalerie de bataille (4 sqdns., 120)

Lt-Gen. Murat

Brigade: Gen. de Brigade Kellerman

2e cavalerie (182)

20e cavalerie (280)

21e cavalerie (180)

Brigade: Gen. de Brigade Champeaux

1e Dragoons (450)

8e Dragoons (328)

9e Dragoons (150)

Brigade: Gen. de Brigade J. Rivaud

12e Hussars (300)

21e Chasseurs à Cheval (359)

11e Hussars (420)

Brigade: Gen. de Brigade Duvignau

6e Dragoons (345)

12e Chasseurs à Cheval (340)

(Under Lt-Gen. Moncey)

Division: Lapoye

1er Légère (850)

29e (3 bns., 1,632)

91e (2 bns., 980)

(Total Artillery: Foot and Horse: 618)

Napoleon Bonaparte, First Consul of the French Republic

Garde des Consul

Grenadiers à pied (2 bns., 800)

Cavalry

Grenadiers à Cheval (200)

Chasseurs à Cheval (160)

Artillerie Légère (6 guns), 72

(4 x 6-pdrs.)

THE AUSTRIAN BREAKOUT



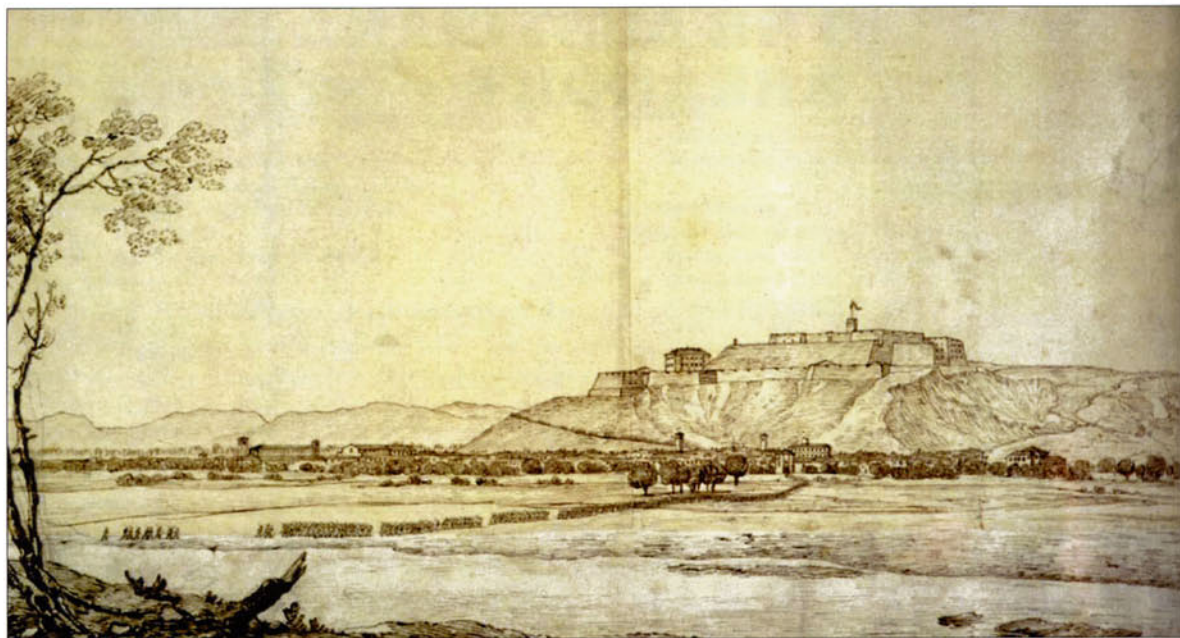
GM Christoph Freiherr von Latterman (1753-1835) joined the infantry aged just 13. After distinguished service in the Bavarian Succession war, he commanded the Pontooniers during the Turkish war. Commanding infantry again in the Revolutionary Wars, he regularly distinguished himself with his bravery and judgement, winning the Knight's Cross of the MTO for Verona on 5 April 1799. Badly wounded crossing the Fontanone, he was on garrison and administrative duties for the rest of his career. (BA)

Delayed by Nimbsch recrossing the Bormida, Ott's command did not start moving up the road towards Castel Ceriolo until 10.30 am, and they were joined by Frimont's infantry en route. Swampy ground forced them to remain on a narrow frontage bordered by thicket, and it was shortly before noon that General Gottesheim's advance-guard caught sight of French troops inside Castel Ceriolo. A swift attack by this veteran commander soon persuaded the few 6e Légère outposts to abandon their positions, many being chased up the Sale road by his cavalry. As Gottesheim's infantry emerged from the village, they could see that the open ground east of them was devoid of French troops. As Ott arrived to the north of the village at 12.20 pm, the first cavalry scouts were returning to report that there was no sign of the large French column Zach had expected from Sale. Prisoners confirmed that they came from the force to the south. Ott appreciated the conundrum: Zach's plan was probably wrong, and there was no point marching east unsupported by the main column, which was still bottled up behind Marengo. A strike into Lannes' right flank would force the French general to commit his reserves and reduce Victor's ability to resist the main Austrian column. However, the French didn't appear to be there in great strength, so he still had to consider the possibility of a large enemy force coming from the north-east.

As Gottesheim's two squadrons of dragoons were sent further up the Sale road, he ordered the rest of his advance-guard to attack Lannes' right, supported by a second battalion of IR28. As the remaining four squadrons of dragoons arrived, they were dispatched south-east in a



RIGHT The view of Marengo as Latterman's Grenadiers crossed the Fontanone. The small ditch in the foreground formed another defensive line for Rivaud's reinforcements. GM Latterman was wounded during the attack. (M. Gioannini)



Initially intended as a forward Austrian strongpoint, the rapid French advance to San Giuliano isolated the 1,300-strong garrison of Tortona fortress. During the battle, they raided Rivalta. (Bagetti/A. Ferrari)

sweep towards Buzana to threaten Lannes' rear and scout the tracks to the east. Gottesheim marched his men south, the small Mariassy Jäger leading the way with two guns. The rest of Ott's division remained north of Castel Ceriolo with Frimont's two Light Infantry Battalions in the village.

As Gottesheim approached Barbotta farm around 12.45 pm, Lannes knew he was facing a serious threat to his open right flank. In a fateful move, a battalion of the 22e was removed from Watrin's line and up to the right of Barbotta to form a new flank. From his reserve, Lannes dispatched the remains of the battle-hardened 28e under General Mainoni to extend this flank. Almost out of ammunition, they formed a single square. Then the Austrian dragoons were spotted to the north-east, forcing Lannes to commit his last troops, the 40e, to fill the rear. To Lannes' left, Victor's troops were becoming increasingly tired and ammunition was running low. Only Oliver Rivaud was north of the road, clinging on to Marengo with two battalions of the much-reduced 43e.

A change of plan

As Kaim's men fell back from the second assault around noon and reordered themselves, Melas, the Austrian commander, recognised that Zach had encountered a major bottleneck. Unblocking it would best be achieved by getting cavalry and light artillery on to Gardanne's left, as the French were covering the now damaged Fontanone bridge. Unaware of Gottesheim's advance, he focused on outflanking the French left, to be followed by a hammer blow against the centre.

O'Reilly's force was still bogged down at La Stortiglione, but some of his grenzers were engaging Gardanne's flank. So, the track to a small ford over the Fontanone to the south-west, which led behind the end of the French line, was clear. GM Pilatti's nine squadrons (1. Kaiser and 4. Karaczay Dragoons) were ordered to cross the stream at this point to take Gardanne in reverse. It was a laboured crossing as each man pushed

Although in 1800, a ford existed at this point on the Fontanone, south-east of La Stortiglione, over which Pilatti's cavalry attempted to cross around 2 pm, it is still apparent that the trees initially provided useful cover, but made crossing difficult in strength. The chaos on the retreat was caused by cavalymen trying to cross at deeper points of the stream. (L. Polastri)



his horse through the swampy watercourse and then climbed the far bank, led by three squadrons of the 1. Kaiser Dragoons under Major Kees. They were just forming up when, to their surprise, the Austrian cavalry was spotted by Kellerman's troopers. In a classic attack, Kellerman first directed 8e Dragoons to tackle Kees, whilst his three heavy regiments, just 640 strong, formed up in line behind. Kees' men engaged the 8e, forcing them to break and rally behind Kellerman's main line, as the 4. Karaczay continued to cross. Before this deployment was complete, Kellerman launched his heavy wave, which overwhelmed 1. Kaiser and threw them back on their unformed colleagues. Although Kees and some of his men tried to hold the French off, panic spread rapidly among Pilatti's command. A tangle of men and horses tumbled



through the thicket back into the ditch, chased by French sabres and infantry musketry. Those at the back were either cut down or captured; in front, many suffocated in the bottom of the ditch. Weidenfeld's Grenadiers were hastily moved to cover the panicked retreat and pre-empt a French advance, which could have cut off O'Reilly.

To the north, Ott's two Dragoon squadrons had ventured up beyond Lobbi (3km north-east of Castel Ceriolo), where they had fought a short clash with a French hussar squadron, the lead unit of Jean Rivaud's cavalry, but there was still no sign of a major force.

The battle around 2.15 pm showing its full extent across about 10km. To the right (north), Ott holds Castel Ceriolo, while O'Reilly is on the left, heading south after taking La Stortiglione. In the centre, there is still fighting around the Fontanone and close to Marengo. (Bagetti/MCA)

The third assault

Along the line of the Fontanone, the opposing infantry had only the ditch between them; shots were exchanged at 10 paces and lines of men lay felled on the marshy ground. Many Austrian artillery crews supporting the attacks were reduced to two men with most horses dead. Engaged at close quarters to the front with Bellegarde's battalions, Lannes was under mounting pressure on his right. Melas was now aware that Gottesheim was executing the task originally allocated to Pilatti. While Lannes was concentrating on this double threat, Kaim prepared to deliver the Austrian main strike.

Meanwhile, IR47 continued to engage Gardanne to the west, and Kaim pulled the rest of his division back a little to reduce casualties. There he reordered them for the third assault with Bellegarde's reassembled battalions further north. The Austrian infantry again scrambled towards the Fontanone's marshy banks under a hail of Rivaud's and Lannes' musketry. Melas had come further forward with his staff and ordered GM Latterman to support Kaim's line with his five Grenadier battalions, which Melas personally led forward.

On Kaim's left, Major Graf Hardegg, commander of the Pioneers, had finally arrived with his bridging equipment. As the 6e Légère had moved north to fill the gap in Lannes' line after the 22e moved up and



Inside the Marengo farm complex (towards the SW side) where at least 400 French wounded and stragglers held out. Once 1. Kaiser Dragoons were behind the farm, the Grenadiers were able to clear the village and the advance could begin. (L. Polastri)

Rivaud remained pinned down around Marengo, a hole had opened in the French line in the thicket-covered boggy ground near the small ditch running north of the village. In the difficult conditions, some Pioneers were already in the channel trying to secure the 10-metre support beams on the far side, covered by Pioneer sharpshooters. Under the pressure of time, Hardegg ordered others to jump in. Standing in mud and water up to their chests, 17 men placed their hands on the shoulders of the man in front and lowered their heads to form a human bridge. A battalion from IR63 were immediately rushed over to back up the sharpshooters among the hedges on the far side, and were supported by La Marseille's battery firing canister, as more Pioneers jumped in to create several more crossings. The sound of gunfire prompted Lannes to move up a battery to engage the Austrians. Kaim was able to mirror this move and directed a reserve battery in support, as Major Perczel was arriving with his guns. The two sides exchanged artillery fire as two Pioneer companies completed their Laufbrücken.

