

# The Franco-Prussian War

7

From Metz to Paris:  
War against the Empire,  
War against the Republic

## MUSEUM OF THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR AND THE ANNEXATION AT GRAVELOTTE

Period : 2nd Republic / 2nd Empire, Varia



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Museum of the War of 1870 and the Annexation, at Gravelotte © sitlor.fr

In April 2014, the Museum of the Franco-Prussian War and the Annexation was inaugurated in Gravelotte, a town famous for the battle of Saint-Privat (known as the battle of Gravelotte in August 1870).

The museum is not just a linear account of the conflict that broke out between France and Prussia in 1870 to the spring of 1871: it recounts the strategic and tactical aspects of the war, and shows the soldiers on both sides.



The Museum of the Franco-Prussian War and the Annexation © Florent Doncourt – Moselle General Council

The museum's collection features numerous paintings and sculptures, press cuttings, personal objects, photographs, and contemporary testimonies of the conflict, some of which are on loan from many other museums, institutions, and individuals, both French and German. Examples include the 4 modèle [model 4] 1858 field gun and the Reffye cannon, both of which are on loan from the Musée de l'Armée.



Museum of the Franco-Prussian War and the Annexation © Florent Doncourt – Moselle General Council

# Museum Franco-Prussian War Loigny-la-Bataille

📍 Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871)

📍 Place du 2 décembre 1870, Loigny-la-Bataille 📞 02 37 36 13 25 🌐 museedelaguerre1870.fr

📍 France Centre Loigny-la-Bataille



This museum (Musée de la Guerre de 1870) is dedicated to the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871) and the Battle of Loigny-la-Bataille, on 2 December 1870.

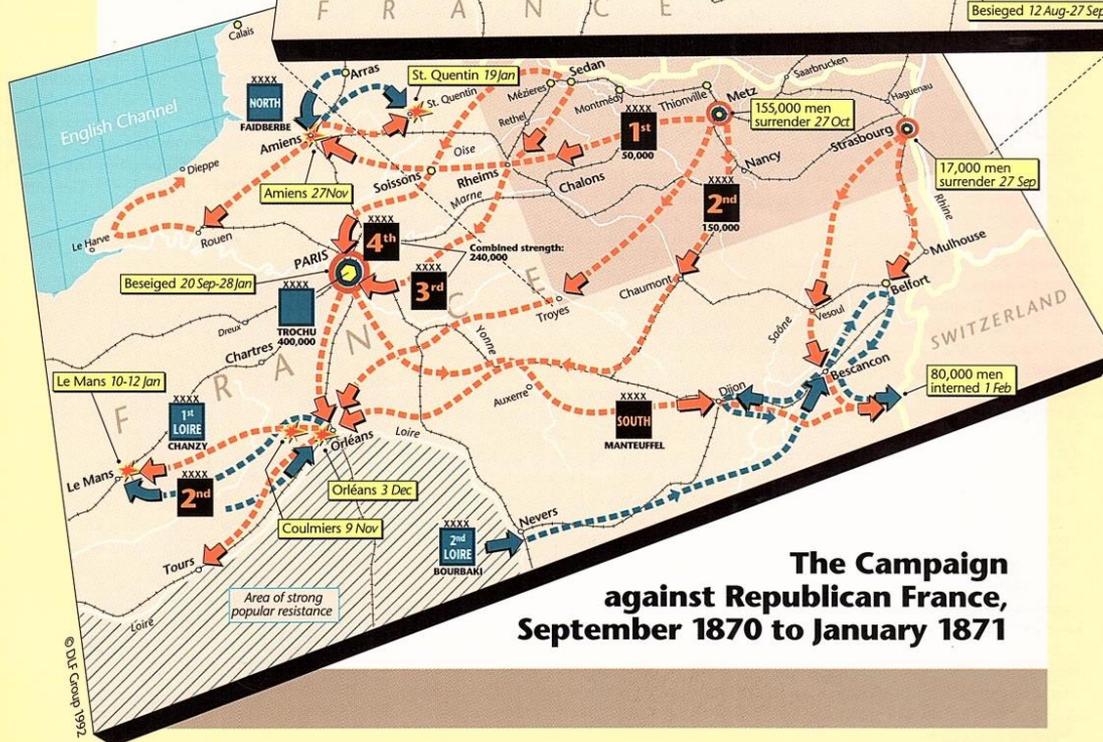
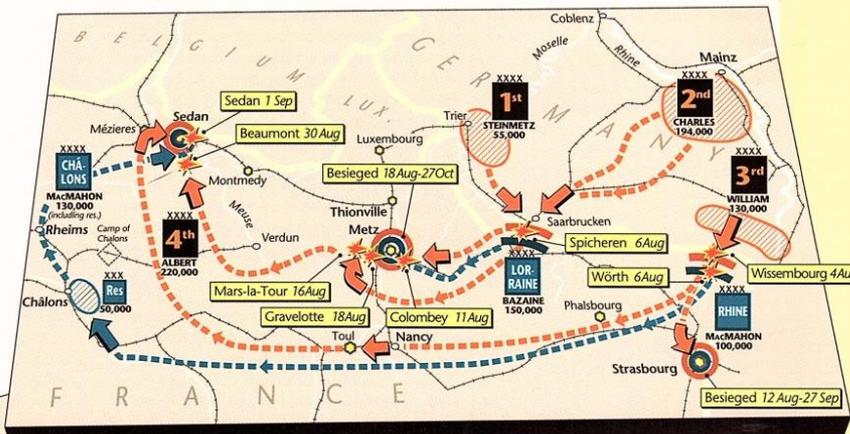
For current visiting hours, please visit the [website](https://museedelaguerre1870.fr) of the museum.

# THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR, 1870-1871

## The Campaign against Imperial France, 3 August to 1 September, 1870

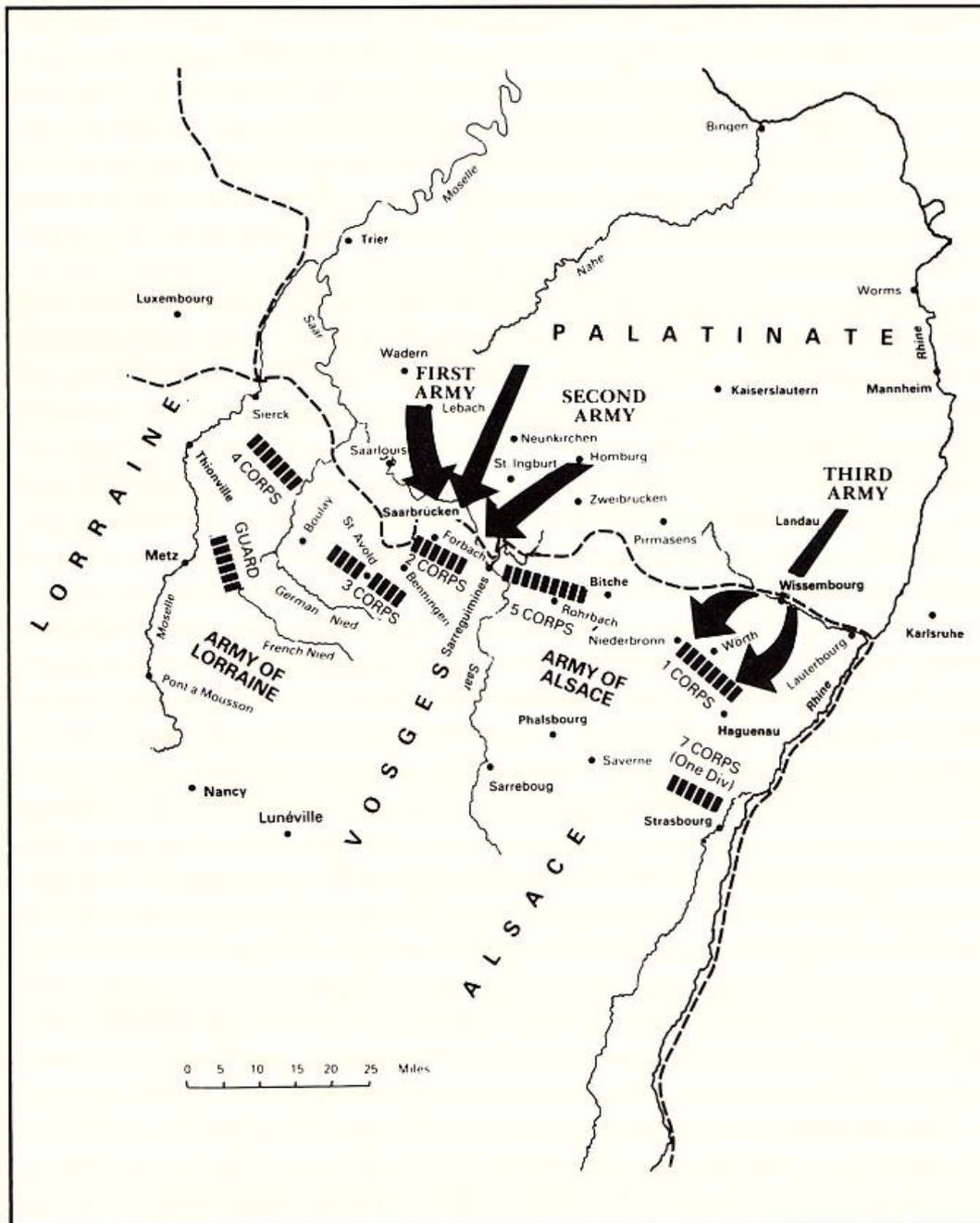
**KEY**

- Prussian forces/movements
- French forces/movements
- Major battle/siege
- Major raillines



## The Campaign against Republican France, September 1870 to January 1871

© D.L. Clark 1992



Map 2 The opposing sides, 6 August

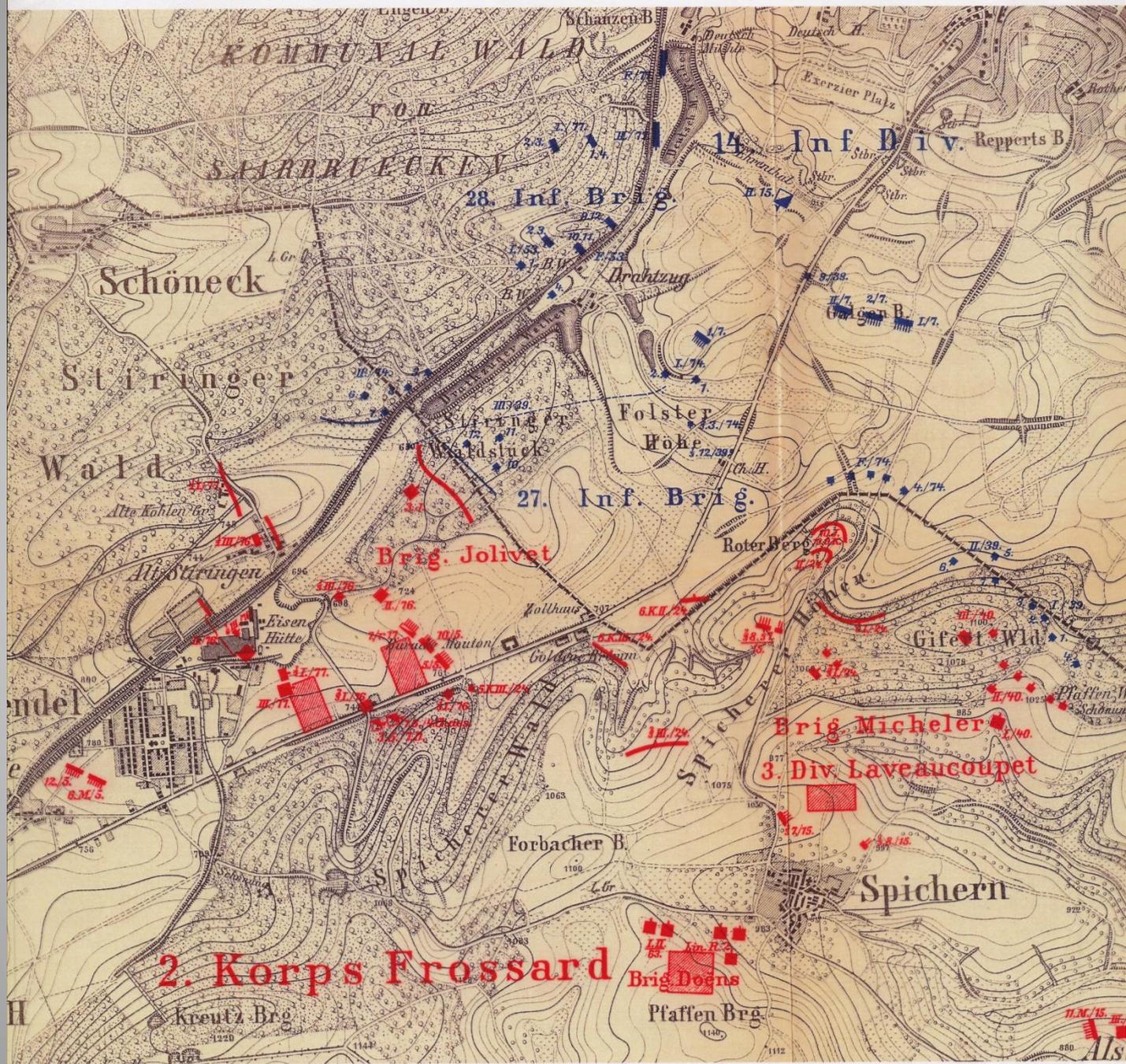


**General Frossard, 2 Corps (63)**



CULVER

Karl Friedrich von Steinmetz



KOMMUNAL WALD  
VON  
SAARBRÜCKEN

Schöneck

Stiringen

Wald

Alt Stiringen

ndel

2. Korps Frossard

Kreutz Brg

Brig. Jolivet

28. Inf. Brig.

27. Inf. Brig.

Brig. Doens

Pfaffen Brg

14. Inf. Div. Repperts B

Roter Berg

Brig. Micheler  
3. Div. Laveaucoupet

Spichern

Gifert Wald

11.11.15.

Als



C. Röchling





Die 77 er erstürmen die Goldene Bremm.



