

= Battle of Neuburg ( 1800 ) =

The Battle of Neuburg occurred on 27 June 1800 in the south German state of Bavaria , on the southern bank of the Danube river . Neuburg is located on the Danube between Ingolstadt and Donauwörth . This battle occurred late in the War of the Second Coalition ( 1798 ? 1802 ) , the second war between Revolutionary France and the conservative European monarchies , which included at one time or another Britain , Habsburg Austria , Russia ( until late 1799 ) , the Ottoman Empire ( Turkey ) , Portugal and Naples . After a series of reverses , several of the allies withdrew from the Coalition . By 1800 , Napoleon 's military victories in northern Italy challenged Habsburg supremacy there . French victories in the upper Danubian territories opened a route along that river to Vienna .

In a series of battles in what is now southern Germany , the French pushed the combined Austrian and Coalition force back , first capturing Stockach , then Messkirch , then Biberach . After his loss at Biberach , the Coalition commander Pál Kray withdrew to the fortress at Ulm , leaving detachments to secure the Danube crossings that lay further to the east , at Höchstädt , Blindheim , Donauwörth , and Neuburg . The battle at Neuburg was the last of the Danube campaign for the summer of 1800 ; the armistice between the Habsburgs and the French was signed a couple of days later and ended in late November , and the French ultimately defeated the Austrians at the battles at Ampfing and Hohenlinden . The heaviest action of the battle occurred in the village of Unterhausen , in the outskirts of Neuburg .

= = Background = =

By early 1799 , the French Directory had become impatient with stalling tactics employed by Austria . The uprising in Naples raised further alarms , and recent gains in Switzerland suggested the timing was fortuitous to venture on another campaign in northern Italy and southwestern Germany . At the beginning of 1800 , the armies of France and Austria faced each other across the Rhine . Feldzeugmeister Pál Kray led approximately 120 @, @ 000 troops . In addition to his Austrian regulars , his force included 12 @, @ 000 men from the Electorate of Bavaria , 6 @, @ 000 troops from the Duchy of Württemberg , 5 @, @ 000 soldiers of low quality from the Archbishopric of Mainz , and 7 @, @ 000 militiamen from the County of Tyrol . Of these , 25 @, @ 000 men were deployed east of Lake Constance ( Bodensee ) to protect the Vorarlberg . Kray posted his main body of 95 @, @ 000 soldiers in the L @-@ shaped angle where the Rhine changes direction from a westward flow along the northern border of Switzerland to a northward flow along the eastern border of France . Unwisely , Kray set up his main magazine at Stockach , near the northwestern end of Lake Constance , only a day 's march from French @-@ held Switzerland .

= = = Strategic importance of Danube Valley = = =

The French war goal , to occupy Vienna and force the Habsburgs to accept and comply with peace terms established in 1798 , required a double @-@ pronged invasion through northern Italy , which First Consul Napoleon commanded , and through southern Germany , a campaign that fell to Moreau . To secure access into Bavaria and , eventually , to Vienna , the French needed to control the Danube riverway . This was not a new tactic : The stretch of river between Ulm and Neuburg had been the site of major battles of the Thirty Years ' War and War of the Spanish Succession . Between Ulm and Ingolstadt , the Danube grows significantly in volume , making it a wide and swift waterway . The Iller joins the Danube at Ulm , dumping massive amounts of water into the stream ; at Donauwörth , the Lech enters the Danube . Neuburg , the first significant city on the river after Donauwörth , had been the family seat of the princes of Pfalz @-@ Neuburg ; taking it from a princely family of the Holy Roman Empire would be a blow to the morale and prestige of the Habsburgs , whose role it was to protect the small princely domains . Control of the bridges and passages between Ulm and Donauwörth , Neuburg , then Ingolstadt offered an advantage of both transport and prestige .