As IR63's battalion and the Pioneer sharpshooters engaged the 6e Légère on Lannes' left, two of Latterman's Grenadier battalions led by their brigade commander were quickly redirected over the Laufbrücken and they stormed across the boggy ground towards Marengo. Behind them came Frimont's Dragoon squadrons as GM Bellegarde's troops began to cross the Fontanone to engage the 22e directly to the front, while on the French General's right flank, Gottesheim's advance-guard still threatened. Seriously exposed to a concentric attack, Lannes saw that Rivaud was also under pressure, so he was in danger of being cut off as the weight of numbers told against him. After three hours of fighting and low on ammunition, his tired men couldn't last: Watrin's brigade broke up and ran for the safety of nearby vines, chased by Frimont's Dragoons.

Back amid the vines, Watrin reordered his men and Lannes prepared to counter-attack, as Champeaux's cavalry launched two charges into 10.

14 JUNE 1230-1500: THE AUSTRIAN BREAKOUT



Map Key

- 1 Gottesheim clears 6eme Légère outposts from Castel Ceriolo. Two squadrons chase most of them up the Sale road. 1230: This cavalry is sent further up the road.
- 2a 1220: Gottesheim attacks Lannes' right.
- 2b Four squadrons move into open ground.
- 3 1230: Lannes moves a battalion of 22eme to form a right flank. 28eme form a single square. 40eme fill in to the rear.
- 4 2nd Batt 43eme committed to Marengo as Kaim's attack pulls back.
- 5 1200-1230: O'Reilly's Grenzers engage 24eme Légère. Pilatti's cavalry cross the Fontanone. Driving off 8eme Dragoons, they are scattered by Kellerman's cavalry.
- 6 Weidenfeld's Grenadiers moved to cover Pilatti's withdrawal.
- 7 1230 onwards: Ott's two squadrons fight running skirmishes with J. Rivaud's Hussar outposts.
- 8 1230: Kaim & Bellegarde make a third assault, supported by Latterman.
- 9 1245: Hardegg's Pioneers build a new crossing. IR63 move between Lannes and Rivaud. Lannes moves a battery up to counter the Austrians. 1250: Two Grenadier batts cross with two squadrons of 1. Dragoons. Bellegarde's troops cross to engage 22eme.
- 11 1300: Rivaud leads up Victor's last two batts against the Grenadiers.
- 10 1330: Watrin's brigade breaks up. Four Austrian squadrons engage Champeaux and 40eme to the rear of Marengo. 1345: Lannes reordered troops attack again pushing the Austrians back to the Fontanone.
- 12 1400-1430: O'Reilly pushes Dampierre back to Casina Bianca. Schustekh and a Grenzer battalion force the French to surrender, as the rest of O'Reilly's force head for Frugarolo.
- 13a 1415: Nobili's Dragoons charge over the bridge with cavalry guns in support to clear French infantry.
- 13b Kellerman counters to drive Nobili back as 96eme cover Gardanne's withdrawal towards Spinetta.
- 14 1430: Ott sends Schellenberg through Castel Ceriolo to support Gottesheim.
- 15 1430: Latterman and IR63 cross the Fontanone again. Lannes withdraws Watrin as Rivaud evacuates Marengo, except 400 men in the farm. New French line established amongst the vines.
- 16 1430: Melas leads two Dragoon squadrons down the road to capture Marengo. The Austrians cross in force. Austrian guns pound the entire French line.
- 17a 1500: Bonaparte arrives with his Guard.
- 17b Monnier's Division heads for the French right and Castel Ceriolo

Lobkowitz Dragoons to take the pressure off the 40e. At the same time, General Rivaud courageously hurried forward through the village with the last of Victor's reserves – the third battalions of the 43e and 96e. As Lannes drove back IR63, it was his turn to threaten to cut off Latterman's battalions, just as Rivaud attacked again with his fresh battalions. Rolling fire was poured into the Grenadiers who, despite a costly charge by the two squadrons of 1. Kaiser Dragoons, were driven from the village and pulled back towards the Fontanone. The two sides faced each other across a small ditch close to the Fontanone, which covered the north side of the farm. A ferocious close-range firefight developed in which senior commanders on both sides, including Rivaud and Latterman, were badly wounded.

Gardanne's position on the French left had also become more precarious: towards 2 pm, O'Reilly finally evicted Dampierre from La Stortiglione. Sending Schustekh's cavalry with the 3rd Ogulin Grenzer after him, his remaining Grenzers engaged Gardanne's left, which had to be extended to the south with a battalion of the 24e. Despite being reinforced with two battalions of the 96e, Gardanne began to doubt his capacity to resist.

Marengo falls

Equally anxiously, Kellerman and Gardanne could now see the next Austrian strike: Nobili's cavalry brigade was forming up to charge the damaged bridge and split Victor's line, their light guns ready to exploit any advantage. To protect against the immediate threat, Kellerman formed up by the road, again with 8th Dragoons to the front. As Nobili's brigade poured over at about 2.15 pm, the remains of the 43e ran for the cover of the farm, while some Austrian Dragoons sabred members of the 96e. Still not fully deployed, 3. Erzherzog Johann were charged by the 8e, but beat them off. Once again, Kellerman led his men in and sent the Austrian Dragoons tumbling back over the bridge, disordering 9. Lichtenstein Dragoons in the process. Although unsuccessful, Nobili's charge had been the last straw for Victor. Out of ammunition, Gardanne's men were already pulling back, using the 96e to cover them. With no reserves left, Victor decided to withdraw his entire line back to the protection of Spinetta's vineyards and Rivaud to the same line further north. Lannes would protect the right.

Close to breaking the French position, Gottesheim rode back to Castel Ceriolo to request more troops and was allocated Schellenberg's division. The division marched south through the village in a long column, Retz's weaker brigade leading Sticker's. Vogelsang's division remained north of the village.

As the Austrian army finally began to gather momentum and Victor started to pull out, the other three Grenadier battalions and the rest of IR63 crossed the Laufbrücken to reinforce their comrades. Major Perczel, who had silenced nearby French guns turned his reserve batteries on the Marengo farm, which was garrisoned by about 400 French infantry, many of whom were wounded. As Latterman's second attack came in, Rivaud's exhausted men abandoned the village. Bellegarde's battalions were joining IR63, as the Bussy Jäger scooped up the nearby guns. Facing Austrian artillery, Lannes ordered Watrin to pull back in line with Victor to safety.

As Chambarlhac's two battalions of the 96e withdrew along with Kellerman's troopers *en echelon*, a huge cheer went up from the Austrian ranks and Melas seized his last, glorious chance. The veteran cavalry commander gathered up the remains of 1. Kaiser Dragoons and with Radetzky, led them over the bridge and swept down the road. The blockage was finally open for the main column. The Pioneers hastily worked on restoring the vital bridge for the artillery. About a hundred volunteer skirmishers led the way for the infantry, screening the deployment of guns belonging to Latterman's Grenadiers. Some of Perczel's reserve guns were rushed over and deployed to lay down a barrage directed on Gardanne's men around Spinetta. As Melas assembled his commanders, Rittmeister Touissant led the Dragoon squadrons round the rear of the farm complex, cutting off its defenders, who surrendered.

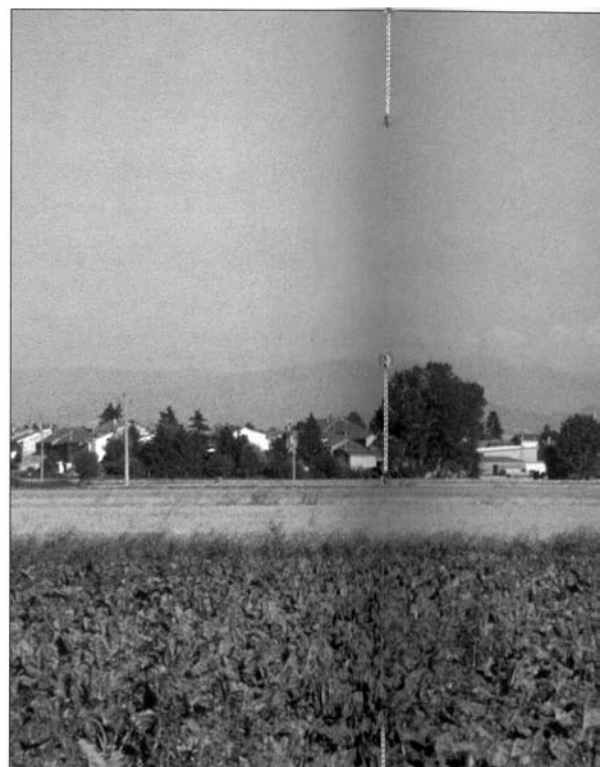
While the final Austrian assault was made on Marengo, O'Reilly was chasing Dampierre south, cutting him off in Casina Bianca. After a short clash, Oberst Schustekh's Hussars chased off the 11e Hussars and swept round the back of the farm as the 3rd Ogulin Grenzer battalion assaulted the front. At 3 pm, the remains of the 44e surrendered. O'Reilly then headed for Frugarolo to protect the Austrian right and observe the Novi/Genoa road, looking out for Desaix or Suchet. From the Tortona fortress, GM Brigido had launched a brief foray in the early afternoon as the army broke out. To the south-west, two of Nimbsch's Hussar squadrons had chased Suchet's dragoons back down the road from Cantalupo towards Acqui, taking a large number of prisoners. The rest had crossed the Bormida and surprised the 12e Chasseurs à Cheval at Castellazo around noon. These French cavalry were then chased east for much of the afternoon.

As Schellenberg's column had marched off, Ott had ordered 10. Lobkowitz Dragoons, currently spread out all over the northern part of the battlefield, to reassemble to face a new threat. The bugles were sounded, but it would take them half an hour to re-form. As the sound of musketry around Marengo subsided, events on the Austrian left came to a conclusion.

Bonaparte's last gamble

Around 2 pm, the First Consul had ridden from San Giuliano to see the position himself. Reaching the main action around 3 pm, he could see Victor and Lannes arranging their new line of defence north of Spinetta among the vines; Champeaux's cavalry (without their commander) were between the two divisions. A stream of wounded were making their way east down the roads. The threat of complete encirclement was growing, as Gottesheim's advance-guard pressed the right, and growing numbers of Austrian troops with artillery marched towards Spinetta to envelop his left wing, cutting his main lines of communication. A crushing defeat could only be averted by gaining time for Desaix and his 9,000 reserves to return.

Napoleon decided he had to commit his last reserves, which were moving up the Buzana track to halt Ott. One battalion of the 72e was directed to join the right of Lannes' line to help against Gottesheim's advance. Monnier was ordered to halt Ott by forming an extended line towards the north towards Castel Ceriolo. The Guard cavalry would



General de Division Jean Charles Monnier, commanding a Reserve division, which advanced to reduce the pressure from Ott on Lannes. By taking Castel Ceriolo, Carra St-Cyr delayed the advance of Schellenberg's brigade. Monnier stayed in reserve with two battalions of 72e, earning Bonaparte's disapproval and his virtual disappearance from official accounts of the battle. (A. Ferrari)

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remain as the last reserve, as the Guard Grenadiers marched up behind Victor's right to distribute cartridges and stand ready as a central reserve.

Initially forced to march in closed formations because of occasional Dragoon attacks, Monnier was surprised to see them disappear suddenly to form up. Staying in reserve with two battalions of the 72e, Monnier sent Carra St-Cyr to launch a surprise attack on Castel Ceriolo from the unguarded south-east. The 70e marched towards a position half-way between the village and Lannes' right to extend the French line, but as their skirmishers saw Schellenberg's men moving south across the ground ahead of them, their commanders opted for safety and moved closer to Castel Ceriolo. Schilt's two battalions of 19e Légère captured the village about 3 pm and scattered the small garrison out on to the marshy ground around the Cavo stream. Quickly, the French established their positions in some houses at the northern entrance to the village. From here, they could see Vogelsang's column, which soon responded by forming to evict Schilt's men from the key village. As the Austrian artillery prepared to open up around 3.45 pm, Schilt quietly withdrew along with the 70e down the Villanuova track.