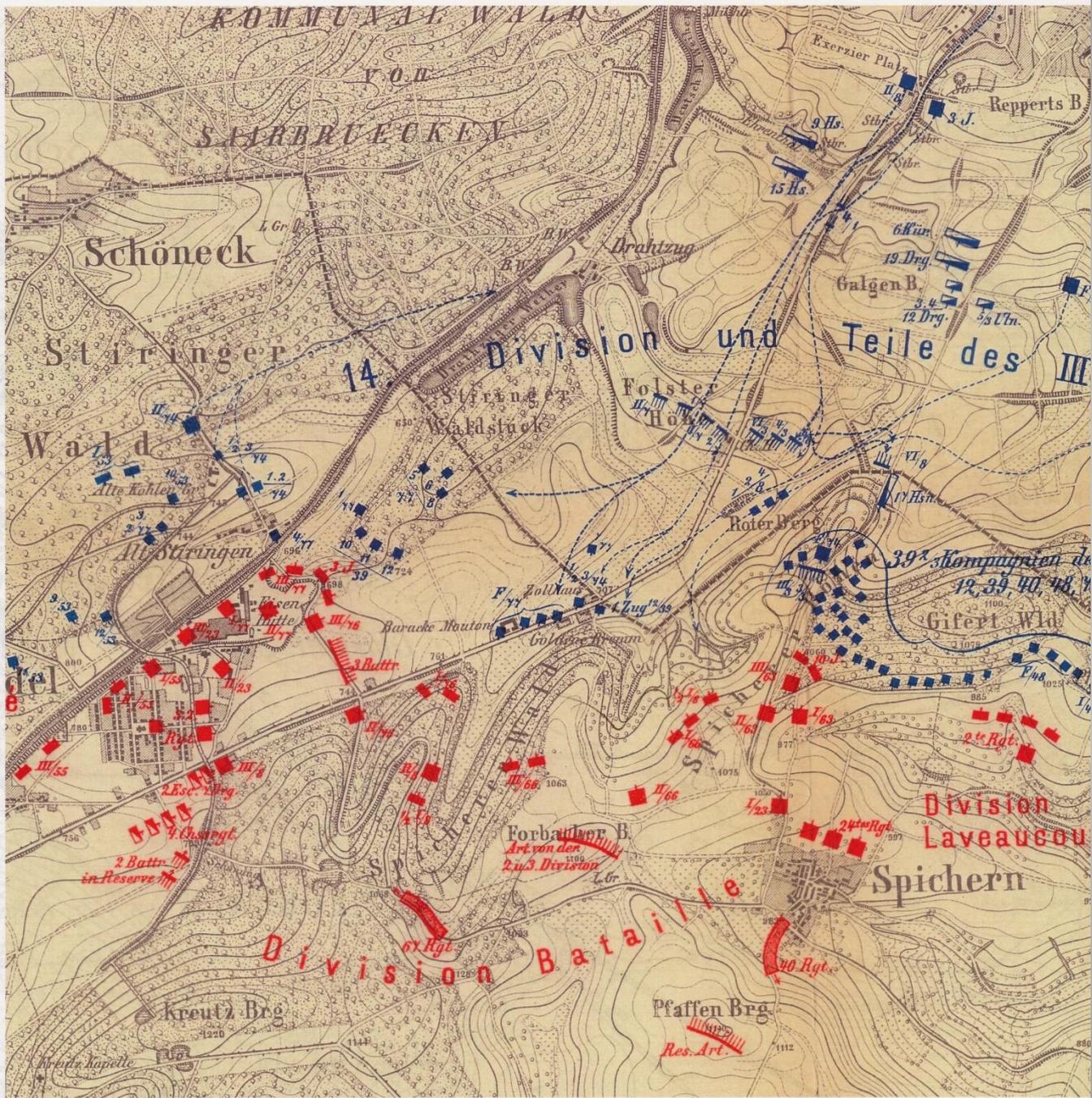
Mit Genehmigung der Photoar. Gesellschaft, Berlin.

Photographiedruck W. Sommer, Berlin-Schöneberg.

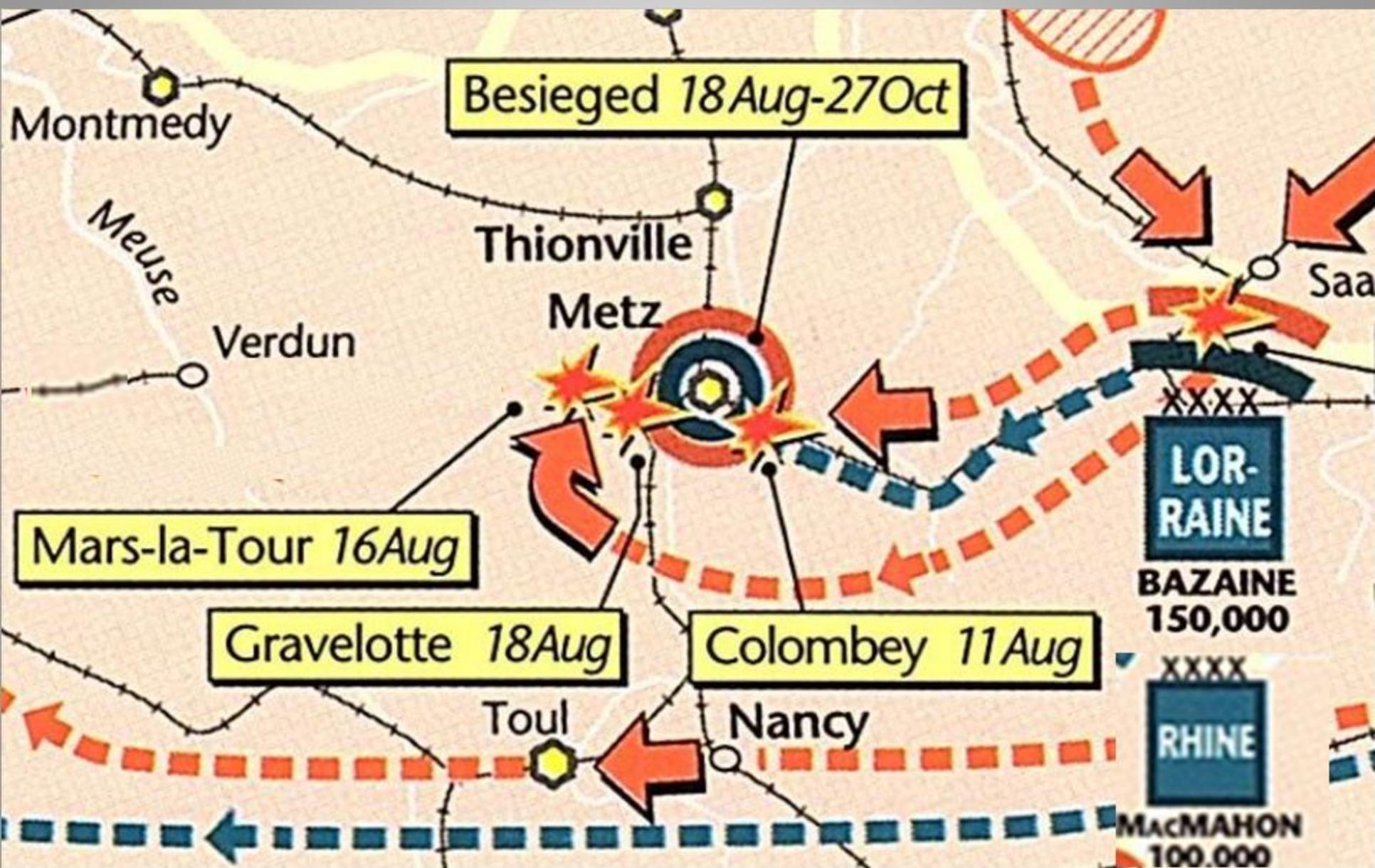
Sturm auf den Spicherer Berg, 6. August 1870.



Ankunft der Brandenburger Artillerie auf dem Roten Berg.









**Marshal Bazaine, 3 Corps, then C-in-C,  
Army of the Rhine**

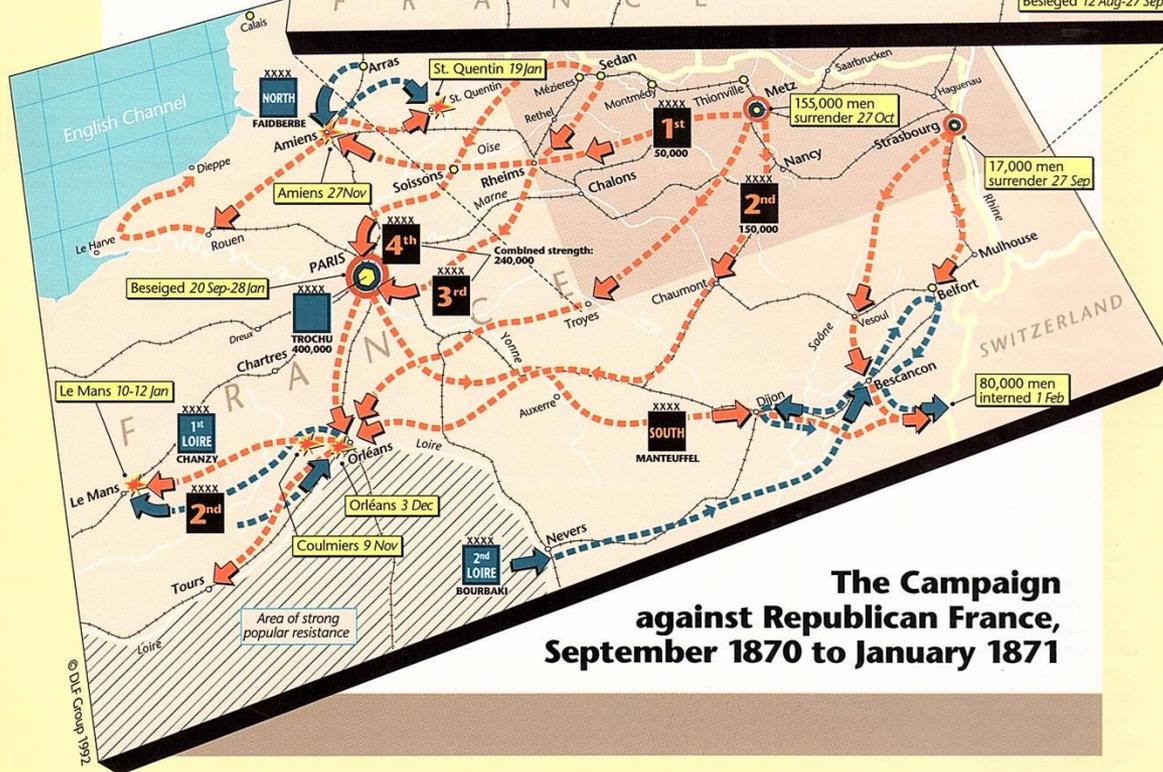
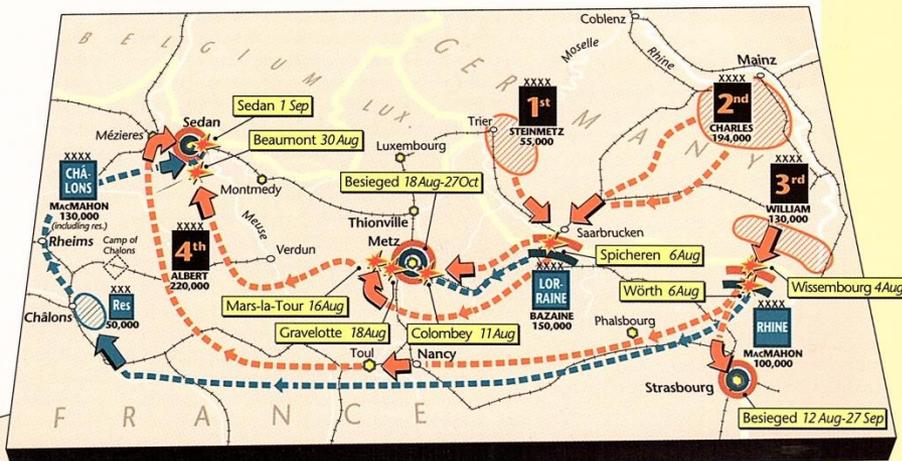


# THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR, 1870-1871

## The Campaign against Imperial France, 3 August to 1 September, 1870

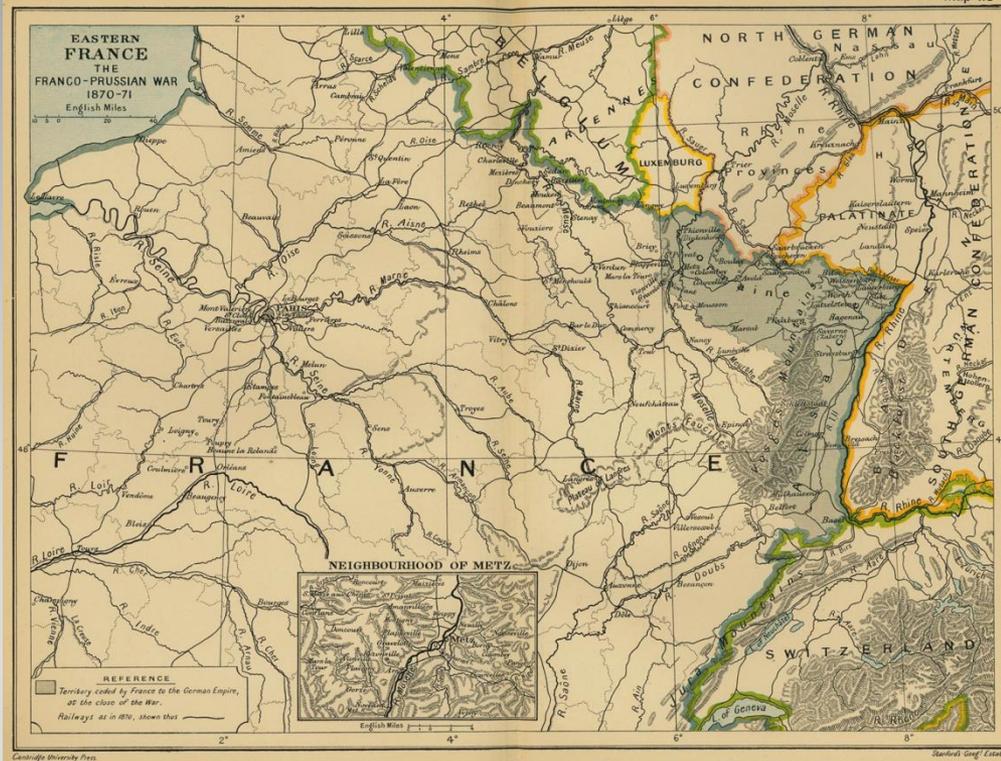
**KEY**

- Prussian forces/movements
- French forces/movements
- Major battle/siege
- Major raillines