= = = Preliminary to battle = = =

After withdrawing from Biberach , Kray waited at Ulm for Moreau 's assault , which did not come . Instead of striking directly at the well @-@ fortified and supplied city , Moreau 's first division , approaching Ulm from the south , suddenly veered to the east and struck at the smaller forces posted between Ulm and Donauwörth . Its commander , Claude Lecourbe , secured posts in Landsberg and Augsburg , and left sufficient rearguard troops to protect himself from Prince Reuss @-@ Plauen , who remained in the Tyrol guarding mountain access to Vienna . Lecourbe then approached Dettingen , Blindheim ( Blenheim ) and Höchstädt . The corps of General Paul Grenier had been posted with its right flank to the Danube and Gunzburg , and their left flank at Kinsdorf . General Richepanse protected both shores of the Iller , covering the road from Ulm south to Memmingen , and secured communication with Switzerland ; there , he withstood considerable skirmishing with the Austrians . Three divisions of reserve remained at the hamlets of Kamlack and Mindel , to support an attack made by General Lecourbe on Ulm , in a case it should succeed , or Grenier 's attack upon Günzburg , in case Lecourbe should not succeed . At the battle at Höchstädt , a full Austrian corps maintained possession until dislodged by repeated attacks of carabiners , cuirassiers and hussars , who took about 2 @,@ 000 of the Austrians and Württembergers as prisoners , along with some cannons and standards . Once Höchstädt and its nearby bridges fell on 19 June , the French controlled the Danube crossings between Ulm and Donauwörth . Kray abandoned Ulm , and withdrew further downstream . The next French target would be Neuburg .

= = Orders of battle = =

= = = French = = =

The exact order of battle of French forces is not clear , but contemporary sources suggest the presence of a portion of General Claude Lecourbe 's Corps of 28 @,@ 368 , including the forces of generals Laval , Molitor , Jardon , and Vandamme . This is also confirmed in an extract of Moreau 's dispatch to the French Minister of War , published in the London Chronicle , 10 June 1800 . " The 6th Chasseurs , 13th Cavalry , 4th Hussars and 11th Chasseurs distinguished themselves in this affair . The rest of the division , and that of [ Lecourbe ] , passed rapidly [ along ] the Danube ... General Grenier was equally well prepared . " In addition , the presence ( and death ) of Théophile Corret de la Tour d 'Auvergne , the First Grenadier of France , suggests that the grenadier company of the 46th Demi @-@ brigade infantry de ligne was at least engaged . In addition , General Espagne 's 37th and 84th Regiments were engaged , as were grenadiers the 109th Regiment . Lecourbe mentions the 37th and the 109th several times in his own account of the battle , so apparently they were heavily engaged : this would include the brigades of François Goullus and François Bontemps .

= = = = Lecourbe 's Division , Armée du Danube = = = =

Lecourbe 's division was reformed in April 1800 while still in Switzerland . After the Battle of Messkirch , both Gouvion Saint @-@ Cyr and Sainte @-@ Suzanne had retired to the Rhine , taking many of their forces with them . Consequently , Moreau had assigned had the cavalry commanded by Jean @-@ Joseph Ange d 'Hautpoul to reinforce Lecourbe 's division . Based on the mentions in the dispatches and Lecourbe 's reconstituted division , portions of the following probably were either present or available :

General of Division Dominique Vandamme , Generals of Brigade Jardon , Laval , Molitor :  
First Demi @-@ Brigade de Légère  
36th 83rd , 94th Demi @-@ Brigades de Ligne  
8th Hussar Regiment

Total 9 @, @ 963 infantry , 540 cavalry  
 Generals of Brigade François Goullus and François Bontemps  
 10th Demi @-@ Brigade de Légère  
 37th , 84th 109th Demi @-@ Brigades de Ligne  
 36th 93rd , 94th Regiments de Ligne  
 9th Hussars  
 Total 8 @, @ 238 infantry , 464 cavalry  
 General of Division Montrichard and General of Brigade Joseph Augustin Fournier  
 10th Demi @-@ Brigade de Légère  
 38th , 67th Regiments de Ligne  
 Total 6 @, @ 998  
 General of Division Étienne Marie Antoine Champion de Nansouty  
 Combined Grenadiers , 25th Cavalry , 11th Dragoons , 12th Chasseurs  
 Total 1 @, @ 500 infantry , 1 @, @ 280 cavalry

= = = Austrian = = =

The Austrian force included :  
 FZM Baron von Kray , Commanding  
 Infanterie Regiments Wenkheim # 35 , Erbach # 42 ( battalions each )  
 Kür Regiment Lothringen # 7 , Hohenzollern # 8 , Kinsky # 12 ( 6 squadrons each )  
 Dragoon Regiment Latour # 11 ( 6 squadrons )  
 Total Austrian force : 8 @, @ 000 men .