The Guard destroyed, 4 pm

As Lannes and Victor had withdrawn, Schellenberg's troops had begun to emerge from Castel Ceriolo. Napoleon anticipated that this was to be Ott's main move to drive east through the gap, which had opened in his line. He redirected the Guard infantry to fill it and face Ott's expected attack. Marching up behind Lannes in open column, the Guard deployed skirmishers to their left about 40 metres from the main formation, using the Cavo ditch for protection.

The vital small town of Castel Ceriolo on the Sale road nestles at the bottom of a slight slope from the Tortona road towards the Tanaro and Bormida rivers. Surrounded by orchards and vineyards, it was difficult for the Austrian commanders to assess French forces inside. In the evening, IR18 Stuart had a harder task evicting part of St-Cyr's force from amongst the many stone buildings and difficult surrounding ground, to cut an escape route through for Ott's troops. (L. Polastri)

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1540: Chasing 10. Lobkowitz Light Dragoons, Murat is halted by a battalion of IR51 deploying from Schellenberg's columns

1550: IR51 and a battalion of IR28 engage the Guard Infantry in a firefight

1600-1615: Ordered up to examine French deployments, Frimont leads his four squadrons to crush the Guard Infantry

1500 ONWARDS: Austrian centre starts to reform east of Marengo, led by an artillery barrage. GM Gottesheim threatens the French right



1445: French troops under Lannes and Victor withdraw from Marengo area

1515: Bonaparte sends a battalion of 72e to extend the French right. The Guard infantry distribute cartridges along the main line

1530: The Guard infantry march north to extend the line further towards Monnier. 10. Lobkowitz Light Dragoons attack, but are driven off by Murat's cavalry



THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CONSULAR GUARD

1600hrs 14 June 1800

1500: St.-Cyr takes Castel Ceriolo and drives the Austrian Light Infantry west

1545: Facing artillery bombardment from Vogelsang's guns to the north, St.-Cyr evacuates Castel Ceriolo and withdraws south-east, covered by Monnier



FRENCH UNITS

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL MONNIER

Gen de Brigade Schilt

A 19e Légère (2 batts)

Gen de Brigade Carra St.-Cyr

B 70e demi-brigade (2 batts)

In Reserve:

C 72e demi-brigade (2 batts)

GENERAL DE DIVISION MURAT

(Remains of Champeaux's brigade)

D 1er Dragoons

6e Dragoons

9e Dragoons

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL LANNES

E 28e demi-brigade (in a single square)

FIRST CONSUL BONAPARTE

F 72e demi-brigade (1 batt)

G Guard Grenadier Infantry

H Guard Light Artillery (4 guns)

General de Division Bessieres

(Guard Cavalry)

I Grenadiers à Cheval

J Chasseurs à Cheval

AUSTRIAN UNITS

FML VOGELSANG

GM Retz

1 IR28 Fröhlich (1 batt)

2 IR40 Mittrowsky (3 batts)

GM Sticker

3 IR51 Splenyi (2 batts)

4 IR57 J. Colloredo (3 batts)

Oberstlt. Harrach

5 10. Lobkowitz Light Dragoons (4 sqdns)

GM GOTTESHEIM

6 IR28 Fröhlich (2 batts)

7 Mariassy Jäger (4 cos)

8 Cavalry Artillery Battery

OBERST FRIMONT

9 1. Kaiser Light Dragoons (3 & 4 Sqdns)

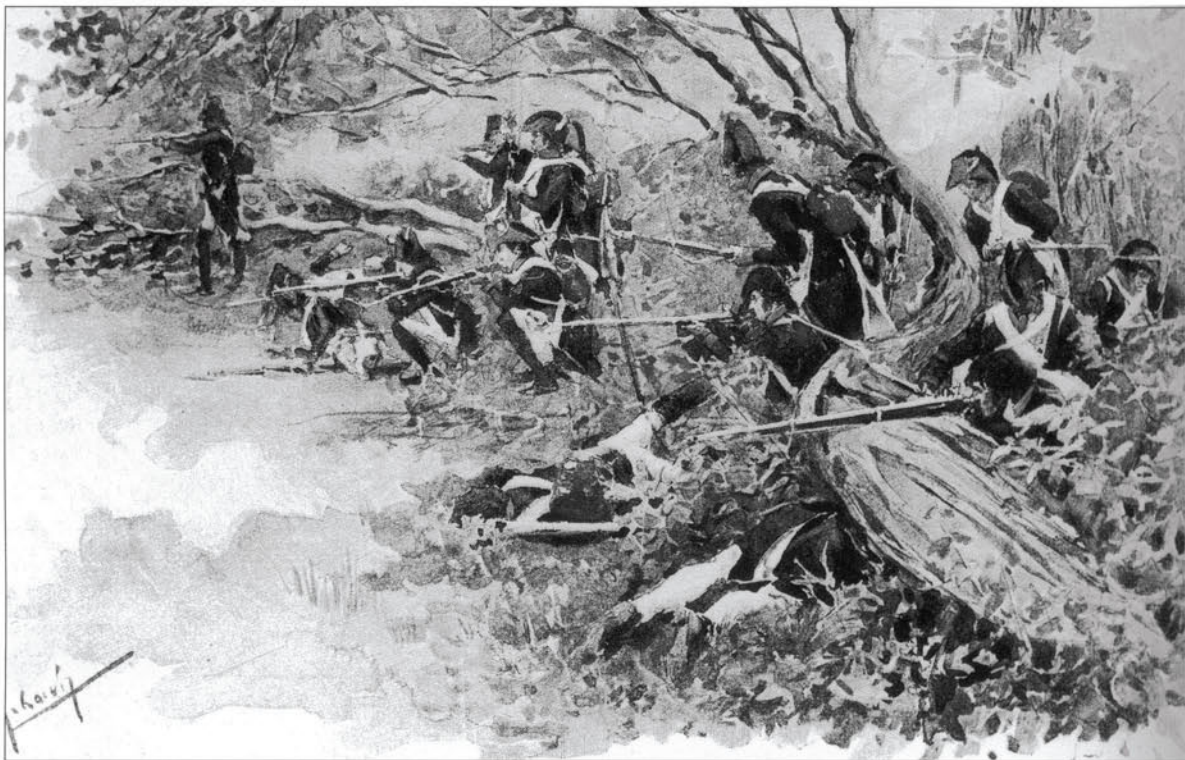
Bussy Jäger zu Pferd

10 3rd Light Infantry Battalion

4rd Light Infantry Battalion

11 Austrian centre led by artillery assembles east of Marengo

NOTE: The vineyards shown were in the old Italian style. The vines were slung between trees.



As Gardanne's troops fell back towards Spinetta they found increased cover amongst the vines and trees, either side of the New Road (Myrbach/ASKB). This was the defile recalled by Petit, where Austrian artillery fire brought down branches on the defenders.

As they had pulled back earlier, Lobkowitz Dragoon scouts had reported a small column moving through the high cornfields, their red plumes identifying them as Bonaparte's Guard and presumably his last troops. Now Gottesheim could see the Guard again, moving to flank Schellenberg's left. Now fully re-formed, the four squadrons of 10. Lobkowitz Dragoons were hurled at the cream of Bonaparte's infantry. Harrach led the Dragoons galloping forward in line, straight into a hail of musketballs from the skirmishers and canister from the 4-pdr. guns. Making no progress, the cavalry withdrew back northwards. They had posed the only mounted threat to Lannes, who was now almost back amid the vines. No longer required to protect them Champeaux's cavalry, now led by Murat, countered to clear the area and set off in pursuit of Harrach's troopers. As they moved north, they threatened the left of Schellenberg's division coming south. Sticker's column, led by IR51, was marching down the central track. As Murat approached, the 1st Battalion immediately deployed from the head of the column. With bayonets lowered, they fearlessly charged at of Murat's cavalry. With its band playing, the battalion let out a thunderous 'Hurrah', before firing a volley to send the French cavalry back the way they had come. The Guard continued its march to its designated position, a small track junction 1km south-east of Castel Ceriolo.

Aligned with the head of Schellenberg's columns, the Guard turned left to deploy into line, facing west, as the heads of the Austrian columns crossed the Cavo di Fontanone. GM Gottesheim, running the southern part of Ott's sector, promptly wheeled the lead units to march east with their wing anchored on the Cavo. IR51's two battalions (nicknamed the 'Legion Infernale' by the French) led the way,

supported by the battalion of IR28 Fröhlich from the western column. The Austrians advanced to close with the Guard behind the small ditch, each side maintaining fire by platoon and full volleys for a considerable time. The Guard had a numerical advantage, but the Transylvanian battalions had better artillery support. The contest developed into an extended musketry duel across the Cavo ditch at 50 paces (30 metres), but neither side could gain the upper hand. Suddenly, the Austrian line fell silent in the smoke as their bayonets were lowered for a charge. But a more ominous noise was coming from behind the Guard: the sound of horses' hooves signalled the advance of the Austrian cavalry.

As they formed into line, the Guard were in a precarious position. Monnier was withdrawing down the Villanuova track and, after retreating on to the Spinetta line, Lannes had consolidated his position in the vineyards north of the Old Road. The cumulative effect was to leave the Guard without support, separated from Lannes by a 500-metre gap in the French line. Fresh from their success at Marengo, Frimont's four squadrons had been re-formed and directed through this gap to out-flank Lannes' position and cut the line of retreat. Suddenly, Oberst Frimont, a former Hussar, saw his opportunity and led his men charging north into the Guard. Slashing their way into the left rear, the flood of Dragoons and Jäger zu Pferd, overwhelmed Bonaparte's élite infantry. The many émigrés among the Bussy took particular pleasure in scooping up trophies as the Austrian cavalry quickly rounded up much of the left-side companies and the four dismounted guns – those who resisted were soon wounded, but most just surrendered. IR51 advanced quickly to join in the looting, tearing out gold earrings and relieving the French of most of their equipment and even clothing. About a hundred guardsmen on the right followed the flag carried by Grenadier Aune to make their escape in a small clump.

Some cohesion was lost in the Austrian infantry as GM Gottesheim was wounded, but the French line had now collapsed on the right and a

The Guard took up a position along the track. The scene has changed little except that the crops then grew to about 1.8m. Those who escaped fell back east up the slight slope towards il Poggi farm. (L. Polastri)



THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CONSULAR GUARD

Thrown forward by Napoleon in a last bid to stabilise the French right, the Guard were outgunned by the smaller IR51 Splenyi for 15 minutes and then crushed by Frimont's four squadrons. Over four hundred were taken prisoner and the four guns dismounted; émigrés in the Bussy Jäger zu Pferd joyfully scooped up trophies and fired on the small group who escaped east around the flag.





LEFT After the Guard gun crews had become casualties, Guardsman Brabant, a former artilleryman, worked one cannon alone in his overalls. Wounded in the right arm, he continued to fire it with his left. The Guard lost its four guns, but the flag escaped. (ASKB)

BELOW After seeing his Guard destroyed, Napoleon tried to lead the last battalion of 72e into the fray. Their reluctance contrasted with later stories of how the third rank turned round and fired on Austrian cavalry – impossible through the fourth rank of NCOs and officers. Napoleon probably received the glancing blow to his left leg from a spent cannonball here, which tore away the boot leather and some skin. (Myrbach/P. Hofschröder)



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RIGHT **Fearful of Austrian cavalry
after seeing his Grenadiers
destroyed, Napoleon decided not
to commit his Guard cavalry then
moving up north of the Old Road.
(Myrbach) (ASKB)**



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further advance by Gottesheim and Ott would cut Lannes off. With the remains of Champeaux's cavalry reorganising on his left, Lannes had to retreat east. His Guard wrecked, Napoleon tried to fire up the battalion of the 72e for one last effort, but they politely declined. Lannes demanded that Bessi eres tackle Gottesheim's front line with the Guard cavalry to relieve the pressure on his infantry, but the sight of the two battalions of IR28 with muskets ready brought a similar response from the cavalry commander. As his men streamed east around 4.30 pm, the First Consul and Murat rode back east.