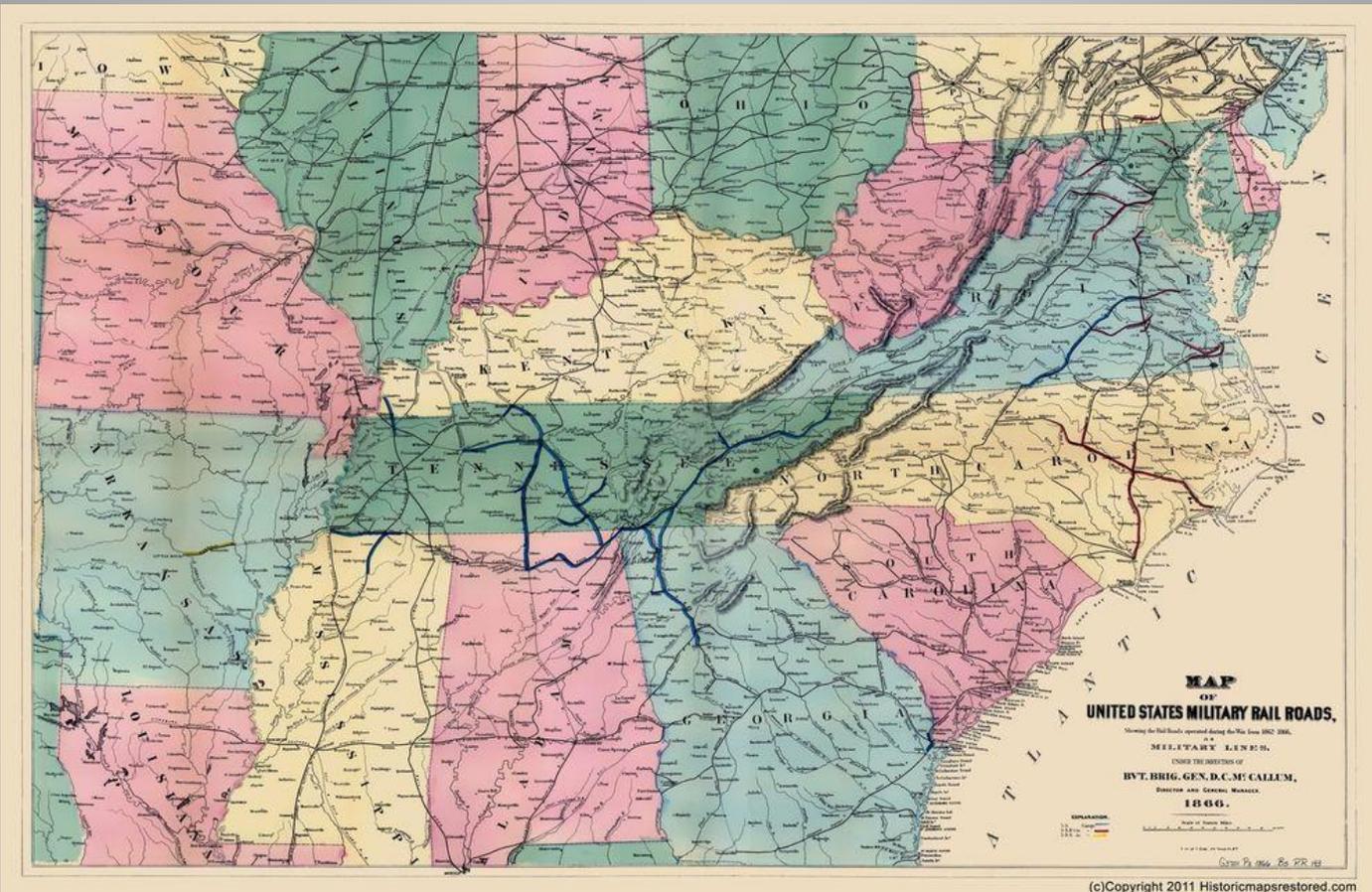


## The Campaign against Republican France, September 1870 to January 1871





As the Germans pressed on to Paris and the Loire valley, a huge backlog of blocked trains accumulated, stretching as far back as Frankfurt and Cologne. The Germans eventually operated three lines in France sufficiently freely to make the siege of Paris, with its huge consumption of ammunition, possible, but although more than 2000 miles of French track was being operated by the Germans when the war ended, conditions remained chaotic and – due to the attacks of *francs-tireurs* – dangerous. The German armies had to subsist by requisitioning and by living off the land which did not prove difficult in a rich agricultural country provided the troops kept moving. It is thus completely untrue that Moltke and his railway officials had solved the problem of supply in 1870. Once his armies advanced beyond the railheads they subsisted by traditional methods that differed little from Napoleonic times.<sup>7</sup>

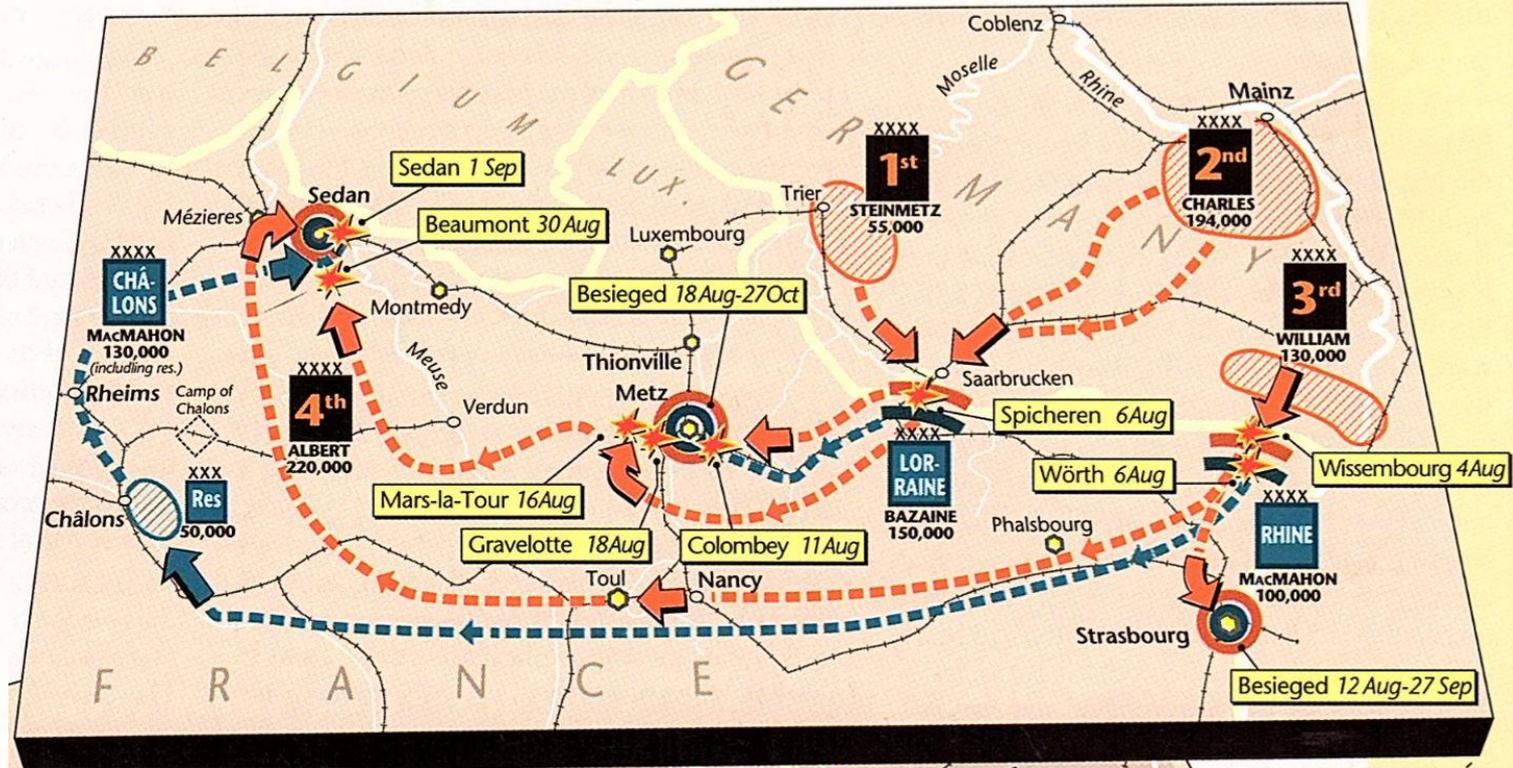


Railways had been exploited much more fully and successfully, for both supply and rapid movement of troops, by the North in the American Civil War but this achievement was not recognized in Europe. What can be said is that despite the contemporary exaggeration of Moltke's mastery of railways in 1870, the revolutionary *potential* of rail communication was becoming clear.



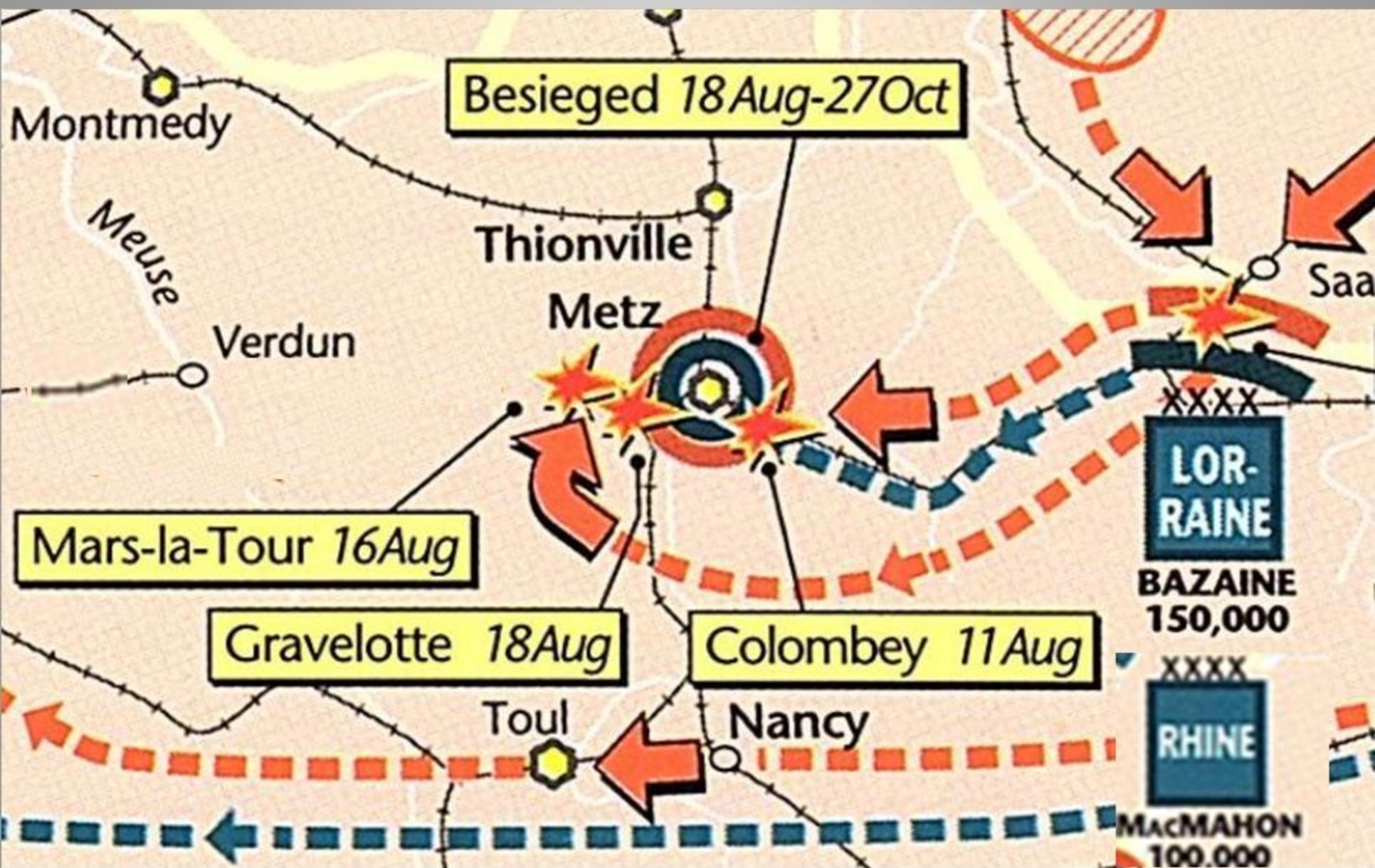
The *tirailleurs* from **Algeria** served in the **Crimean War**, the **Second Italian War of Independence**, the **French intervention in Mexico** and the **Franco-Prussian War (1870)**, as well as in French colonial campaigns in Tunisia, Indochina, Morocco, Madagascar and Algeria itself. During the Crimean War the Algerian *tirailleurs* acquired the nickname of "Turcos" (Turks) by which they were widely known over the next hundred years. The name reportedly arose from comparisons between the Algerian troops and the Turkish allies serving alongside the French and British forces at the siege of Sevastopol.

