

The Battle of La Souffel

Age of Eagles Scenario
by GRW, 2011

SETTING

Date: 28 June 1815, 3:00 PM

Location: 5 miles north of Strasbourg, France

Combatants: French Empire vs. Austrian Empire & Kingdom of Württemberg

History: Napoleon's grand strategy for the 1815 campaign was to guard France's borders with a series of "observation" corps while he delivered the knock-out blow to each allied army in turn. With barely 20,000 men, General Rapp's Army of the Rhine was tasked with guarding the vulnerable eastern border to central France. Three days after Napoleon's decisive defeat at Waterloo, Rapp learned of the result and began a slow withdraw from the Rhine.

His small army was pursued by the vanguard of Schwarzenberg's Army of the Upper Rhine, a multi-national coalition of over 200,000 men. On June 26 Rapp skirmished with the Austrian III Corps, buying himself just enough time to continue his withdraw toward Strasbourg. But with the allied vanguard in hot pursuit, Rapp elected to make a stand along the banks of the meandering Souffel River. Late in the afternoon of June 28, Crown Prince Eugene eagerly collected his III Corps to mount an attack against the heavily-outnumbered French.



Jean Rapp

French Orders: Check the enemy advance to buy our army time and space for future maneuvers.



Crown Prince Eugene of Württemberg

Allied Orders: Destroy Rapp's army before he escapes.

Victory points: One point for each spent or destroyed enemy brigade; two points for uncontested control of each town south of the Souffel River (there are 4 such towns).

Game length: Allied 2:30 PM until 7:30 PM (11 Turns)

AFTERMATH

Rapp deployed in a traditional defense over a four mile front, with two divisions guarding the river bridges, and one central division in reserve. For his own part, Prince Eugene may have been overly eager to win some glory in the waning days of the war. Instead of concentrating his superior numbers, Eugene committed his men piecemeal as they arrived. He first directed the Austrians to seize Lampertheim. When this failed to turn Rapp's flank, Eugene committed Franquemont to strike Souffelweyersheim. Charging headlong over the bridge, Prince Adam's cavalry broke through the French line, only to have Rapp personally direct a counter-charge with Merlin's division. The onset of dusk allowed Eugene to call off his engagement, and the imminent arrival of 30,000 Russians forced Rapp to fall back into the fortress of Strasbourg, where he remained until Napoleon formally abdicated. La Souffel was a tactical French victory, but strategically irrelevant. Each side lost roughly 3,000 casualties.

SCENARIO RULES

1. The scenario automatically ends in a decisive allied victory if they capture Bischeim, representing the French line of retreat into Strasbourg.
2. RAPP is Charismatic.
3. RAPP and EUGENE are both +0 on initiative rolls. The Allies begin with initiative Turn 1.

TERRAIN & WEATHER

The gaming table should be six feet long by four feet wide, laid out according to the accompanying map. Urban areas offer +2 advantages to defending units in melee and a -2 benefit when under fire. The steep, wooded banks of the Souffel River make it impassible, except at the bridges. Cavalry may ford the river at a cost of 6" movement penalty and are automatically disordered. The area was dotted with light woods, which block line of sight but do not impede movement. Roads offer full movement benefits. The weather is warm and clear.

DEPLOYMENT

Units set up according to the accompanying map in whichever formation the commander sees fit. Batteries may begin limbered or unlimbered, and commanders must be deployed within 12 inches of their commands. RAPP deploys with ROTTEMBOURG, ALBERT, and MERLIN anywhere south of the Souffel River. *[Historically, Albert was positioned between Lampertheim and Mundolsheim, Rottembourg defended east of Souffelweyersheim, and Merlin waited near Bischeim.]* GRANDJEAN arrives from Bischeim only after the first Allied brigade successfully crosses south of the Souffel.

EUGENE arrives with PALOMBINI at 2:30pm (Turn 1) from point A. FRANQUEMONT arrives with Prince ADAM at 3:00pm (Turn 2) from point B or C. KOCH also arrives from point B or C, but not until 4:00pm (Turn 4). Prince EMILE arrives at 5:00pm (Turn 6) from point A.

The Allied player may voluntarily elect to delay Prince ADAM's arrival until 4:00pm (Turn 4), at which time these troops may arrive from point D (riding around the flank of the French line).

SCALE

Each infantry stand represents 360 soldiers, each cavalry stand 180 troopers, and artillery stands a battery of 6-10 guns. Ground scale is one inch to 150 yards and one complete turn represents thirty minutes of historical time.

Notes on Sources

Though it would forever be remembered as the last battle of the Napoleonic Wars, La Souffel was a minor engagement and a footnote in the wake of Waterloo. Research is difficult to find, and Count Jean Rapp's biased memoir is the best source. The OOBs are drawn from George Nafziger's research, although the brigade commanders on the French side are speculatively drawn from various officers Rapp named in his notes. The battlefield map was created by cross-referencing Rapp's account with Google Maps. See Jean Rapp, *The Memoirs of General Count Rapp* (1823), pp352-374. For a brief account of the battle and a summary of the overall strategic refer to William Siborne's *The Waterloo Campaign, 1815* (1848).

French Order of Battle

RAPP
Army of the Rhine

RAPP corps Idr

Rottembourg 15th Division Idr
Gudin C 9/7/5 Sk line
Montagnier C 7/5/4 Sk line
Light Foot Artillery #1

Grandjean 17th Division Idr
Fririon C 7/5/4 Sk line
Dandlau R 9/7/5 Sk light
Heavy Foot Artillery #3

Albert 16th Division Idr
Beurmann R 9/7/5 Sk light
Voyrol C 9/7/5 Sk line
Light Foot Artillery #2

Merlin Cavalry Division Idr
Grouvel R 5/3/2 LC chasseurs
Favier R 6/4/3 HC dragoons
Light Horse Artillery #4

Allied Order of Battle

EUGENE
III Korps, Army of the Upper Rhine

EUGENE III Corps Idr

FRANQUEMONT corps ADC

Prince Adam Cav. Div. Idr
Jett R 8/6/4 LC mtd. jägers
Moltke R 8/6/4 HC dragoons
Light Horse Artillery #1 & 2

Palombini Austrian div. Idr
Count Kinski R 9/7/4 LC chevxlgr.
Luxemburg R 16/12/8 Sk line
Czollich R 16/12/8 Sk line
Light Foot Artillery #5 & 6

Koch division Idr
Hohenlohe R 12/8/6 Sk line
Misany R 9/7/5 Sk line
Lalance R 9/7/5 Sk line
Hugel R 12/8/6 Sk light
Light Foot Artillery #3 & 4

Prince Emile Hessian div. Idr
Folhenius E 9/7/4 Sk grenadier
Gall R 7/5/4 Sk line

MAP & DEPLOYMENT