The Austrian pursuit, 4.30 pm

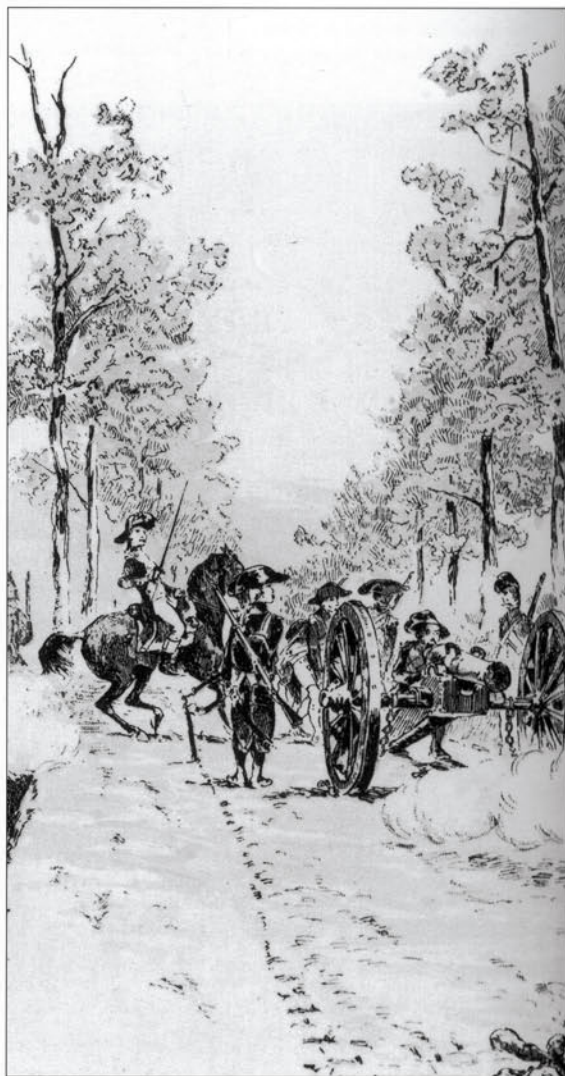
As the Grenadiers mopped up in Marengo village, Bellegarde's brigade deployed with IR63 to move against Lannes. In action since 8 am, the tired infantry took the opportunity for a break, leaving it to their light artillery to rain metal on Lannes' infantry. The main Austrian cavalry under Pilatti and Nobili had all taken a drubbing at the hands of Kellerman that day. As the sun beat down in the high mid-afternoon humidity, the troopers scattered to forage and find water for their mounts, as did some infantry, and it was some time before the casualties were helped. Tired by the day's events, Austrian officers made little effort to restore order, which had been damaged by high casualties. Nevertheless, the Austrians had taken ten cannon and two howitzers, as well as 3,000 prisoners, the last thousand of whom were being marched across the bridge as the final Austrian unit, IR23, waited to cross in the opposite direction.

To the south

Gardanne and Chambarlhac were holding their lines around Spinetta under heavy artillery fire as increasing numbers of Austrian troops poured over the bridge. Melas issued orders for the final pursuit across a battlefield thickly sown with dead men and horses. He had sustained

bruising in two falls that day, so he decided to return to headquarters in Alessandria, stopping frequently to check on the care of the wounded. Zach was beside himself with joy: he had humbled his enemies in the Austrian headquarters and outwitted Bonaparte.

As the Austrian units formed up again, IR47 Kinsky took up the task of following the withdrawing French as they pulled back through Spinetta. Nobili's cavalry brigade were nearby: the 3. Erzherzog Johann Light Dragoons joined IR47 on the New Road but split into two groups at the Lungafone cross-roads. Four squadrons went south-east looking for Desaix, who they expected would be near Rivalta, and to act as a link with O'Reilly; the remaining division led the way for



TOP, LEFT As his army fell into disarray and the 72e refused to march, Bonaparte sat at the side of the road anxiously awaiting the arrival of Desaix with Boudet's division (L. Sergent after Coignet's memoirs). (SAGEP, Genoa)

BOTTOM, LEFT Most of the roads and tracks were lined with high mulberry trees (left close to La Rana). Ditches also ran along the main roads, creating good defensive positions for French artillery. The banked New Road east of Spinetta was also used as a defensive rampart (right). (L. Polastri/ASKB)

BELOW Up this road marched Kaim's second Treffen (IR23 Toscana). Hauptmann Wenzel Rauch (3rd Battalion) at the rear of this column saw the artillery pieces with shot-up wheels, corpses and piles of horse cadavers scattered all around. (L. Polastri)

IR47 towards Cascina Grossa. They protected the right of the advance pursuit column under GM St Julien. The 9. Lichtenstein Dragoons and three reserve Cavalry Artillery batteries joined the rear of this column, which was led by the fresh IR11 Wallis and Latterman's five Grenadier Battalions. The volunteer skirmishers, who had led the way over the bridge, screened the column as it headed for Spinetta, and the Grenadiers collected their guns. Placing Kaim in charge of the army, Melas had ordered St Julien to get his guns up to San Giuliano and to pound the French to complete the victory.

FML Ott had ordered Gottesheim's men north-east. In better order, the Austrian left marched along two tracks: Schellenberg's division along one running past Villanuova towards La Ghilina, while Vogelsang followed the track running due east from Castel Ceriolo. 10. Lobkowitz led the way, scouting ahead, Frimont's cavalry would form the link to Kaim.

Following Lannes, Kaim moved up with Bellegarde's tired brigade in column followed by IR63; what remained of Pilati's cavalry came behind. A further 1,000 paces (600 metres) back came Weidenfeld's Grenadier brigade. The Austrians were not now expecting to meet any firm resistance, but as they approached the vines on the Old Road, IR52 at the head of Kaim's column came under fire from ambush units left by Lannes in the high cornfields around the vines, supported by units from Champeaux's dragoons. In this difficult ground, broken up by ditches, Lannes' infantry could fire effectively against the head





of Kaim's column, which deployed to push the French back. Nevertheless, IR23 were rushed up the Marengo village road and through the vineyards to tackle the French flank. As these reinforcements came through the vines, these last French troops withdrew down the Old Road.

ABOVE Many Cascinas (stone farmhouses) such as il Poggi (from the SW) dotted the landscape. Surrounded by trees, they provided both water and defensive strongpoints for withdrawing French troops. (L. Polastri)



LEFT Fortunately for Bonaparte, Desaix's crossing of the Scrivia was delayed by the torrent and he was able to march his division north to halt the Austrian advance. (Myrbach)

THE FRENCH COUNTERATTACK

Victor had held the line of the Fontanone for seven hours with little support, and had bought Bonaparte time. Although some of the French army was in disorder and many were helping wounded from the field down the two roads, Lannes was also holding his line. About 6,000 troops remained to face the Austrians marching out through Marengo. From here, the French forces conducted a steady retreat down the two roads for about half an hour, Kellerman and Murat screening the battered infantry with their cavalry.

In the meantime, in the defile approaching San Giuliano, Bonaparte had begun re-forming the fugitives and those helping their wounded colleagues back into units. The urgent priority was to protect the wounded being tended in the village. Victor's remnants were south of the road, where they were reinforced with a fresh battalion of the 44e and shielded by Kellerman and the remains of Champeaux's troopers; Lannes was north of the road with Monnier echeloned back to his right watching Ott. In reserve on the road stood Murat and the Guard cavalry. Napoleon had been heartened to see Desaix's ADC, Savary, who

Desaix's ADC, Anne-Jean Savary (1774-1833), brought news of his approach to Napoleon. The First Consul directed him to tell Desaix to move up the New Road to face Zach's advancing infantry. (MCA)



1720: Austrian skirmishers are scooped up by 1er Hussars



1730: 9e Légère engage the head of IR11, which breaks up and re-forms behind the Grenadiers

1820-1830: Austrian guns and Light Dragoons put to flight. Most cavalry head north; the rest plus the guns head for Kaim's troops

1820-1830: Pilatti's cavalry rush forward in small units to help FML St. Julien's men

1735-1750: Three Cavalry Artillery batteries move up with 9. Light Dragoons deployed behind

1815: Part of Kellerman's column reverts to line to attack the Austrian guns and 9. Light Dragoons

1805: Kellerman turns his line back into column; the first part attacks St. Julien's troops as 9e Légère advance

1745-1805: Marmont's 16 guns withdraw on the advancing Guenand. Some guns fire a last barrage into the Grenadiers

1745-1800: Kellerman moves north to deploy to Guenand's right until Monnier advance

1735-1800: 9e Légère withdraw steadily to the main French line, followed by Austrian Grenadiers advancing en echelon

1830 ONWARDS: Kellerman and Boudet round up many of St. Julien's troops; one Grenadier battalion plus about a third of IR11 escape to block the road

AUSTRIAN UNITS

FML KAIM

- 1 IR63 Erzherzog Josef (3 batts)
 - 2 IR53 Jellacic (2 batts)
- GM Pilatti
- 3 1. Kaiser Light Dragoons (3 sqdns)
 4. Karaczay Light Dragoons

FML ST. JULIEN

- 4 About 100 skirmishers (various units)
 - 5 IR11 M. Wallis (3 batts)
 - 6 5. Grenadier Battalions
 - 7 9. Lichtenstein Light Dragoons
 - 8 3. Cavalry Artillery Batteries
- GM De Briey
- 9 IR47 F. Kinsky (2 1/3 batts)
3. Erz. Johann Light Dragoons:
- 10 4 sqdns
 - 11 2 sqdns

FRENCH UNITS

LT-GENERAL DESAIX

- 1er Hussars
- ##### GENERAL DE DIVISION BOUDET
- General de Brigade Musnier
- B 9e Légère (3 batts)
- General de Brigade Guenand
- C 30e demi-brigade (2 batts)
 - D 59e demi-brigade (3 batts)
- General De Brigade Kellerman
- Remains of:
- E 2e Heavy Cavalry
 - 20e Heavy Cavalry
 - 21e Heavy Cavalry
 - 8e Dragoons
 - (Champeaux's Brigade)
 - 1e Dragoons

6e Dragoons
9e Dragoons

General De Brigade Marmont

F 10 guns
6 guns from Boudet

GENERAL DE DIVISION GARDANNE

G Remains of:
44e demi-brigade
101e demi-brigade
Plus reinforcements from San Giuliano

H 44e demi-brigade (1 batt)

GENERAL DE DIVISION MONNIER

I 72e demi-brigade (2 batts)
J 70e demi-brigade (left of Monnier's main force)

NOTE: All times are approximate.

THE FRENCH COUNTERATTACK

1700-1800hrs, 14 June 1800



reported that there was no Austrian column marching from Genoa, and that Desaix's men would return from Rivalta around 5.30 pm. At 5 pm, a mud-spattered Desaix reached Bonaparte near San Giuliano. The First Consul wanted Boudet's division to cover the retreat on Torre di Garrofoli, but Desaix knew a renewed battle could be won with Marmont's guns in support – five were still in service, five were left in reserve on the Scrivia and six were from Boudet. They needed time to get organised, so the 9e Légère would engage Zach's column south of the New Road and then make a fighting withdrawal to just short of Victor. Marmont would form his battery north of the road in front of Guenand's brigade, drawn up in *ordre mixte* close to the road junction near Cascina Grossa. As Boudet's troops approached towards 5 pm, the 9e Légère swung west to avoid the swarm of fugitives still on the road and hastened off to their designated position.

Changes of fortune, 5–7 pm:

GM De Briey was now heading due west on the track to Cascina Grossa with IR47 and a division of 3. Johann Dragoons. St Julien's column, accompanied by Zach and the remaining staff, had taken a short cut on the New Road to avoid Lungafone and were among the vines. With their fresher troops, the Austrian right wing and Ott's force forged ahead, while after a late start and French resistance, Kaim's column was lagging behind, and was only just beginning to deploy again east of the vines. As the Austrian line took on the shape of a crescent, some staff officers urged Zach to slow the advance. He wouldn't listen – if the French could be driven through San Giuliano, the road to Tortona was open.