# The Campaign against Imperial France, 3 August to 1 September, 1870

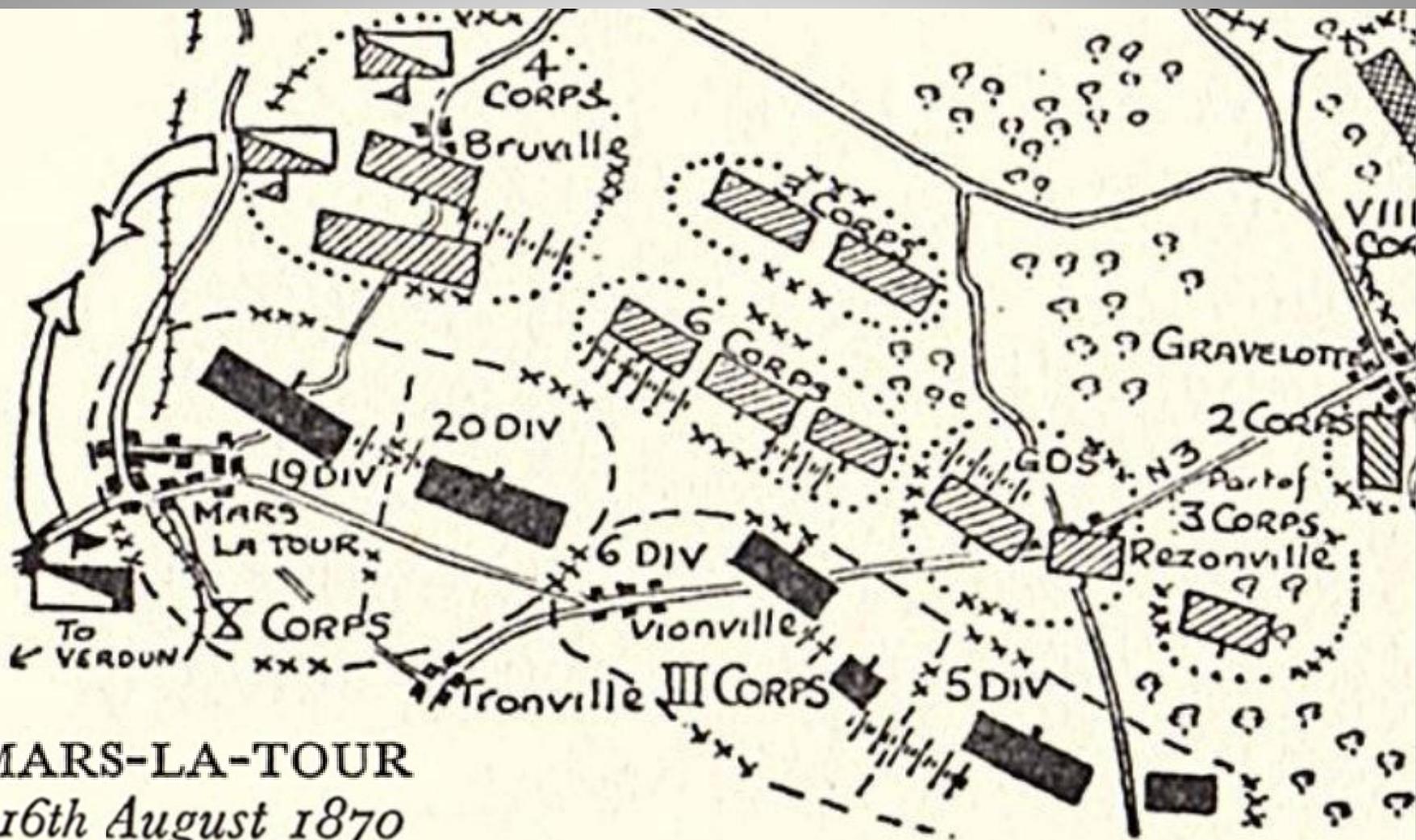


**KEY**

- ← Prussian forces/movements
- ← French forces/movements
- ★ Major battle/siege
- Major raillines







MARS-LA-TOUR  
16th August 1870



French infantry at the battle of Mars-la-Tour.



*Heinrich XVII, Prince Reuß, on the side of the 5th Squadron I Guards Dragoon Regiment at Mars-la-Tour, 16 August 1870. Emil Hünten, 1902.*

## Battle of Mars-La-Tour

Part of the Franco-Prussian War



Heinrich XVII, Prince Reuß, on the side of the 5th Squadron I Guards Dragoon Regiment at Mars-la-Tour, 16 August 1870. Emil Hünten, 1902.

**Date** 16 August 1870  
**Location** Mars-La-Tour, France  
49°06′11″N 5°52′21″E﻿ / ﻿49.10308°N 5.87250°E﻿ / 49.10308; 5.87250

**Result** Inconclusive

### Belligerents

North German Confederation

French Empire

Kingdom of Prussia

### Commanders and leaders

Friedrich Karl

François Bazaine

### Units involved

Second Army

Army of the Rhine

### Strength

Initially: 30,000

80,000 *engaged*<sup>[1]</sup>

Total: 80,000<sup>[1]</sup>

160,000 *present*<sup>[2]</sup>

210+ guns

### Casualties and losses

15,799

17,007

4,421 killed or dead of wounds

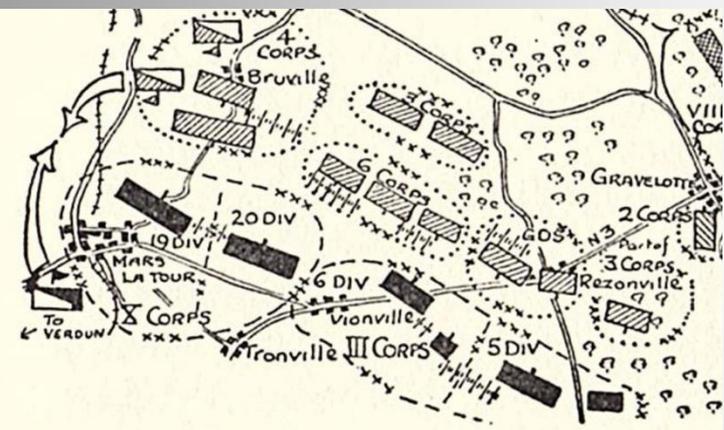
1,367 killed  
10,120 wounded

10,411 wounded

5,472 missing

967 missing

2,736 horses



FROM METZ TO PAGNY, 12½ M., railway in ½-¾ hr. (fares 1 *fr.* 60, 1 *fr.* 10, 70 pf.). — Soon after leaving Metz, we pass on the left *Fort St. Privat*, now *Prinz August von Württemberg*, and then the tree-girt château of *Frescati*, where the capitulation of Metz was signed on Oct. 27th, 1870. Close by is a huge shed for military air-ships. A little farther on, the train crosses the river. — 5 M. *Ars-sur-Moselle*, with iron-works, lies at the beginning of the valley of the *Mance*, up which runs the road to (21½ M.) Gravelotte (p. 202). On the hill is the *Kronprinz Fort*. In the Moselle valley, between *Ars* and *Jouy-aux-Arches* (fair inn at the N. end of the village), on the right bank, are situated extensive remains of a *Roman Aqueduct* erected ca. 100 A. D., which brought water to Metz from the source of the *Gorze* (a distance of 15 M.) and here crossed the Moselle in an arched bridge, ¾ M. long and 60 ft. high. Seven of its arches and one pier are still standing at *Ars*, and 10 arches at *Jouy*. On the hill of *St. Blaise* (1195 ft.), above *Jouy*, is the *Graf Haeseler Fort*. — 7 M. *Ancy*, on the Moselle. — 8½ M. *Novéant*, the German frontier-station, lies at the entrance to the valley of the *Gorze* (p. 201). A new bridge crosses the Moselle to *Corny*, the headquarters of Prince Frederick Charles during the investment of Metz. — 12½ M. *Pagny* is the French frontier-station. Thence to *Nancy* and *Paris*, see *Baedeker's Northern France*. From *Pagny* a railway runs via *Arnville*, *Chambley* (14½ M.), and *Mars-la-Tour* (p. 201) to *Conflans-Jarny*.

FROM METZ TO AMANWEILER, 10 M., railway in 36 min. (fares 1 *fr.* 40, 85, 50 pf.). The railway skirts the suburb of *Montigny*, crosses the Moselle, and stops at (3½ M.) *Longeville*, at the foot of the hill of *St. Quentin*. At (8 M.) *Moulins* (electric railway, see p. 194) it reaches the valley of *Moutveau*, which it ascends via (6 M.) *Châtel-St-Germain* to (10 M.) *Amanweiler* (*Amanwillers*; hotel opposite the railway-restaurant), 1¾ M. from *St. Privat* (p. 203). From *Amanweiler* to *Verdun*, see *Baedeker's Northern France*.

FROM METZ TO DILLINGEN, 37½ M., railway in 2 hrs. — 2½ M. *Vantoux-Vallières*; 4½ M. *Nouilly*, with the battlefield of Aug. 14th, 1870 (see p. 200); 6 M. *Failly*; 20 M. *Anzelingen*; 24½ M. *Busendorf* (p. 188). — 37½ M. *Dillingen*, see p. 188.

### The Battle Fields of August 14th, 16th, and 18th, 1870.

The three excursions require a day each, but it is quite practicable to combine the visits to the battlefields of Aug. 16th and 18th by using a motor-car or a bicycle and by taking the railway to *Novéant* and back from *Amanweiler*. Readers who understand German will find more details in the guidebooks and maps sold at the booksellers (25 pf. 2 *fr.*). The military visitor will find 'Taktische Wanderungen' by *Lieutenant Colonel Liebach* indispensable (3 *fr.*). A commemorative ceremony is held yearly on Aug. 15th in the ravine between *Gravelotte* and *St. Hubert*, and the graves are decked with flowers. — Carriages or motor-cars are best procured through the Tourists' Enquiry Office (p. 195).

THE BATTLE OF AUGUST 14TH marks the first act in the bloody struggle as a result of which the French army was cooped up in the fortress of Metz. Towards midday the German advance guard had come into touch with the enemy on its retreat from *Saarbrücken*. About 3.30 p.m. the German General von der Goltz began the attack with parts of the VII. Army Corps. The chief bone of contention was the line passing through *Colombey* and *Nouilly*, two villages which have given the German name to the battle, while the French call it the *Battle of Borny*, after the headquarters of Marshal Bazaine. *Colombey* was taken about 5 p.m. and successfully maintained against superior forces, while to the N. the I. Army Corps under Manteuffel advanced toward *Nouilly*. By 9 p.m. the French had been forced back under the guns of the fortress and their strategic retreat, begun in the morning, had been so delayed that the German army now surrounding the S. side of Metz was able to overtake them two days later. The losses of the Germans amounted to 222 officers and 4784 men, those of the French to 3608 officers and men.

CIRCULAR DRIVE. Those who visit the battlefields by carriage proceed via *Plantières*, *Borny*, *Grigy*, *Ars-Laquenexy*, and *Aubigny* to *Colombey*, then go on via *Lauvallière* and *Noisseville* to *Nouilly*, and return via *Vantoux* (20 M. in all).

WALKERS take the railway to *Peltre* (p. 203). Thence they ascend via *Mercy-le-Haut* and *Ars-Laquenexy* to (1½ hr.) *Aubigny*, the point at which General von der Goltz began his advance. It has a château and a monument to the 45th Infantry. In ¼ hr. more we reach *Colombey*, the château of which still lies in ruins. Adjoining the park is a large Military Cemetery, with a fine monument to the 13th Infantry. From the cemetery we proceed to the N. along the *Toten-Allée* ('Avenue of the Dead'), passing numerous monuments, then take the road to the right, and follow the pine-walk diverging to the left to (½ hr.) *Lauvallière*. By following the road farther to the W. we reach the tavern of *Amilié*, to the right of which is a monument to the I. Army Corps, commanding a survey of the whole battlefield. About ½ M. to the N. lies the village of *Noisseville*, which was again the centre of violent contests on Aug. 31st and Sept. 1st, when Bazaine made a determined but ineffectual attempt to break through the German lines. About ¾ M. to the S. is the large French monument, with a bronze group by E. Han-naux, a native of Metz. At *Nouilly* (p. 199) we regain the railway, by which we return to Metz.

The battlefields of August 16th and 18th lie to the W. of Metz, on the roads to *Verdun*. On Aug. 15th the III. Prussian Army Corps, under General von Alvensleben II., crossed the Moselle in the night and advanced as far as *Gorze*.

At about 10 p.m. on August 16th the III. Army Corps surprised the retreating French army at *Flavigny* and *Vionville*. Both these places were captured at about 11.30 a.m.; but farther advance was impossible in the face of the superior numbers of the French troops. Several cavalry charges were made to repel the French attacks. Among these was the famous charge of the 7th Cuirassiers and the 16th Uhlans (Bredow's Brigade), which dis-

persed two regiments of French infantry and four gun-batteries and has been celebrated by Freiligrath in his 'Todesritt'. No less bloody was the struggle to the W. of Vionville at *Tronville* and *Mars-la-Tour*, where the X. Army Corps (under General von Voigts-Rhétz) made its attack about 3 p.m. and managed to maintain its position against the overwhelming superiority of the French, with the aid of various costly attacks of the Dragoon Guards. About 6.45 p.m. the finest cavalry engagement of the whole war took place here. Six regiments of French cavalry were dispersed by twenty-one squadrons of the Rheinbaben division. After it had lasted nearly twelve hours darkness put an end to the battle, in the final stages of which 67,000 Germans with 222 guns were opposed to 138,000 French with 476 guns. In spite of their numerical superiority the French did not succeed in regaining their lost ground or in opening the road to Verdun. Their losses amounted to 879 officers and 16,128 men, those of the Germans to 711 officers and 15,079 men.

To visit the battlefields we proceed by railway to *Novéant* (p. 199) and go on thence by omnibus to ( $\frac{1}{2}$  hr.) *Gorze* (*Hôtel-Restaurant Habillon*, carriages to hire; *Hôt. Sanssouci*). The drive round the battlefields leads via Flavigny and Vionville to Mars-la-Tour and returns to Gorze via Vionville and Rezonville (15 M. in all).