= = Battle = =

On 26 June 1800 , Kray 's force held the remaining passages across the Danube between Neuburg and Inglostadt . On that morning , the divisions of Gudin and Montrichard marched toward the junction of the Danube and Lech rivers from Donauwörth . General Gudin 's division followed a southward track toward Pöttmes and established a line north to Ehekirchen , approximately 3 miles ( 4 @. @ 8 km ) ( roughly along what is now road 2035 ) . Montrichard 's division , the 10th Demi @-@ Brigade de Légère and the 38th and 67th Regiments de Ligne marched toward Neuburg , which he was instructed to occupy with his right wing connecting to Gudin 's and covered the road between Augsburg and Neuburg . Gudin 's division encountered some resistance before it could take possession of Pöttmes , but succeeded with several charges executed by the 6th and 8th Hussars , who also captured 100 horses from the Austrians . General Puthed , who commanded the brigade on General Gudin 's left , took control of Ehekirchen with little opposition .

General Montrichard 's division approached Neuburg on the causeway that ran parallel to the river and took possession of the outskirts of the city with little problem . Kray 's troops , joined with Prince Reuss @-@ Plauen and emerged from Neuburg to defend the outskirts . Both Austrian forces were unprepared for battle at the moment , which allowed Montrichard 's troops to penetrate within four miles of the city with little opposition . Espagne 's brigade supported the advance guard , and after a brief action took the heights of Oberhausen with the 37th and the 84th Regiments . By early afternoon , the Austrians had recovered the village of Niederhausen , but the village of Unterhausen remained in French hands , defended by 100 marksmen , portions of the 37th Regiment and the 1st company of grenadiers of the 109th regiment .

From this point on , combat centered on the village of Unterhausen , 3 @. @ 8 miles ( 6 @. @ 1 km ) west @-@ south @-@ west of Neuburg center . A few French platoons drove the Austrians from the forest located between the village and the Danube with a bayonet charge by the grenadiers of the 109th . As French reserves arrived , the Austrians counterattacked and retook the woods , the heights at Oberhausen , and the village . According to Lecourbe 's account , the Austrians , " embolden by this first success , soon covered all the surrounding heights , on which they planted about twenty @-@ five or thirty pieces of cannon . " At eight o'clock at night , after twelve hours of

battle , companies of the 14th and 46th Regiments ( French ) moved along a small road on the right of the village , and another group proceeded on the left , enveloping the village . The subsequent simultaneous French attack at both flanks and the center convinced the Austrians that , despite the defensive barrages laid by their artillery in Oberhausen , the French had been massively reinforced . The attack on the village , executed without firing a shot , involved fierce hand @-@ to @-@ hand fighting in which the commander of the 46th Regiment and the First Grenadier of France , Latour D 'Auvergne , were both killed .

Outside the village , the French 46th and 14th Light Infantry mingled in combat with the Austrian cavalry , yet managed to hold their own , presumably in squares . This melee continued until about 2200 , when the Austrians withdrew from Unterhausen . Lecourbe ordered his troops not to pursue , as nightfall was on them .

= = Aftermath = =

The battle had immediate implications . General Ney established his headquarters in the castle at Neuburg , which over looks the battlefield . General Moreau ordered the establishment of a tomb on the location where the First Grenadier had fallen . Emperor Francis II dismissed Pál Kray , who had lost an impressive succession of battles , and appointed his brother , the 18 @-@ year @-@ old general major Archduke John , to command the Austrian army . To compensate for John 's inexperience , the emperor named FZM Franz von Lauer as deputy commander and the zealous Oberst ( Colonel ) Franz von Weyrother became Chief of Staff .

In the broader scheme , the series of battles beginning with the losses at Stockach and Engen and ending at Neuburg broke the Austrian control along the strategic Danube . Similarly , in Italy , French successes at the battles at Montebello and Marengo forced Austrian withdrawal to the east . With France threatening Habsburg Austria from the northwest and southwest , the Austrians agreed to a cease fire . Subsequent peace negotiations were complicated by the alliance Austria had made with Britain , and which prevented her from signing any separate peace . The British entered the negotiations to bolster their weakened ally . Initially Britain , which had successfully blockaded French ports , refused the French terms and offered counter terms in September 1800 . Napoleon later claimed that the Austrians did not negotiate in good faith , and sought only to gain time until " the rainy season " ( winter ) , when army movements would be difficult , and the Habsburgs would have an entire season to recruit .