Suddenly, the pursuers ran into trouble: the skirmishers screening Zach's battalions had moved too far ahead and in the open ground east

Looking south from Vigna Santa across the flat area, across which the 9e Légère marched to reach the New Road to avoid the retreating French troops. At the time, this area was covered in new growth vines. On the right is Cascina Grossa, to where De Briey advanced to face Gardanne.(L. Polastri)

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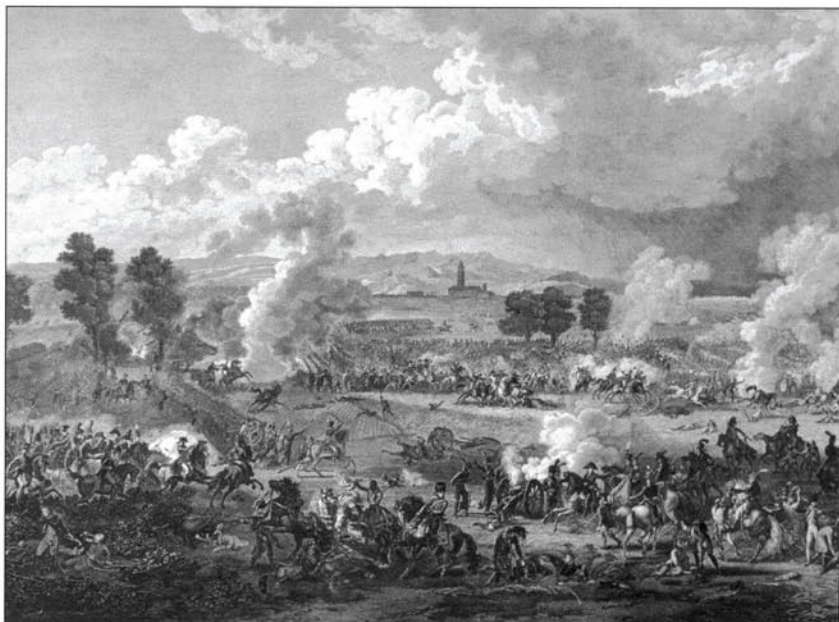
This part of Lejeune's famous
 painting shows 9e Légère
 engaging the Austrian
 Grenadiers as Desaix is shot
 from his horse in the final stage
 of the battle. This action has
 often been placed further east
 near San Giuliano, but Lejeune,
 an eyewitness, clearly shows
 Cascina Grossa and the tree-
 lined track in the background.
 (MCA)

of the vines, were routed by the 1er Hussars. Unaware of this, the lead
 companies of IR11 Wallis came under fire from 2,000 troops of the
 9e Légère as they emerged from the vines. Attempting to deploy under
 sustained musketry fire, the Austrian infantry fell into disorder. The
 officers broke the line and attempted to reassemble their men behind
 Latterman's Grenadiers, who had meanwhile deployed to engage
 Boudet's light infantry. Order was restored to IR11 as the Grenadiers
 advanced, led by their battalion guns, which pounded the 9e as they fell
 back towards the rest of the division at the road junction. Advancing
 across clearer ground, Zach moved up the three Cavalry Artillery bat-
 teries to pound Guenand and Marmont north of the road. Behind them,
 9. Lichtenstein Light Dragoons moved off the road to deploy.

Desaix rejoined the 9e demi-brigade Légère, as they reached their
 stop point south-west of the road junction. Marmont's guns were getting
 the worst of the duel to the north of the road, so as a precaution, Desaix
 ordered Kellerman north on to Guenand's right as Monnier was still
 further back. Victor, along with Gardanne, was left was facing De Brier's
 command advancing from Cascina Grossa.

As the Grenadiers advanced *en echelon*, Kellerman moved his 400
 heavy cavalry in line behind Guenand and then wheeled left to get
 through the vines anchoring the infantry's right. The Grenadiers
 exchanged a last volley with the 9e at 20 paces and both prepared to fight
 at bayonet point. As Guenand marched his five battalions up, Marmont
 was pulling his guns back as the Austrians closed. Three on
 his left fired a last barrage into the Grenadiers, disordering the flank
 battalion. Behind the Austrian gun line, 9. Lichtenstein Light Dragoons
 prepared to advance as their guns fell silent.

Emerging into open ground, Kellerman saw his opportunity:
 wheeling his line by squadrons, he formed column, and charged
 through the gap between the artillery. His target was the disrupted left
 flank of the Austrian Grenadiers, which he struck with the first half of his



force just as the 9e Légère moved forward to attack them in front. Assailed from the front and left, three Grenadier battalions soon found themselves either casualties or prisoners. At his moment of success, Desaix was killed by a bullet in the chest, but his men advanced, chasing the Grenadiers' guns, which were now trying unsuccessfully to escape. Kellerman turned his men against IR11, supported by the 9e with similar results.

The second part of Kellerman's column swung right into line to charge the Light Dragoons. The Austrian guns had quickly limbered up and were hurrying back through the Dragoons' line, which was further disrupted by a small exploding ammunition cart. The Dragoons tried to counter-charge, but in disorder were easily overwhelmed by the French cavalry. They broke up and fled, most to the north to join Ott. GM Zach had seen Kellerman preparing to attack and realising the danger, had ridden up to the cavalry to have them charge immediately. As he was riding up, 2e Cavalerie came hurtling through and, abandoned by the staff, Zach was captured.

On the right of the Grenadiers, GM St Julien tried to restore order. Seeing the trouble the Austrian troops were in, Nobili charged in with his brigade, mostly still in road column. As the Austrian cavalry swirled around the 9e Légère, Korporal Altmann of 4. Karaczay Dragoons saved St Julien, who had been captured on the Austrian right. It was a small success as the pursuit column disintegrated and Nobili's brigade gradually fled down the Old Road.

Panicked flight

After clearing the vines east of Marengo, Kaim's infantry had been struck by the first cavalry to flee, but this caused little damage. As IR23 had moved up to the flank of Bellegarde's battalions, the line became

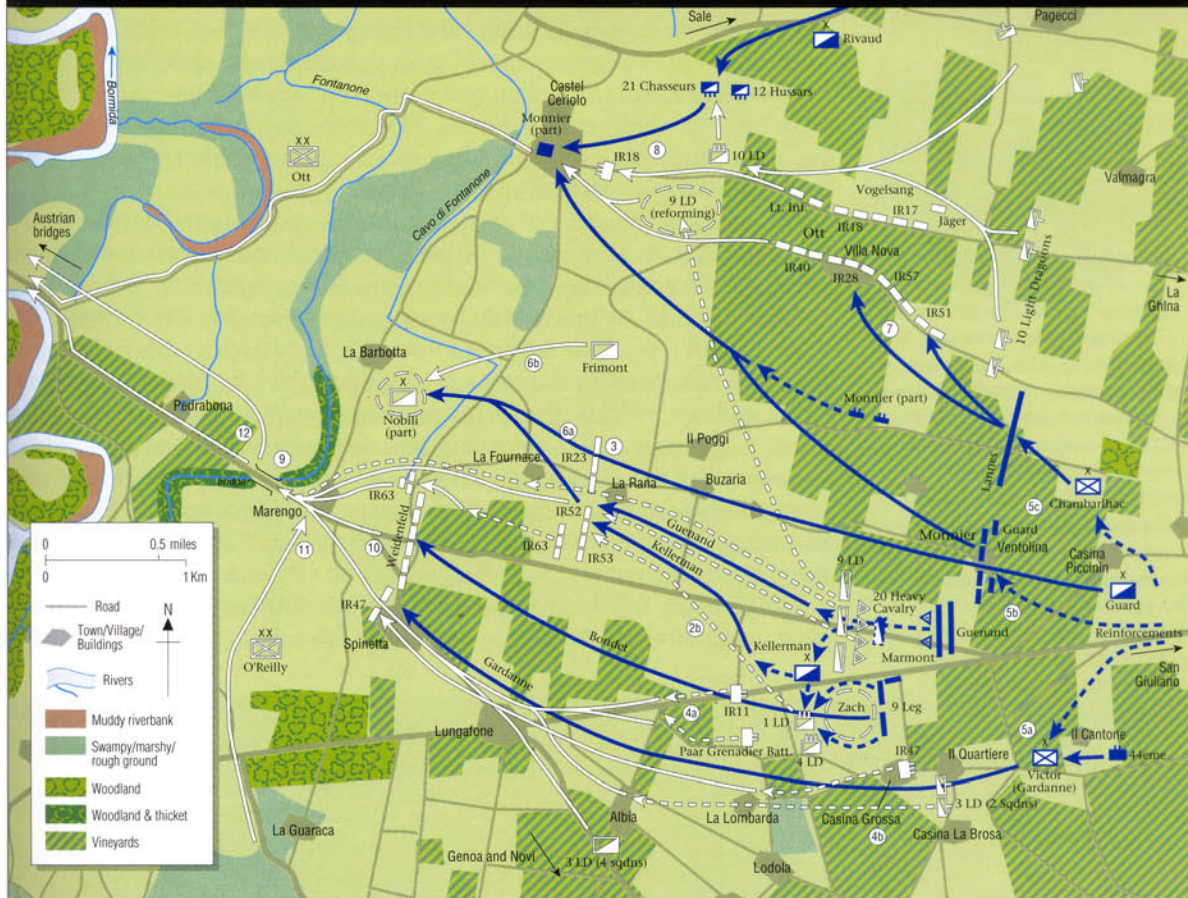
Map Key:

- 1 1815: Attacked by the second half of Kellerman's force, 9. Light Dragoons break up. Most head north to Ott; some followed by the Cavalry Artillery guns head west for safety.
- 2 1830 onwards: Kellerman's first wave and 9e Légère round up much of Zach's infantry. Nobili's cavalry break up and flee west. Zach is captured.
- 3 1830-1900: Kaim's infantry are struck by Nobili's brigade and the Cavalry Artillery guns.
- 4 a) 1840-1900: Part of IR11 and the Paar Grenadiers block the New Road.
b) Followed by Gardanne, De Briey withdraws.
- 5 1830: With reinforcements rejoining the ranks, the French line begins a general advance.
- 6 a) 1900: Guenand attacks Kaim's infantry. Only IR63 escape in reasonable order. b) Frimont's cavalry withdraw to protect Kaim's open left and rally some of Nobili's troopers.
- 7 1900-1930: Attacked by Lannes and Chambarlhac, Ott withdraws west.
- 8 1945-2015: Elements of Monnier reach Castel Ceriolo first. IR18 evict them from the village as Ott continues to retreat. Jean Rivaud's cavalry assail 10. and the reformed 9. Light Dragoons.
- 9 1915 onwards: Austrian fugitives reach the Fontanone. 1945 onwards: The reformed Austrian cavalry reinforced by 3. Johann Light Dragoons are overwhelmed by Kellerman and Murat (with the Guard cavalry).
- 10 1930-2030: With IRs 63 and 47, Weidenfeld's Grenadiers form a defensive line. An attack by Boudet and Gardanne is repelled.
- 11 1830-2100: O'Reilly returns from Frugarolo to cover Weidenfeld's withdrawal on Marengo.
- 12 2100-2200: O'Reilly and Frimont's cavalry form the last Austrian rearguard around Marengo and then withdraw on the Bormida. French troops follow but are struck by Austrian artillery in the bridgehead.



As the French cavalry (chasseurs, not hussars shown) moved against the Austrian lines, many artillerymen were cut down prompting the rest to join the general flight towards Kaim. (ASKB)

14 JUNE 1815-2200: DESAIX'S COUNTERATTACK ROUTS THE AUSTRIAN ARMY



over-extended and brittle; only the remains of IR63 stood behind as the second Treffen close to the vines. Suddenly, through the high corn came a flood of panicked artillery teams and Nobili's Dragoons, which smashed through them, causing considerable disorder. Nevertheless, some order was restored before the first French appeared atop the slight rise in the centre of the battlefield.