WALKERS take 4-5 hrs. for a satisfactory survey of the battlefields, or (if Mars-la-Tour be included) 7-8 hrs. At the upper end of Gorze we ascend to the left, then take the footpath diverging to the right, which passes the farm of St. Thiébault and ascends to ( $\frac{3}{4}$  hr.) the hill of *Flavigny*, on which are various monuments to German regiments. We then proceed to the left to ( $\frac{1}{4}$  hr.) the *Friedrich-Karl-Stein*, which commands an extensive view. In the direction of Rezonville we desery a monument occupying the spot where King William, on the evening of Aug. 17th, gave the orders for the battle of the following day. We next descend to ( $\frac{1}{2}$  hr.) *Vionville*, where there are two other German monuments. The road to ( $3\frac{1}{2}$  M.) Mars-la-Tour passes more monuments and then crosses the French frontier. In *Mars-la-Tour* (*Café du Commerce*) are a French monument and the monument of the German Dragoon Guards, while a little farther on, to the right, is that of the 16th Infantry. Near the church are a monument to Joan of Arc and a 'Musée Militaire' with relief-plans of the battles. Near the railway-station (p. 199) is the interesting French monument by Bogino. — Proceeding to the E. from Vionville, we pass a spot where enormous numbers of soldiers were buried and the so-called 'Denkmalsbank' (a memorial bench), and reach ( $2\frac{1}{4}$  M.) *Rezonville*, the chief point d'appui of the French and retained by them until the close of the battle. Memorial tablets indicate the houses in which King William, Bismarck, and Moltke spent the night of Aug. 18-19th. About  $\frac{3}{4}$  M. to the N., on the 'Römer-Strasse', which now forms the frontier, are monuments to the 3rd and 16th Hussars and to the Bredow brigade. — From Rezonville we may either proceed via Gravelotte to (6 M.) the railway-station of Châtel (p. 199) or return to Gorze by the road to the S., passing two other German monuments.

The BATTLE OF AUGUST 18TH decided the fate of the French army and the fortress of Metz. Bazaine had withdrawn his forces in the direction of Metz and had taken up a strong position on the hill at the farther side of the valley of the Mance, extending from Point-du-Jour to St. Privat. As the Germans were ignorant how far the

French line extended to the N., the IX. Prussian Army Corps (under General von Manstein) began the battle towards midday by a frontal attack near *Vernéville*. General von Steinmetz then ordered the VIII. Corps (under General von Goeben) to advance at *Gravelotte* and the VII. Corps (under General von Zastrow), farther to the right, to advance also. The attacking parties suffered terrible losses, but in the face of the strong French position were unable to gain any considerable advantage except the capture of the farm of St. Hubert below Point-du-Jour, which was effected in the afternoon by parts of the VIII. Corps. The troops of the Corps of Guards and of the XII. (Royal Saxon) Guards, which at first had been arranged in echelon formation, consequently diverged to the N.E. and captured *Ste. Marie-aux-Chênes* about 3.30 p.m., after which the Guards (about 5 p.m.) made a sanguinary but ineffectual attempt to storm *St. Privat*. A second attempt at 7.30 p.m., preceded by a heavy canonade and the outflanking of the French right wing by the Saxons at *Roncourt*, was more successful. The French broke up in confusion. Their left wing, however, at Point-du-Jour, maintained its position against the attack delivered under cover of darkness with the aid of the II. Army Corps and did not retire upon Metz until the morning. The number of Germans engaged in the battle amounted to 230,000, that of the French to 180,000. The Germans lost 899 officers and 19,260 men, the French 609 officers and 11,700 men.

CARRIAGE DRIVE via Moulins and Rozérieulles to Gravelotte, then via Vernéville and Ste-Marie-aux-Chênes to St. Privat, returning via Amanweiler and through the Montveau valley ( $27\frac{1}{2}$  M. in all). From Amanweiler we may also use the railway.

WALKERS, starting at the railway-station of *Ars* (p. 199), on the Gravelotte road, ascend the valley of the Mance to the Protestant chapel and then take the footpath, to the right, which climbs the ravine and ( $\frac{1}{4}$  hr.) crosses the bare ridge in the direction of the new *Feste Kaiserin*. At *St. Hubert* (inn) it reaches the Metz and Verdun road. The fort (no admission) occupies the height of *Point-du-Jour*, which, during the battle, was the chief point d'appui of the French left wing. At St. Hubert itself and in the ravine below are several German monuments. From St. Hubert we ascend to ( $\frac{1}{2}$  hr.) —

*Gravelotte* (*Cheval d'Or, Poste*, both very fair), which formed the centre of the right wing of the German position, consisting of the 7th and 8th Prussian Corps. At the E. end of the village is a large soldiers' cemetery, to which most of the graves scattered over the plain have been removed. Adjoining is a large \**Memorial Colonnade*, with an Angel of the Resurrection in bronze-gilt by L. Cauet, busts and medallions of the German leaders and generals round Metz, and memorials of the fallen (1905). On the road to Rezonville, opposite the Cheval d'Or, is a *Military Museum*. The parish-church has been rebuilt since the war.

In the middle of the village the road divides, both branches leading to Verdun. On that to the right (N.) lies the farm of *Mogador*, near which (1.) is a rock with an inscription, marking the spot whence Emp. William witnessed the battle; it affords a good survey of the opposite heights, then occupied by the French. *Malmaison*, the next farm on this road, was occupied by the 9th Prussian Corps d'Armée, the lines of which extended along the road diverging to the right as far as (3 M.)

**Vernéville.** Near Vernéville, to the right of the road to Chantrenne, are monuments to the 9th Rifles (Jäger) and the 36th Infantry. To the W. (road leading to the left in the village) is a column erected by the 18th Division.

On the road from Vernéville to (3 M.) *Amanweiler* (p. 199) is the monument of the 9th Regiment of Field Artillery, which surprised the French corps stationed at Amanweiler about 11.30 a.m., but became in its turn the object of the concentrated French cannonade. Farther on are various monuments which indicate the line of attack followed by the right wing of the Corps of Guards. A finger-post shows the way to (20 min.) the monument of the Hessian Division, which was combined with the 18th Prussian Division to form the 9th Army Corps. The monument stands near the railway from Amanweiler to Verdun, on the French frontier, which here projects in the form of a triangle. — The road from Vernéville to (4 M.) *Sainte-Marie-aux-Chênes* (see below) leads across French territory, passing through *Habonville* and near *St. Ail*.

*Amanweiler*, where we regain the railway, lies  $1\frac{3}{4}$  M. to the S. of **St. Privat**, the chief point d'appui of the French right wing. Here there are an extensive *Military Museum* (adm. 40 pf.; café in the same building), with plans of battles, panoramas, and relics, and also two memorial monuments. There are other German monuments at the N. end of the village. The keeper of the graves at St. Privat has the key of the conspicuous view-tower, to the S.W. of the village, which was erected as a general monument to the German Guards.

To the W. of St. Privat, on the road to (2 M.) *Ste-Marie-aux-Chênes*, are monuments to various regiments of the Guards. In the village is a French monument. — At *Roncourt*,  $\frac{3}{4}$  M. to the N. of St. Privat, is the *König-Albert-Haus*, a museum with relics of the Saxon troops.

## 28. From Metz to Bingerbrück viâ Saarbrücken and Neunkirchen. Valley of the Nahe.

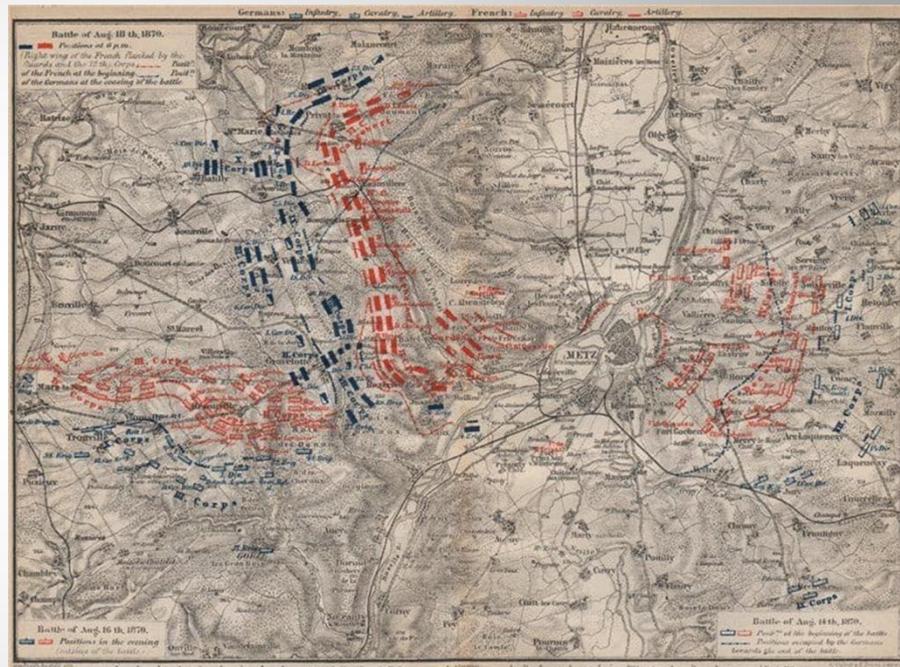
137 M. RAILWAY in  $4\frac{1}{2}$ - $6\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. (fares 17  $\mathcal{L}$  10, 16  $\mathcal{L}$  40, 9  $\mathcal{L}$  90 pf.; express fares 19  $\mathcal{L}$  10, 18  $\mathcal{L}$  40, 10  $\mathcal{L}$  40 pf.). — Saarbrücken is also connected with Metz (50 M., in  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hrs.) by a branch-railway viâ Courcelles, Teterchen, and Völklingen.

*Metz*, see p. 194. The train skirts the suburb of Queuleu. —  $4\frac{1}{2}$  M. *Peltre*, the starting-point for a visit to the battlefield of Aug. 14th, 1870 (p. 200).

8 M. *Courcelles-an-der-Nied*, the junction of a branch-railway up the valley of the Nied to *Teterchen* (p. 194), where it unites with a branch-line from Diedenhofen and goes on to join the Saarbrücken and Trèves railway at Bous or Völklingen (p. 194). —  $13\frac{1}{2}$  M. *Remilly*, junction of the Saarburg and Metz line (p. 492); 18 M. *Herlingen*;  $21\frac{1}{2}$  M. *Maiweiler*;  $24\frac{1}{2}$  M. *Falkenberg*;  $27\frac{1}{2}$  M. *Tetingen*; 31 M. *St. Avold*, an industrial place with 3500 inhab. and a garrison of 2500 men;  $34\frac{1}{2}$  M. *Oberhomburg*, on the Rossel.

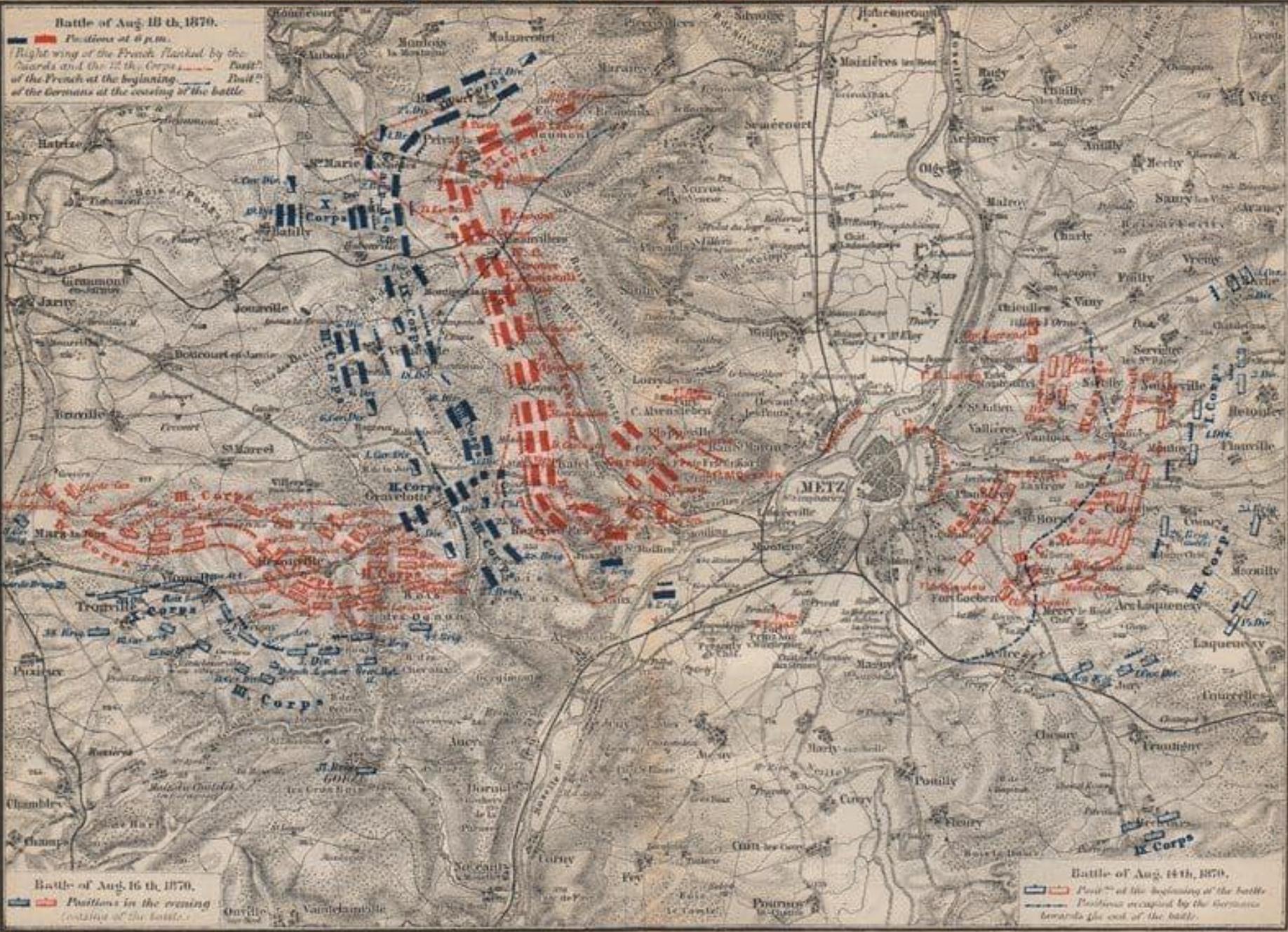
From (38 M.) *Benningen* branch-lines run to the N. to *Hargarten* and *Teterchen* (see above), and to the S. to *Farschweiler*, *Hundlingen*, and *Saargemünd* (p. 489).