With a frightful shout, Guenand led his infantry down the rise into Kaim's damaged lines. Despite being assailed by small groups of Nobili's cavalry, the French infantry are soon amongst the Austrian troops. Exhausted by a fierce battle under the Italian sun, Kaim's infantry broke up in disorder. In the second Treffen, IR63 retained better order and were able to withdraw through the vineyards to join the left of Weidenfeld's Grenadiers, as the two sides fought in a multi-coloured mêlée north of the Old Road.

It had not been total disaster on the Austrian right. Escaping almost intact with elements of IR11, the Paar Grenadiers blocked the French advance along the San Giuliano road and repelled several cavalry attacks, as the 9e Légère followed them. Further south, De Briey had been too distant to intervene and as Gardanne's infantry advanced, he ordered IR47 to withdraw west from Cascina Grossa. The entire French



GM Franz Guyard Saint Julien Graf von Walsee (1756-1836) graduated in law from Vienna university before joining the army as an Unterlt. in IR54 in 1777. Wounded serving as a Major at Belgrade, he served in Italy throughout the Revolutionary wars, distinguishing himself at Bassano (6 November 1796) and in the 1799 siege of Mantua. Captured in the last phase of Marengo, he was rescued by Korporal Altmann of 4. Dragoons. Later served in the Tyrol in 1805 and as a division commander in III Korps in 1809. (BA)

At his most famous moment, Desaix was felled by a musketball at the head of Boudet's men. In letters following the battle, a distraught Napoleon wrote of the loss of a genuine friend and able commander (Langlois/MCA). In the background, GM Zach has been captured and is being led towards French lines.

infantry was now advancing rapidly, its more reluctant fugitives hastily rejoining the line to reinforce it.

Like De Brier, Ott had not been involved in the final phase of the fighting in the centre. As he saw the fighting west of St Giuliano develop, he ordered his columns, whose heads were aligned with Zach's, to halt in close order, and the centre battalions were already being turned south into line by their commanders. However, the fighting moved back rapidly towards Marengo and Ott concluded it was better to save his own force by retreating through Castel Ceriolo.

Bonaparte remained nervous about his right. He directed Chambarlhac and Lannes to tackle Ott's withdrawing columns. Lannes attacked IR57 leading Schellenberg's column, while the 96e assailed IR51 at the rear. As the lead Austrian units reached Castel Ceriolo, they experienced a sense of déjà vu: some of St-Cyr's men (under Monnier), who had remained in the vineyards, made their way back to the village again and occupied it. To the north, Jean Rivaud had led his two cavalry regiments down the Sale road and, after brushing aside the two squadrons of 10. Lobkowitz Dragoons, had assailed the rest of that regiment, which had re-formed with some of 9. Dragoons to face them. Rivaud got the better of the duel, but Ott's infantry managed to drive them off.

As darkness fell, Vogelsang ordered IR18 at the rear of his column to clear a way through the village before the French infantry could put it in



a state of defence. After a ferocious fight, IR18 opened the main thoroughfare west and despite being badly wounded, GM Vogelsang continued to direct them back down the road towards the Bormida bridgehead as the 70e fired on their rear. During the night, Ott's relatively unscathed force rejoined the main army.

Final rearguard

As storm clouds darkened the sky around 7 pm, Austrian fugitives were crossing the Fontanone, but the officers failed to re-form their frightened men behind the ditch. As quickly as they formed up, they were ridden down by cavalry, thronging back towards the Bormida bridgehead. In complete disorder, many jumped the ditch and the parapet into the defences, riding down the wounded who were being treated there.

Only Weidenfeld's six Grenadier battalions behind the vineyards remained in good order, formed up across the two roads north of Spinetta, despite the fugitives pushing their way through. The French centre had moved a long way during the day, and aside from probes, Kellerman's cavalry did not engage the fresh Grenadiers, who were being joined by IR63 and IR47 on their wings to shield the panicked troops. It was only when the 9e Légère, followed by Gardanne, appeared to the Austrian right, that they fell back on Marengo and its bridge. Frimont's cavalry was under pressure to the north, so they were



ABOVE FML Ludwig Freiherr von Vogelsang (1748-1822). From a noted Walloon military family, he had graduated through the Academy route into the infantry, serving with distinction as a Major in the Belgian rebellion of 1790. Ennobled as a Freiherr in 1793, he showed himself courageous and decisive as Oberst of IR9 Clerfayt. A Generalmajor in 1796, he deputised for FML Lacy advising the Emperor. (BA)







The evening after the battle Petit and the Guard cavalry marched back towards Torre di Garrofoli through the wreckage on the battlefield. French bodies were piled up at Garrofoli for burning and their total casualties exceeded those of the Austrians. (Myrbach)

LEFT The Guard cavalry under Murat and Bessieres finally being engaged in the last part of the action. They fell on the right flank of 3. Johann Dragoons and put them to flight. (Myrbach/ASKB)

reinforced with the re-formed 3. Johann Dragoons. As they moved up, they were attacked by Kellerman from the front and the Guard cavalry from the right, sending them fleeing back over the Fontanone.

Around 6 pm, O'Reilly had marched beyond Frugarolo and was patrolling along the Orba. As he fell back north, his light troops covered Weidenfeld's withdrawal, but the French once again attempted to take up the pursuit. Formed in closed-up battalion masses and supported by the Hussars, O'Reilly's Warasdin-Kreuz and Ottocac Grenzers fended them off until Weidenfeld was some way back to the Bormida. Together with Frimont they fought a last rearguard action at Marengo, before they too fell back over the Fontanone.

Behind them, fleeing artillery teams tried to cross the Bormida to the side of the bridge, losing both guns and ammunition wagons in the mud. Troops successfully getting through the bridgehead were directed back into the campsites they had occupied the previous day. Equally exhausted, the active French pursuit petered out around Marengo as the Guard cavalry rode through about 10 pm. As the night became starlit, Victor's men moved up the Pedrabona road to take up positions similar to those they had held that morning, but no assault was made on the bridgehead fortifications.

Austrian losses numbered 963 dead, 5,518 wounded and 2,921 prisoners, together with ten flags, 12 guns, two howitzers and 13 ammunition wagons. The usual French claims of 700 casualties obscured a casualty toll of the same magnitude.

AFTERMATH

A month after crossing the Alps, First Consul Bonaparte had won a stunning victory. The peace preliminaries were signed the following day and by 17 June, the First Consul was in Milan. On 2 July, he entered Paris to secure his political power for the next 14 years. However, the return of individual power was not universally popular; the first attempt to assassinate Napoleon occurred on 23 December.

Melas had achieved his aims: the Austrian army escaped and could re-form behind the Mincio near Mantua, while he returned to retirement in September. Peace negotiations initially failed and fighting erupted in late November 1800, but in Germany, Moreau swiftly defeated the Austrian army at Hohenlinden on 3 December 1800. Minister Thugut did not survive the Peace of Luneville, which was concluded on 8 February 1801, on essentially the same terms as Campo Formio. The United Kingdom came to terms at Amiens in the following year.

The defeats of 1800 led the Austrians to improve their intelligence gathering with the formation in 1801 of the Korps für Kundschaftszwecke ('intelligence purposes') drawn from able line officers. However, it could not prevent the intervention of Schulmeister and the disaster of Ulm in 1805. Bonaparte took no part in the later campaigns of 1800. He was already starting the overhaul of the old Royalist/Republican army and its transformation into the Grande Armée. Fifteen years and four days later, at Waterloo, Emperor Napoleon again saw his Guard infantry crushed, but in 1815, the reinforcements came to the aid of his opponent.



After somewhat comical scenes in the Austrian headquarters in Alessandria, the armistice was signed on 15 June. Berthier presents the agreement for Melas' shaky signature. Dupont is seated with probably Radetzky and De Best to the right. Although defeated, Melas was able to march his army back to Austrian territory. (BA)



As early as the *Bulletin* written on the evening of 14 June, Marengo became a cornerstone of the Napoleonic myth, consolidating the Consulate. In 1805, six months after his coronation, Emperor Napoleon staged 'a re-enactment' of the battle and Berthier presented him with a bound account – even this work of fiction was further amended by the Emperor to suit his claim of a planned withdrawal based on Castel Ceriolo. (MCA)

CHRONOLOGY

1799

- 15 August** Battle of Novi; Austrians under Melas control most of northern Italy; Russian commander Suvarov marches for Switzerland.
- 9 October** Napoleon Bonaparte returns from Egypt to land at Frejus.
- 8-9 November** Bonaparte seizes power in the coup d'état of 18th Brumaire.
- 4 December** Cuneo falls to the Austrians. The French under Massena and Suchet are confined to Genoa and the Ligurian coast.
- 25 December** Bonaparte becomes First Consul.

1800

- 13 January** Russians leave the Second Coalition and march home.
- 6 April** Austrians commence their attack on Genoa, which is blockaded from the sea by the Royal Navy. Fighting at Cadibona, the Bocchetta and Monte Fascio near Genoa.
- 19 April** The left wing of the French army under Suchet is separated from the right under Massena.
- 21 April** The siege of Genoa begins.
- 25 April** French troops under Moreau cross the Rhine at Kehl and Alt-Breisach.
- 3 and 5 May** Moreau defeats Kray at Stockach and Mössingen.
- 6 May** Bonaparte leaves Paris.
- 10 May** Kray concentrates his Austrian troops around Ulm.
- 14 May** First French troops begin to cross the Grand St Bernard Pass.
- 15 May** Savona falls to Ott.
- 18 May** Lannes defeats a Grenzer battalion at Chataillon.
- 22 May** Fruitless Austrian assault led by Elsnitz against Suchet's positions on the Var; Melas leaves Nice; Lannes takes Ivrea.
- 25 May** Melas reaches Turin.
- 26 May** Battle of Chiusella: Lannes defeats Hadik.
- 27 May** Moncey dispatched from the Rhine with 15,000 men and crosses the St Gotthard.
- 2 June** Bonaparte arrives in Milan.
- 4 June** Massena surrenders Genoa to Ott and Lord Keith.
- 6-7 June** French under Murat cross the Po at Piacenza, Lannes at Belgiojoso.
- 9 June** Battle of Montebello: Lannes defeats Ott.
- 10-12 June** Melas concentrates his troops at Alessandria.
- 14 June** Battle of Marengo. Suchet sends a reconnaissance force to Acqui.
- 15 June** Convention of Alessandria.
- 20 June** New subsidy treaty between Britain and Austria.

- 16-24 June** Austrians evacuate Genoa and pull back behind the Mincio.
- 15 July** Armistice of Parsdorf between Moreau and Kray in Germany.
- 22 November** War resumes.
- 3 December** Moreau's Army of Germany defeats the Austrians under Archduke John at Hohenlinden.

1801

- 1st January** Austrian foreign minister Thugut dismissed by Emperor Francis II.
- 8 February** Peace of Luneville.
- 14 March** British prime minister Pitt replaced by Addington.



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LEFT The First Consul joins his men around a bivouac fire (Myrbach). The campaign was marked by unseasonably high levels of rainfall, which only gave way to sunshine on 14 June.

RIGHT Joachim Murat (1767-1815) in typically flashy attire just before the 1800 campaign. The future Marshal had served as a Chef de brigade and ADC with Bonaparte in 1796-7, commanding the small cavalry force in Egypt. Although an able cavalry commander leading the mounted arm in Italy, he owed his position to his marriage to Caroline Bonaparte in November 1799. (ASKB)

WARGAMING THE BATTLE OF MARENGO

In writing these notes, it has been assumed that the wargamer wishing to re-create the campaign which ended at Marengo will be using traditional wargame figures on a playing surface. Such aspects as committee games and role playing have not been considered.

The campaign game

The battle of Marengo took place on 14 June 1800 during what is now termed the Italian campaign during the War of the Second Coalition 1798-1800. Marengo itself was a village in north-west Italy, situated roughly 45 miles north of the city and port of Genoa and a mile east of Alessandria.