40 M. *Kochern*. — 43 M. *Forbach* (Karsch), a town with 8600 inhab. and large papier maché works, is dominated by the *Schlossberg*, which is crowned with a view-tower and a ruined castle. The



**Battle of Aug. 13th, 1870.**

Positions at 6 p.m.  
 (Right wing of the French flanked by the  
 Guards and the 12th Corps) Part  
 of the French at the beginning Part  
 of the Germans at the closing of the battle



**Battle of Aug. 16th, 1870.**

Positions in the evening  
 (closing of the battle)

**Battle of Aug. 14th, 1870.**

Part of the beginning of the battle  
 Positions occupied by the Germans  
 towards the east of the battle.

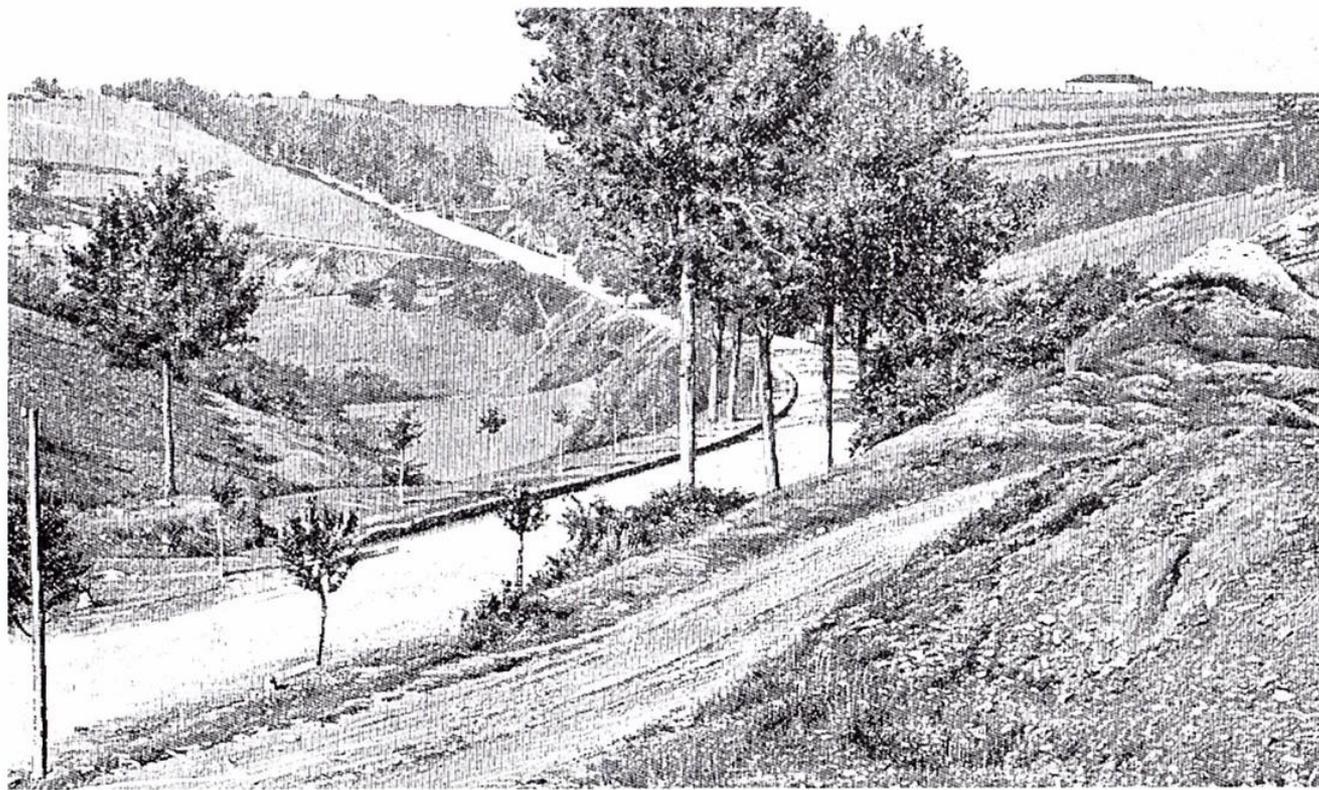


# GRAVELOTTE

18th August 1870



► *The road between Gravelotte and St-Hubert crossed the fateful Mance Ravine on a raised causeway and provided the focal point for VIII Corp's assaults. This contemporary picture shows the wooded lower slopes of the Mance Ravine which then gave way to the bare upper slopes - an ideal killing ground for Frossard's rifles. Steinmetz duly provided the targets. (Battles of the Nineteenth Century)*







The "Rifle Battalion 9 from Lauenburg" at Gravelotte, painting by Ernst Zimmer



The cemetery of Saint-Privat near Metz became a bloody battlefield [Battle of Gravelotte] on which 42,000 soldiers died.



## Battle of Gravelotte

Part of the Franco-Prussian War



The Cemetery of St. Privat by Alphonse-Marie-Adolphe de Neuville (1881)

**Date** 18 August 1870  
**Location** Gravelotte, France  
49°09′N 6°01′E﻿ / ﻿49.15°N 6.02°E﻿ / 49.15; 6.02  
**Result** French military victory; German strategic advantage

### Belligerents

 North German Confederation

 French Empire

-  Prussia
-  Saxony

### Commanders and leaders

- \* Wilhelm I
- \* Helmuth von Moltke
- \* Karl Friedrich von Steinmetz
- \* Prince Friedrich Karl

 François Achille Bazaine

### Units involved

- \* First Army
- \* Second Army

 Army of the Rhine

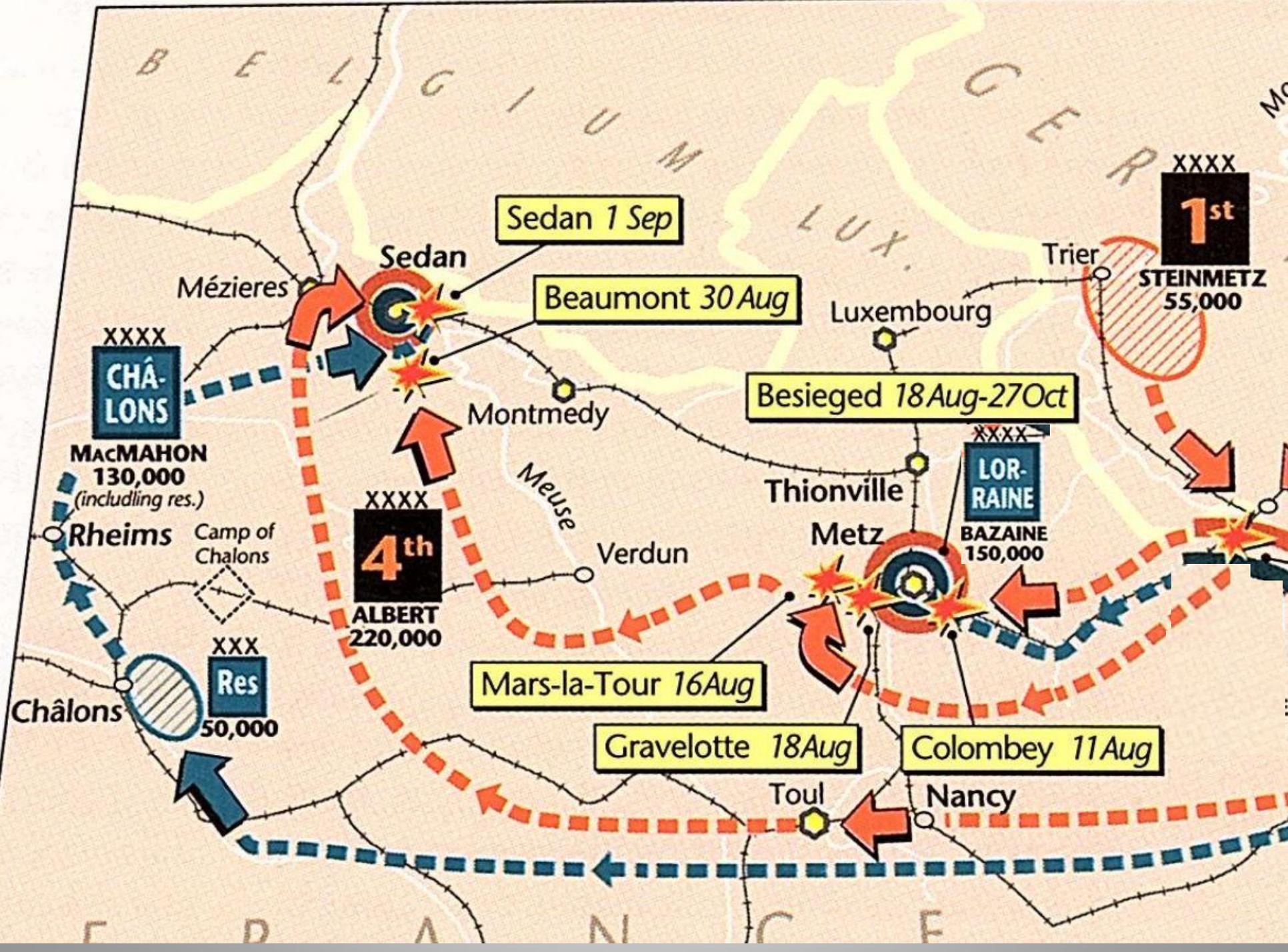
### Strength

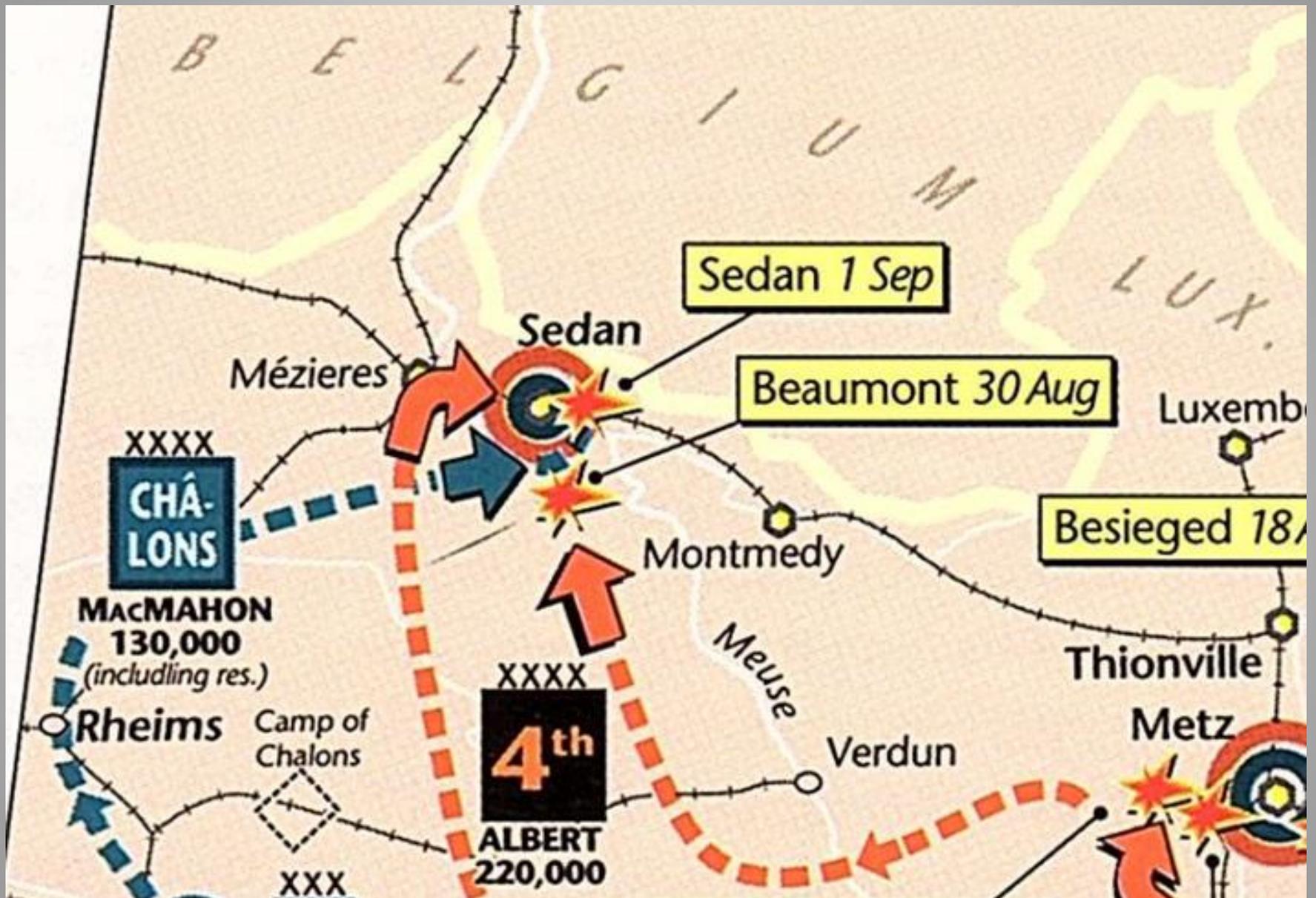
188,332	112,800
732 guns	520 guns

### Casualties and losses

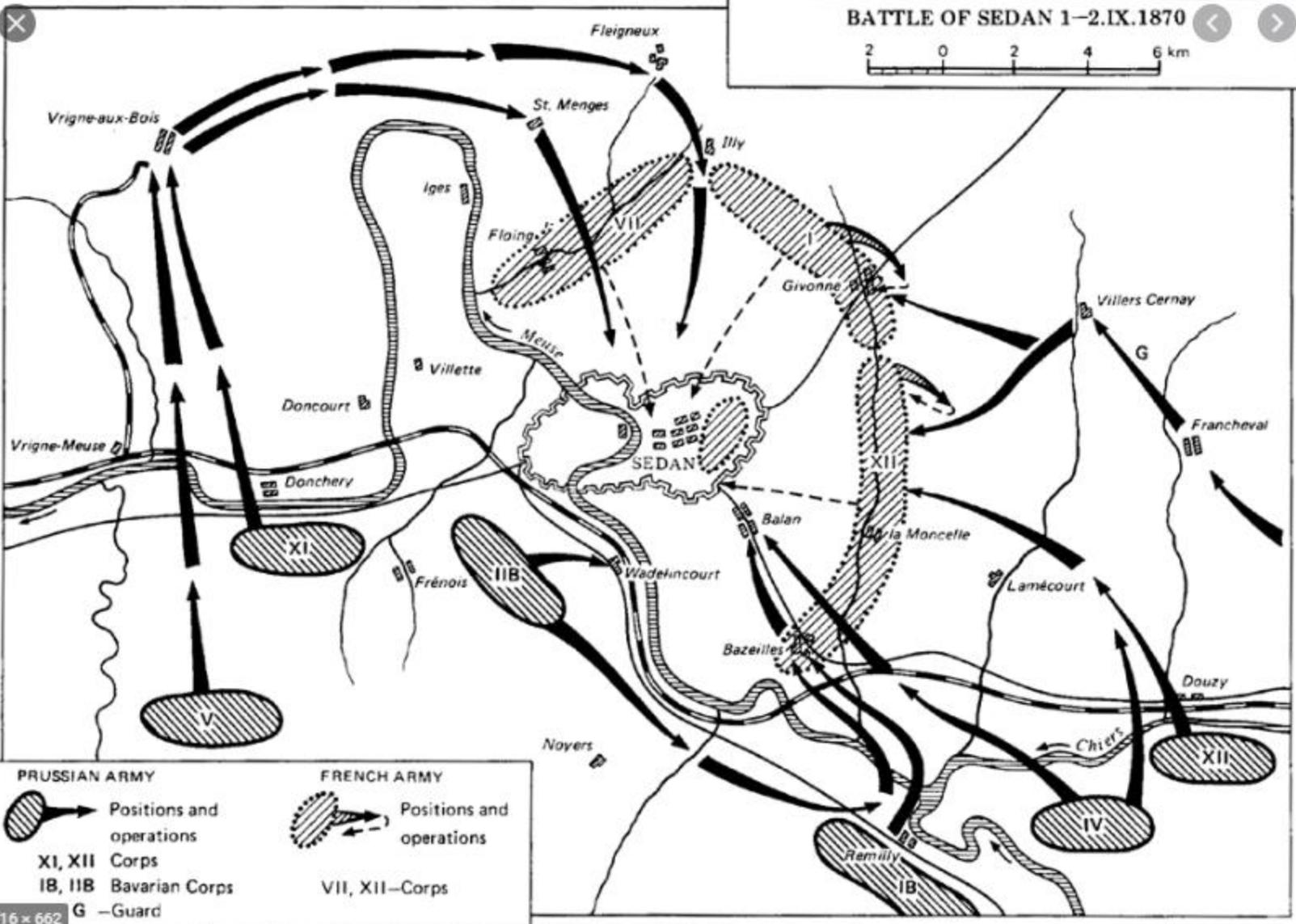
20,160	12,275
5,237 killed	
14,430 wounded	
493 captured or missing	



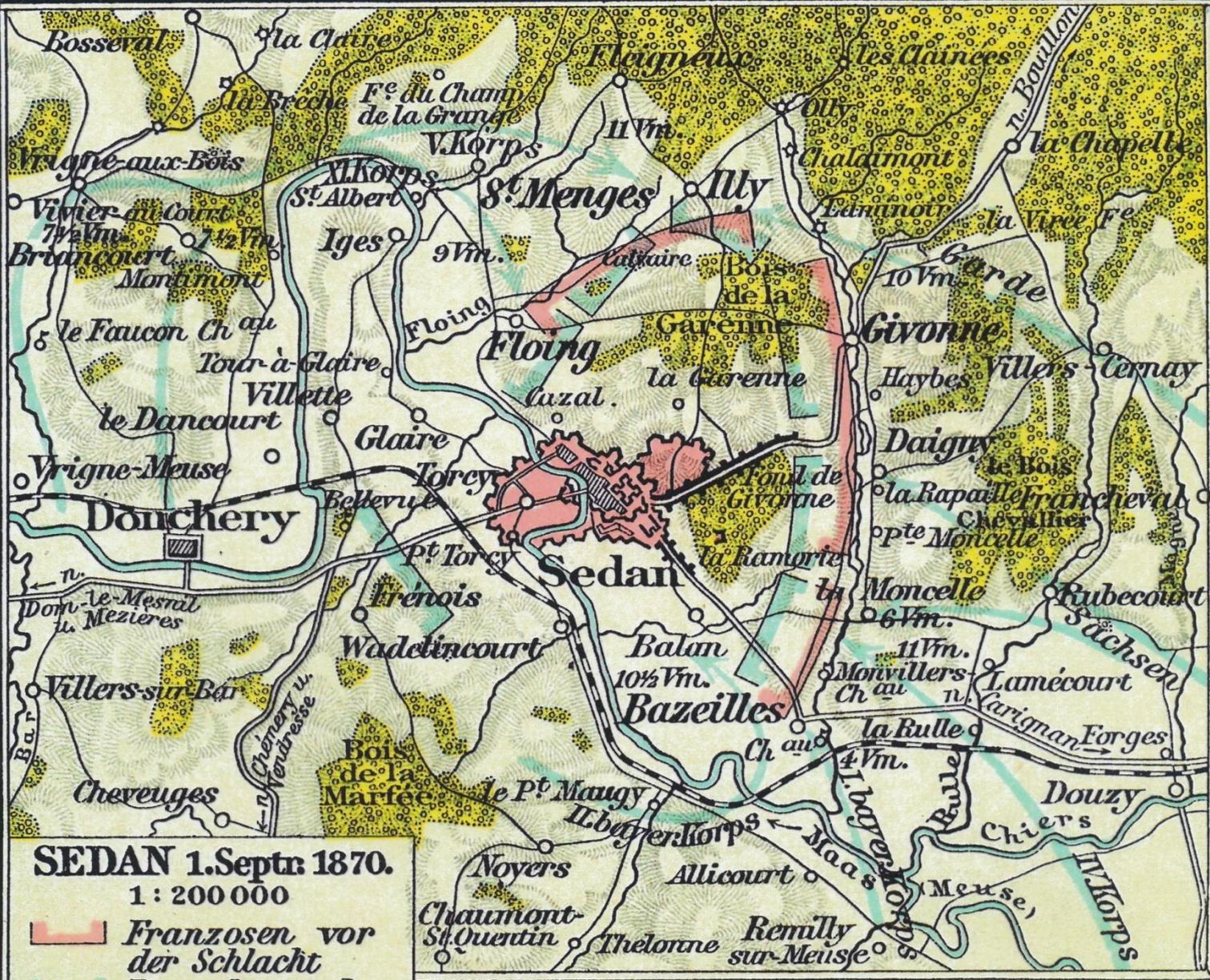




BATTLE OF SEDAN 1-2.IX.1870

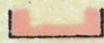


<b>PRUSSIAN ARMY</b>		<b>FRENCH ARMY</b>	
	Positions and operations		Positions and operations
XI, XII Corps		VII, XII-Corps	
IB, IIB Bavarian Corps			
G - Guard			



**SEDAN 1. Sept. 1870.**

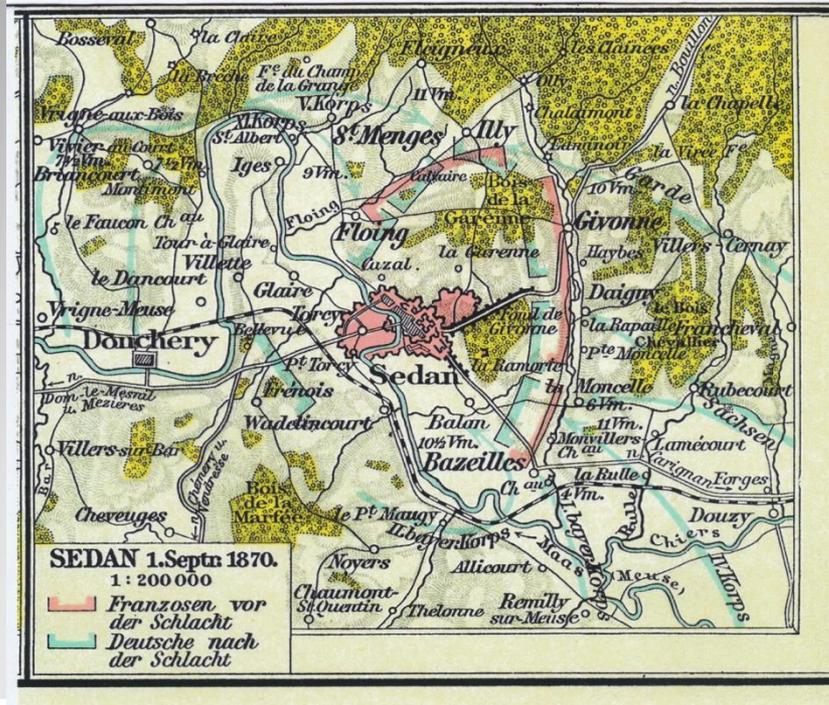
1 : 200 000



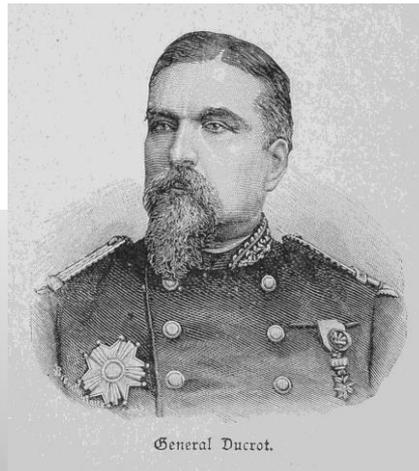
*Franzosen vor der Schlacht*



*Deutsche nach der Schlacht*



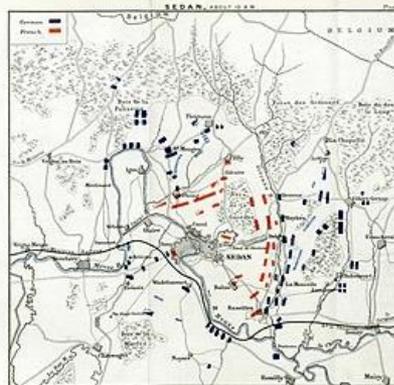
“Nous sommes dans un pot de chambre, et nous y serons emmerdés.”



General Ducrot.

# Battle of Sedan

Part of the Franco-Prussian War



Situation at 10:00 on 1 September

**Date** 1–2 September 1870  
**Location** Sedan, France  
 49°42′00″N 4°56′40″E  
**Result** German victory

- Fall of the Second French Empire
- Surrender, capture and abdication of Napoleon III

## Belligerents

Prussia  
 Saxony  
 Bavaria  
 France

## Commanders and leaders

Wilhelm I	Patrice
Helmuth von Moltke	MacMahon (WIA)
Friedrich Wilhelm	Auguste Ducrot
Albert, Prince of Saxony	Félix Wimpffen
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Napoleon III (Present at the battlefield, POW)</li> </ul>

## Units involved

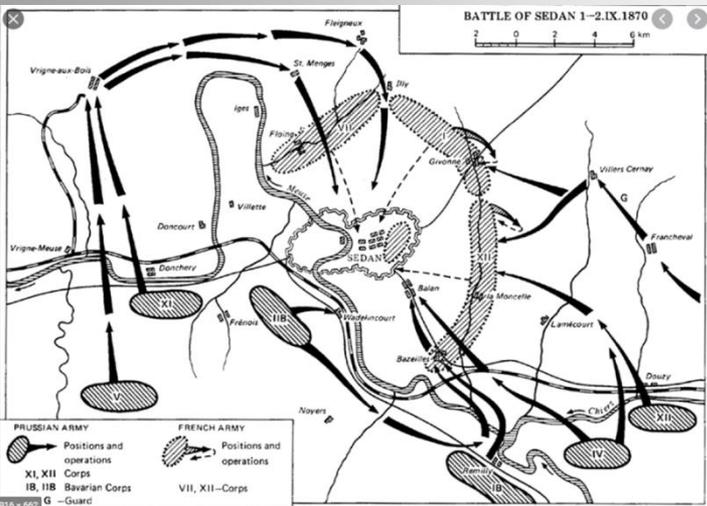
Third Army	Army of Châlons
Fourth Army	

## Strength

200,000	130,000
---------	---------

## Casualties and losses

1,310 killed	3,220 killed
6,443 wounded	14,811 wounded
2,107 missing	104,000 captured