While the main thrust of these notes will be focused on the actual battle of Marengo, the principal events prior to the action are briefly summarised below so that the potential offered by refighting the entire campaign can be more readily assimilated by the wargamer.

The siege of Genoa lasted from 20 April to 4 June 1800 when the Austrians under General Ott compelled the French garrison of Genoa, commanded by General Massena, to capitulate after a blockade.

In terms of numbers, Massena had 9,600 troops in Genoa and formed two divisions, those of Miollis (4,500) and Gazan (3,500) plus a reserve (1,500).

The Austrians fielded 24,000 troops, deployed in four groups: one of 6,600 and another of 7,800 to the right, 5,270 in the centre and a fourth 4,450 on the left. The Austrians were assisted by a Royal Navy flotilla that bombarded the city.

The siege of Genoa presents an interesting wargame situation which can work as either a part of an integrated campaign action, or as a stand-alone operation.

The action at Casteggio-Montebello came about when Lieutenant-general Lannes, commanding the advance guard of the French Army of the Reserve, advanced from Pavia with over 15,000 troops and on 9 June 1800 clashed with General Ott at the head of 17,000 men. The French were initially repulsed by the Austrians, but the arrival of Lieutenant General Victor with an additional 6,000 men allowed them to win the day.

In many ways a 'dress rehearsal' for the main battle, this action provides a scaled-down action in which the forces of both sides could readily be represented down to battalion level.

The battle of Marengo

The battle of Marengo splits into two distinctive phases and it is recommended that the wargame re-creation follows this pattern.



Largely ignored following his disastrous capitulation at Bailen in 1808, General Dupont de l'Étang was the real Chief of Staff of the Reserve. (ASKB)

Marengo first phase – Napoleon's defeat

Initially then for a straight historical refight, the figures are set down in their correct opening dispositions as shown on the various maps elsewhere in this book.

In essence, the Austrian plan of attack began with the clearance of Pedrabona by the advance-guard, followed by a costly assault on Marengo and the vital Fontanone bridge, which was led by the battalion guns plus Frimont's battery. On the wings, O'Reilly with 3,000 infantry and some cavalry moved south against la Stortiglione while FML Ott marched northwards to Castel Ceriolo. From there, on his own initiative, Ott tackled Lannes' right flank, while in the centre, the terrain severely restricted the effects of the Austrians' numerical superiority. Rivaud and Gardanne held strong positions protected by the stream.

O'Reilly was also blocked by Gardanne's left at la Stortiglione, but after clearing it could turn the French flank. As Ott broke Lannes's right flank, the French were finally forced to evacuate the Marengo area.

Napoleon sent in his last reserve, Monnier's division (3,200) to extend the far right flank towards Castel Ceriolo and a battalion of 72e to shore up Lannes' right. Finally, the 800 strong Consular Guard were committed to fill the yawning gap left in the line, but the frontline could not be held. Lacking further reserves and low on ammunition, the French were ordered – or more accurately compelled – to retreat.

The elderly Austrian commander, GdK Melas, feeling assured of victory and probably tired himself, handed command to FML Kaim and ordered him to conduct the pursuit.

Wargaming comment

One interesting point which emerges from the narrative is that the Austrian commanders were older than the French, but they were veterans of the Seven Years War and the Turkish Wars. The French were younger and more adventurous, and had served in the French Royal Army before the Revolution. This might impinge on any wargame re-creation of Marengo and players may wish to reflect this aspect by introducing 'plodding' and 'rash' dice to govern or even interfere with the actions of the various commanders.

It is important to also bear in mind that in the French army of 1800 the emphasis was on the offensive, with mobility and the use of the bayonet being preferred to linear firepower. The infantry formed three ranks, with the front two firing and the third rank loading muskets.

Thus in this first phase of the battle, the French might be considered as being wrong footed by having to fight defensively – a point worthy of consideration perhaps.

The Austrians used their artillery aggressively, and in a tactic normally associated with the Franco-German War of seventy years later, advanced their guns to forward positions in front of the main battle line in order to lay down a heavy fire and fall back on their supports if necessary as the enemy closed. The superior numbers of Austrian guns – 100 to the French 20 – certainly needs to be reflected in the wargame and while the actual numbers of artillery pieces may not be available, the 5:1 ratio should and must be preserved and re-created.



GM Count Josef Wenzel Radetzky von Radetz (1766-1858) was from the Bohemian nobility and fought in the heavy cavalry during the Turkish and early Revolutionary wars. Trapped in Mantua in 1796 with other 1800 commanders, he became Oberst commanding of the Italian Pioneer battalion raised in 1799. As Melas' Adjutant-General, he was praised for his 'decisiveness, bravery and constant activity' at Novi and was popular with the troops. His extreme dislike of Zach did much to undermine the Austrian effort in 1800.

In order to replicate the other problems facing the French, wargamers will need to look at the tiredness of the troops and also impose some limits on the supply of infantry ammunition.

Most of the French, certainly those commanded by Victor and Lannes, had been in combat for some time and against overwhelming odds for around three hours.

Any limits imposed on energy and ammunition should not perhaps be too stringent, but they should still come into play in time to render the French at a further disadvantage. Much will depend on the time scale of the wargame, in the sense of how much 'real time' each game move is adjudged to represent. One fairly simplistic method would be to stipulate that the wargame would last say 10 moves and allow the French sufficient ammunition for only seven moves. Thus the French commander can choose to blast off for those seven moves and pull out, his men totally without ammunition, or possibly to hold and fire for five moves and then begin to retreat with the comfort of having two rounds still in hand.

With regard to the aspect of battle fatigue, one could assume this relates to the soldiers' ability in combat and their speed of movement, as well as possibly affecting morale.

Again, assuming a 10-move game for the moment, the wargamer could allow the French say five perfectly normal moves, then two where their ability in *mêlée* is reduced by a factor – this will vary according to the preferred set of rules – two more with a further reduced factor and the final move where the French really are weary and suffer three reduction factors in *mêlée*. Similarly, the French ability to move could be penalised under a similar system, with increasing reductions in movement as the game progresses. With regard to the effect of weariness on morale, the rules in use may well already reflect this factor, but a growing detrimental total against morale status would serve to reflect this. Admittedly, if the action is being replayed as a straightforward historical refight, then the French commander will automatically retreat after a previously specified number of moves to reflect these factors. However, it would perhaps be an interesting exercise to construct rules for ammunition depletion and combat fatigue, surely two historical factors with which wargamers seldom bother.

Marengo second phase – Desaix's victory

It was too late to recall Lapoype, but Napoleon's courier reached Desaix at Rivalta around noon, where Boudet's Division had been delayed in its march south by the swollen river Scrivia. Nevertheless, at 4 pm the French cause seemed lost. Although arrangements had been made for ammunition resupply, the army was retiring with cavalry covering their left flank.

The Austrians were casual in their pursuit however and Desaix took up a position in front of San Giulanovecchio and the rest of the French forces formed on his left and right, the latter flank including a battery of some 18 guns.

The Austrians had to reform their troops after crossing the Fontanone and then march off in pursuit in road columns because of the thick vegetation. This gave Desaix enough time to return and spring his trap as St. Julien's infantry emerged from the vines along the New Road. This delaying tactic allowed Guenand to form north of the road

and Marmont to gather 16 guns to face the three batteries, which would deploy opposite them from the rear of St. Julien's force.

The Austrian advance had become uncoordinated as the fresher troops under St. Julien and Ott marched well ahead of the centre under Kaim. St. Julien had deployed skirmishers, but the 1er Hussars' attack effectively blinded the Austrians, making it impossible for IR11 to deploy properly when 9e Legere attacked. Nevertheless, the Grenadiers followed the French light troops back eastwards. There in a classic all arms counterattack, Marmont's guns fired their last rounds to cut a swathe into the Grenadiers as the French infantry halted, volleyed and launched a bayonet attack. At the same moment, through the gunsmoke came Kellerman's cavalry. The second group of cavalry again changed formation to attack the Austrian Dragoons, who were unable to mount a charge effectively and scattered them. A general French advance followed and the remaining Austrians were driven back in disorder. Marengo and Castel Ceriolo were retaken and despite a couple of Austrian attempts to make a stand, they were utterly defeated.

French infantry and cavalry were able to march past Bard fort via the Albaredo track, but most of the artillery (including two 3-pdrs. captured at Chataillon) had to pound the fort into submission before rejoining the army. Bonaparte was very short of artillery for 10 days. (Bagetti/A. Ferrari)

Wargaming Comment

The Austrians used standard manoeuvres, marching in columns and firing in line. Skirmishers were deployed in open ground, but in the enclosed terrain near Marengo, artillery played the vital advance role to prepare the way for the main formations. This second phase of the battle must surely be more enjoyable to the beleaguered French commander



than the wargame of the first phase. As noted above the French soldiers had the ability to deliver a telling volley of musketry and mount a bayonet charge. This must be represented in the wargame re-enactment and provides the French player with a fairly rare chance to conduct such an operation. The rules in use should allow French – or for that matter any nation in this particular instance and position to benefit from fire power bonuses such as first volley etc., but if they do not, then such points should be built in for the wargame. The success of the bayonet charge probably relies on morale more than on cold steel. Again, a set of Napoleonic rules should already cover this, but it is an important factor in the action, so local rules may be needed. As well as the French being given additional points for aggressiveness, charging, elan etc., the Austrians should also suffer demerits for casualties, disorganisation and so forth. The artillery fire against the column and the subsequent cavalry attack against this ‘damaged’ flank should already be workable from the rules in use. If they are not, then it is suggested another set is needed.

Alternative scenarios

So much for the historical battle and what heady stuff it is, but Marengo could also be fought as a straight fight with the given forces, but with no attempt being made to follow the historical course of the battle.

The Austrian attack could well drive the French back with no hope of re-forming. Instead of an ordered retreat, the French rout and there is no second phase.

Alternatively, the French deployment around Marengo holds and the Austrian attack is contained – the probable outcome here is a bloody stalemate.

Moving on to the second phase of the battle, General Desaix’s arrival could be based on either dicing for a random or perhaps limited selection of times or on a particular game move. The result of this dice roll is unknown to the Austrians, but they do know that French re-inforcements are likely.

Also, another option could be to just refight the second phase of the battle, but this time starting with the French falling back in good order. Once again, dice can be utilised to determine the number of moves of delay before the Austrians advance. As before, Desaix’s arrival is based on rolling for either a time delay or specific move. The Austrians should start the advance as they did in the actual battle, that is in two columns with no artillery deployed, but once the action is joined they do have the chance to deploy. This is an interesting option to develop and the result is by no means a foregone conclusion.

Figure size and scale

Finally, a few observations as to the size of figure that might be used and the possible figure/man ratios.

When considering large-scale Napoleonic actions such as Marengo, only 15mm or 6mm figures can realistically be considered as being of a suitable size. Any larger and the wargame would need to be played over a very large area, or, rather unsatisfactorily, broken down into a number of separate sub-sections or stages.

Using 6mm figures however, it is possible to re-create the opposing forces right down to battalion level. This can be achieved in one of two ways. Firstly by allowing one 6mm troop block or unit to represent a given historical unit, irrespective of the variations in the strengths of those historical units. Thus the 755-strong Austrian Warasdin-Kreuz Grenz Regiment would be represented by one troop block, as would the Ottocac Grenz Regiment at 298.

Alternatively, adopt a man/figure ratio, a system which would work equally well in 15mm as in 6mm. If a ratio such as one wargame figure representing 50 actual soldiers was selected, then the strengths of the above two units would be 15 and six respectively.

Equally the wargamer's available forces can be organised so that one 'unit' is said to represent a brigade or even a division, but this tends to reduce the sheer scale of the re-creation of an action such as Marengo.

THE BATTLEFIELDS TODAY

THE BATTLEFIELDS

The best small-scale maps of Italy are the Touring Club Italiano in 1:200,000 of Lombardia and Piemonte. The Michelin map of Italy North-West in 1:400,000 is an alternative, but none show much contour detail. Local large-scale maps are in 1:25,000 and issued by each local government area or the Italian Army. For Marengo/Alessandria, you will need four to cover the battlefield: 177-NO Sale, 177-SO Spinetta-Marengo, 176-SE Castellazzo Bormida and 176-NE Alessandria. All of these show few contours, relying on spot heights. The Piemonte Servizio Cartografico also provides 1:10,000 scale maps.

The Lombardia maps are contoured and the Istituto Geografico Militare map Series M691, Foglio Pavia 59 provides 1:100,000 scale coverage of the Pavia-Montebello area. 1:25,000 scale maps by the Regione Lombardia are very detailed, but two are required for Montebello: B8 1 Voghera and B8 111 Godiasco. These maps are only obtainable by writing

Typical of later paintings of the battle, the most familiar landmark is the Tower near Marengo farm, although Napoleon largely played down the fighting in this area. Distances are greatly reduced, so this famous feature is near the climatic end of the battle. Incidents in the battle are also included at the wrong points, such as the exploding ammunition wagon to the left. (BA)



to the Regione Piemonte Servizio Cartografico at Corso Bolzano, 44, 10100 Torino (Marengo) and Regione Lombardia – Servizio Cartografico, Via Pirelli, 5, 20100 Milano (Casteggio-Montebello), or to the Istituto Geografico Militare, Via Battisti, 10, 50122 Firenze.

The Po valley has always been at the centre of northern Italy's prosperity, and significant economic as well as urban development has affected the main battlefields. Based in Alessandria (www.comune.alessandria.it – Tourist Information: +39 0131 445711), start at the huge and imposing Citadel, a typical European star fortress, the construction of which started in 1721. Now owned by the Italian Army, it is not open to the public. However, during the Bicentennial celebrations of June-August 2000, it will be open for visitors to the historical exhibition. From the Citadel, head out to the east along the N10 for a round trip of the main part of the Marengo battlefield. Ignoring the buildings on the south side, Marengo itself is little bigger than in 1800 and the farm complex including the Tower is largely unchanged, although the western corner has been filled in. The Villa Marengo now stands on the site of the Inn and houses the Museum with its interesting collection of objects and dioramas.

A large factory now stands on the slight rise from which Austrian gun teams and Guénand's infantry descended on Kaim's troops, but the line of the Old Road is clearly visible. Heading east on the main road towards Tortona, you are travelling on the New Road, down which Zach advanced. Head on through San Giuliano Vecchio to Torre Garofoli, an ancient and unchanged hamlet, site of Napoleon's headquarters. At the road junction just before the Scrivia, there is a choice: a) head north to pick up the A21 west back past Castel Ceriolo and over the Bormida to the north of Alessandria, where the Austrian army originally camped; b) head south down the N211 to Rivalta, where Desaix attempted his crossing of the Scrivia, and the Novi battlefield. The N35 leads to Genoa, although the old road runs through Gavi and over the Bocchetta pass; c) head east on the N10 to Tortona. From the ruins of the San Vittorio Fort, demolished by Bonaparte in 1801, there is a fine panoramic view of the plain north to the Po, the battle sites of both Casteggio-Montebello and Marengo being clearly visible. Head further east on the N10 through Voghera, Montebello and Casteggio to Stradella. Although the flat land towards the Po has been drained, the slopes of the Apennine foothills show just what a vital road this was. Alternatively, a railway line runs down from Piacenza along this route to Alessandria.

Still largely tree-lined, the Fontanone is cemented over at Marengo, but is still open to the north and south. To the north, the now modern farm of La Barbotta and the site of the Guard's unsuccessful stand are still visible, but the vineyards have now gone and modern corn doesn't grow to 1800 heights. Castel Ceriolo is bigger, but its importance in the landscape is clear. Back in Marengo, a battle ossuary is sited in the park by the Villa. Away from the main roads, the local tracks are difficult in wet weather, so summer is the best time to visit, although the heat can be fierce.

Visitors coming by road from Switzerland have the opportunity to bypass the tunnel on the N27 to visit the St. Bernard Hospice with its famous dogs. The importance of the imposing Bard Fortress (presently under repair) is quite clear in a narrow defile of the Valle d'Aosta, visible from the A5.

THE SURROUNDING AREA – TOURIST GUIDE

Bonaparte's second Italian campaign was fought over a large part of north-west Italy, covering five modern regions: Valle d'Aosta, Piemonte, Lombardia, Liguria and Emilia-Romagna, an area renowned for its cuisine, wines and fashion, as well as its historical past.

Milan (Milano), the capital of Lombardia and Italy's main commercial and financial centre (www.comune.milano.it – Tourist Information: +39 02 72524300), is also an important historical city. The Sforzesco castle (open daily from dawn to dusk) is the symbol of Milan: destroyed several times, once on Napoleon's instructions, it now houses the city art museum with its magnificent collection, including works by Michelangelo. The Pinacoteca of Brera houses one of the best painting collections in Italy, particularly from the 15th to 18th centuries, including works by Mantegna, Piero della Francesca and Raphael. One of Canova's statues of Napoleon stands outside in the gallery courtyard (open Tue-Sat 9 am-5.30 pm, Sun and public holidays 9 am-12 pm, closed Mon). Follow Bonaparte on the 1800 campaign by attending an opera at the world-famous Teatro La Scala (automatic telephone booking service: tel. +39 02 860775 – www.lascala.milano.it). Military enthusiasts should not miss the Municipal Museum of the Risorgimento, which holds a large collection of documents and art related to Italy's history from the late 18th century to 1870 (open Tue-Sun 9:30 am-5:30 pm, closed Mon). Ten kilometres north-east is Monza, home of the Ferrari Grand Prix team and the famous racetrack.

Marengo Museum contains an interesting collection of artefacts from the battlefield, as well as large dioramas (L. Polastri)



Fifty kilometres of Milan, Pavia (www.comune.pavia.it – Tourist Information: +39 0382 27238) is a lively, but traditionally minded city with a well-preserved historical centre. The city's most important buildings date from the 10th-17th centuries, including the Romanesque Basilica of San Michele, the Renaissance cathedral, the Visconti castle and the university. A little further out is the Certosa monastery, a masterpiece of Lombard architecture, begun in 1396 and completed with a beautiful marble facade at the end of the 15th century (guided tours 9-11.30 am and 2.30-6 pm, closed Mon). The Ducal Park, a vast hunting ground between the Visconti castle and the Certosa, is the site of the battle of Pavia (1525), when Francis I King of France was defeated and later captured by Emperor Charles V, in a battle which marked the triumph of musketry over armoured cavalry.

Now the centre of a major agricultural area, Lodi (www.pmp.it/Lodi/Lol – Tourist Information: +39 0371 421391) retains many of its medieval and Renaissance buildings, but the famous bridge over the Adda stormed by Bonaparte's troops on 10 May 1796 is long gone.

Since it was settled by the Romans, Piacenza (www.comune.piacenza.it – Tourist Information: +39 0523 329324) has always been an important crossing of the Po, situated on the south bank astride the main east-west road. The 13th-century cathedral and the Palazzo Gotico were built as the city flourished commercially under the Farnese dukes. The magnificent Palazzo Farnese houses the City Museum, the large Art Gallery, the Carriage Museum and the Museum of the Risorgimento (open 10-12 am and 3-6 pm May-September; otherwise it closes at 5 pm closed Mon). From 1816 to 1847, it formed part of the Duchy of Parma, ruled by Napoleon's second wife, Marie Louise of Austria.

Genoa (Genova), capital of Liguria (www.comune.genova.it – Tourist Information: +39 010 248711), is now a modern industrial Mediterranean seaport. Nevertheless, some parts of its historical heritage remain, although a little dilapidated. The magnificent Palazzo Ducale, started in the 14th century, is the architectural symbol of the city's tradition as a maritime Republic (open daily 9 am-8 pm – www.palazzoducale.genova.it). Since its renovation in 1992 to mark the 500th anniversary of the discovery of the Americas by its most famous son, Christopher Columbus, the ancient port area has become a lively cultural and tourist centre, housing the Sea and Navigation Pavilion, an exhibition on Italian maritime culture since the Middle Ages (seasonal opening hours – Tourist Information: +39 010 2463678), and Europe's largest Aquarium, which exhibits 500 different species (seasonal opening hours – Information: +39 010 2465535 – www.acquario.ge.it). Like other major cities, Genoa has its own Museum of the Risorgimento (open Tue, Thur, Fri, Sat 9 am-1 pm).

Former capital of the Kingdom of Sardinian Piedmont/Savoy, and Italy itself until 1861, Torino (www.comune.torino.it – Tourist Information: +39 011 535181) remains the heart of Piemonte. Despite its industrial and technological development, the city maintains a large and architecturally harmonious historical centre, made famous by the film, *The Italian Job*. Castello Square, the hub of city life, is made up of several monumental buildings: the impressive Palazzo Reale, the former Royal residence (open 9 am-1 pm and 2-6 pm from Tue to Sun, closed Mon),

which also houses the Royal Armoury, an important European arms collection; the Palazzo Madama; the Baroque San Lorenzo church; the Renaissance Duomo (open daily), with its magnificent Baroque Chapel, which guards the famous Holy Turin Shroud, scheduled to be on display again from 26 August to 22 October 2000. Turin's finest Baroque masterpiece is the Palazzo Carignano, home of the first Italian Parliament and now, the National Museum of the Risorgimento (open 9 am-6:30 pm, Tue-Sat, 9 am-12:30 pm Sun, closed Mon). Opposite is one of the world's best collections of Ancient Egyptian artefacts in the Egyptian Museum (open 8.30 am-10 pm Tue-Sat, 8.30 am-8 pm Sun and hols., closed Mon), and nearby, the Sabaudia Gallery, one of Italy's most important art galleries, with its prestigious collection of Flemish and Dutch masters (open 9 am-2 pm Tue-Sat, 1:30-7 pm Thu, 10 am-10 pm Sun, closed Mon). The imposing Citadel includes the National Museum of Artillery (Open 9 am-4 pm Mon-Thu, 9 am-1 pm Fri, closed Sat-Sun) and the Pietro Micca Museum devoted to the 1706 siege, which includes a fascinating tour of the underground defence works (open 9 am-7 pm Tue-Sun, closed Mon). Outside the city are the magnificent Royal residences of the Savoy dynasty: Venaria Reale, Stupinigi, Rivoli, Moncalieri, Aglié, Racconigi.

Museum opening days and access times do change, so a call to the local Tourist Information office is recommended.

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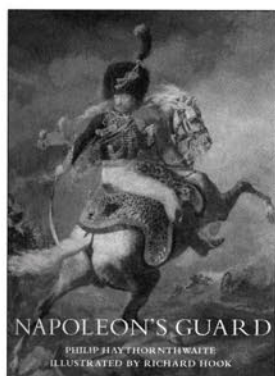
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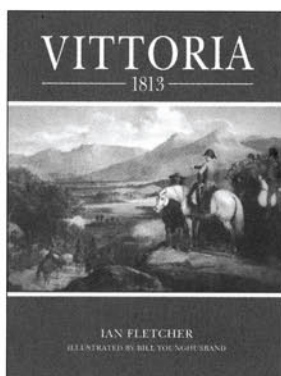
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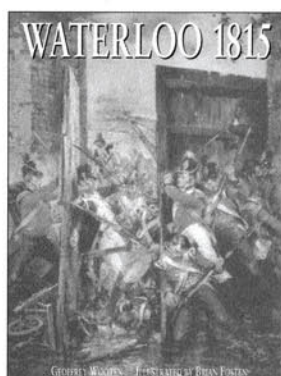
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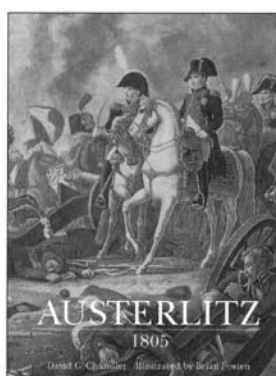
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