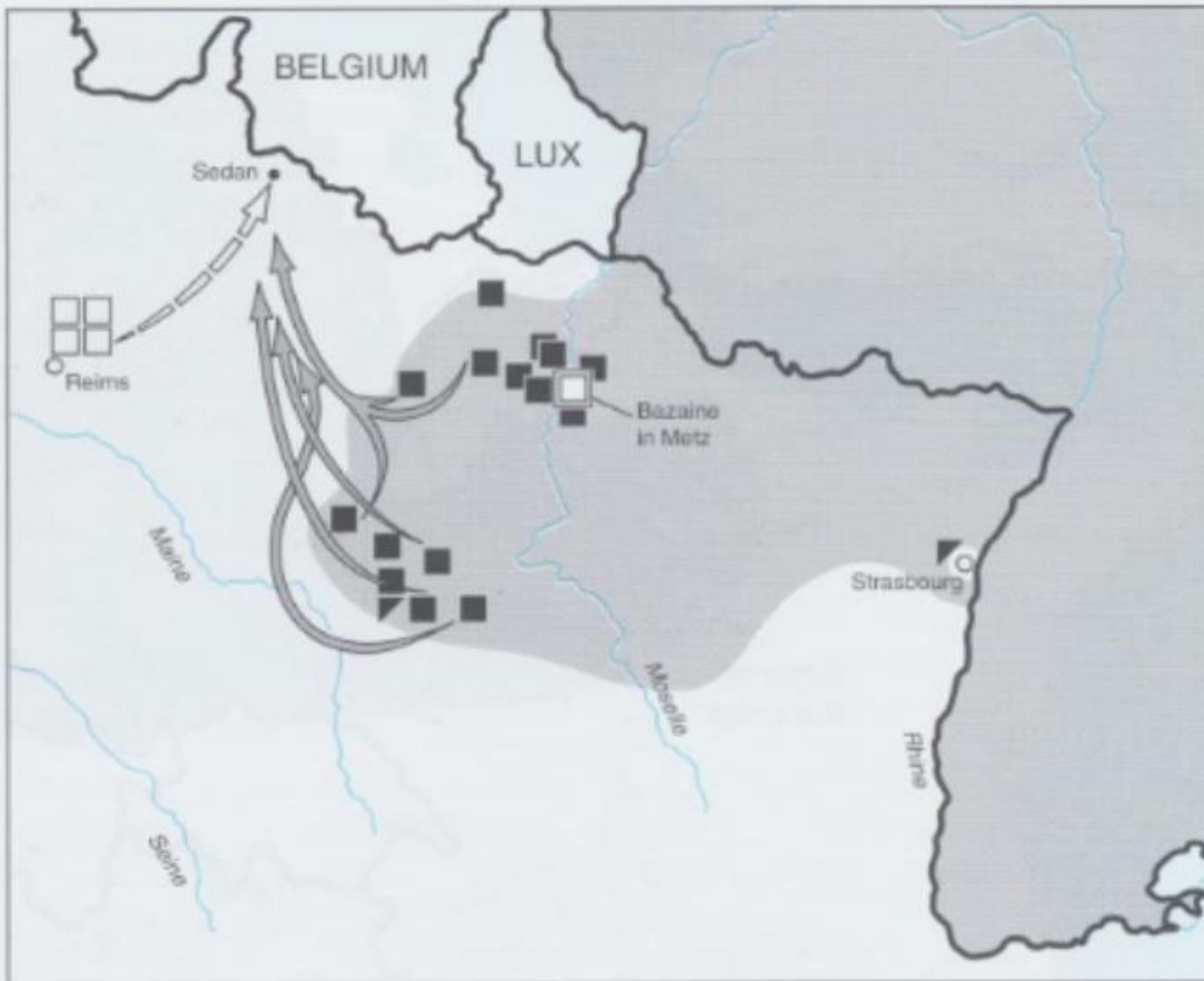




**Sedan— General Reille delivers surrender letter to King Wilhelm.**

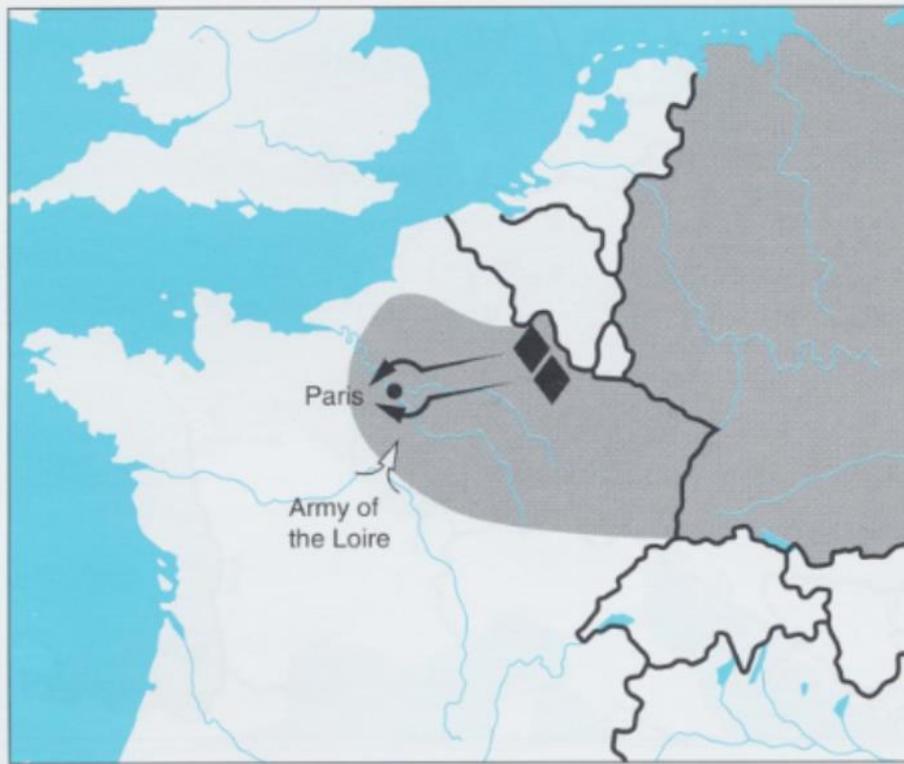




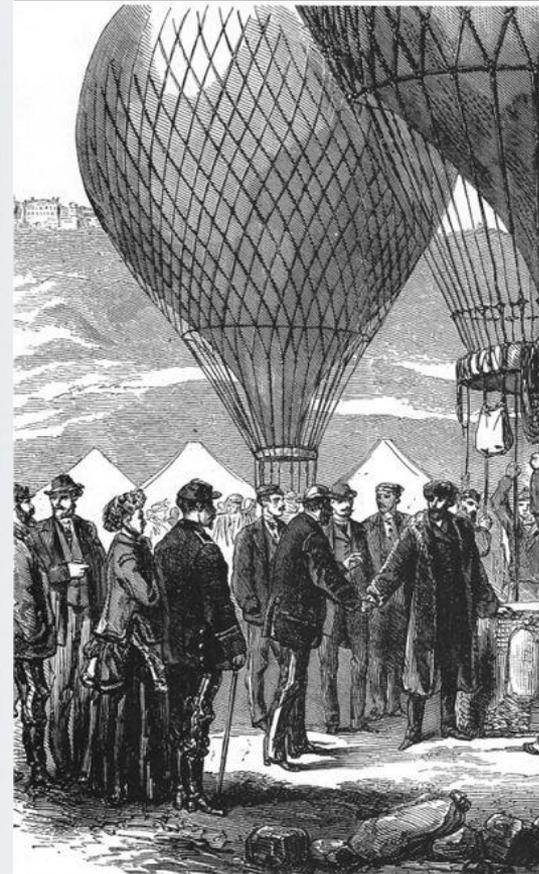


2 September 1870  
SEDAN

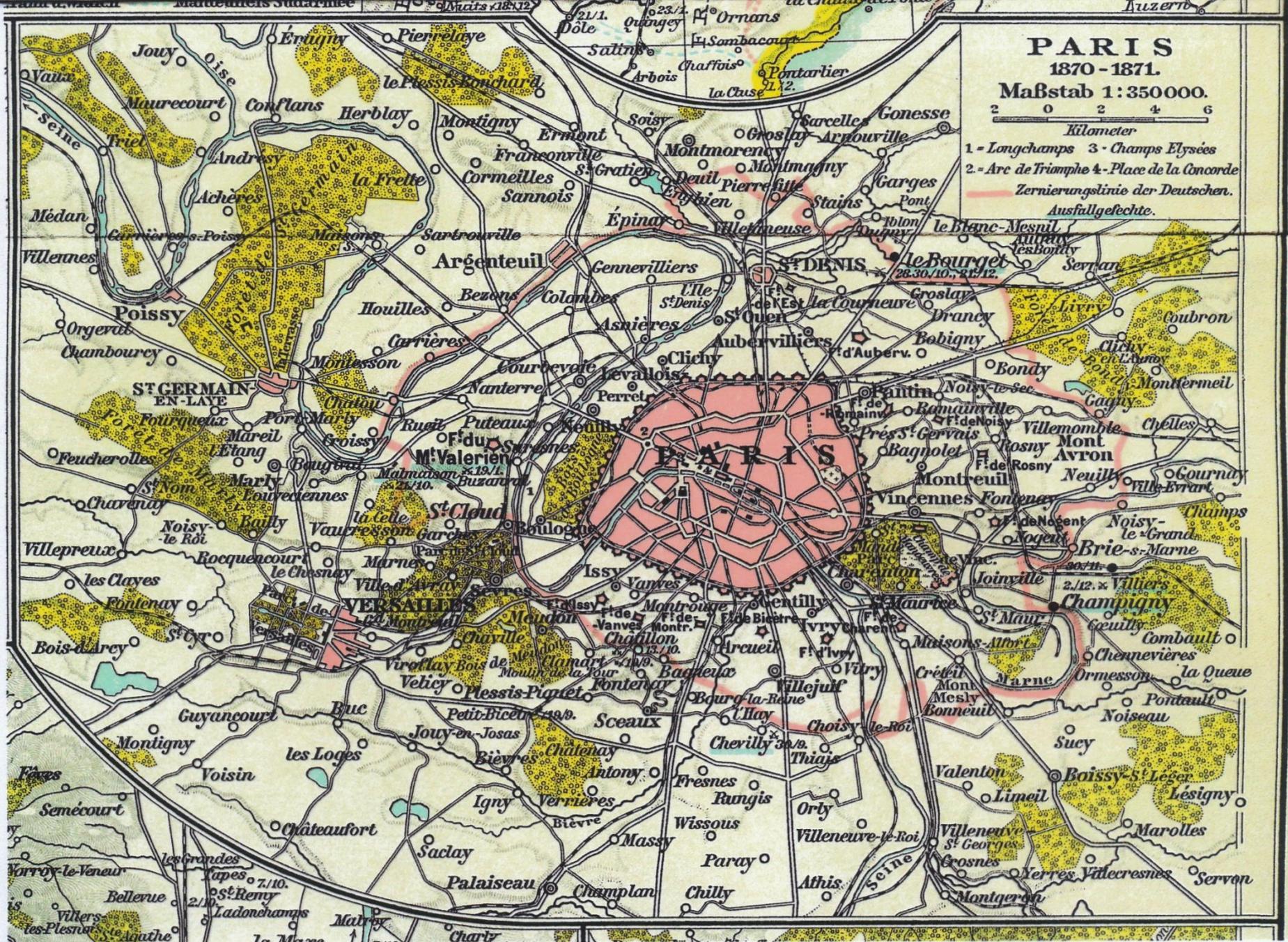
Copyright © 2000  
The History Channel



1 December 1870  
PARIS BESIEGED



Bismarck didn't care whether the French were ruled by an emperor, a king or a cabinet, peace was going to cost them dear. By the time the Parisians had accepted this ugly fact, the Prussian armies were at the gates of the city. Indeed, they had drawn their siege lines: Gambetta, the leading spirit of the new republic, had to leave the capital by balloon.



## Siege of Paris

Part of the Franco-Prussian War



Saint-Cloud after French and German bombardment during the battle of Châtillon

**Date** 19 September 1870 – 28 January 1871  
(4 months, 1 week and 2 days)

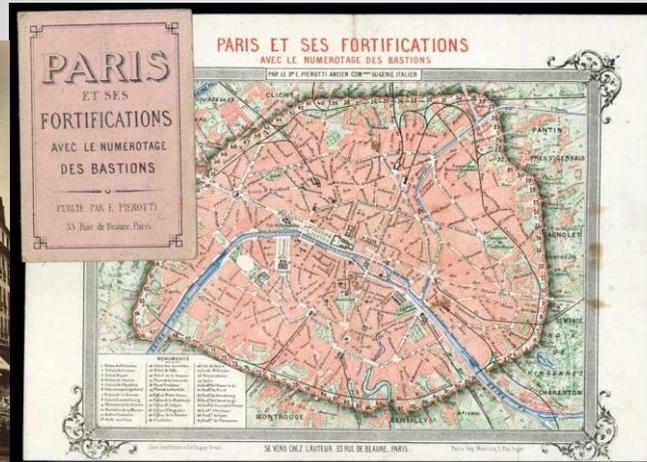


1 December 1870  
PARIS BESIEGED

Gambetta's plan was to raise enormous conscript armies in the provinces and simply sweep the Germans out of the country. It was true that Moltke, with half his forces committed to the siege of Paris and most of the rest watching Bazaine in Metz, had little with which to meet a counter-offensive, let alone a massive one. On the other hand Gambetta needed time to turn his conscripts into soldiers.



Miracles of improvisation produced an 'Army of the Loire' of four corps by the beginning of November and a preliminary demonstration by this force persuaded the Germans to pull back from Orleans. But when it came to real battles there was a world of difference between the raw French levies and the battle-hardened German troops. The Army of the Loire's attempt to drive north and relieve Paris was easily held, as was the Paris garrison's attempt to break out to meet the relieving force (at the end of November): neither caused Moltke to lose a moment's sleep. He didn't even have to use the forces set free by the capitulation of Metz the month before.



Moltke's plan for Paris was simply to starve it out. This would obviously take time and Bismarck, worried by the fact that opinion in Europe was now moving in France's favour, pressed for a bombardment. He got his way and the guns duly opened up on 5 January 1871. But they did so to very little effect and Paris surrendered on 28 January simply because it had only ten days' food left. The armistice was extended to the rest of France three days later.



# BATTLES NEAR ORLEANS

## Battle of Coulmiers

Part of the Franco-Prussian War



*Salut à la victoire (Coulmiers)*  
by Étienne Dujardin-Beaumetz [fr]

<b>Date</b>	9 November 1870
<b>Location</b>	France
<b>Result</b>	French victory

### Belligerents



### Commanders and leaders

Jean-Baptiste d'Aurelle    Ludwig von der Tann

### Strength

About 70,000 men    About 20,000 men

### Casualties and losses

1,500 dead and wounded    1,112 soldiers and 54 officers, 1,000 prisoners

## Battle of Beaune-la-Rolande

Part of the Franco-Prussian War



A near-contemporary depiction of the battle

<b>Date</b>	28 November 1870
<b>Location</b>	Canton of Beaune-la-Rolande, France
<b>Result</b>	Prussian victory

### Belligerents



### Commanders and leaders

Konstantin Bernhard von Voigts-Rhetz    General Crouzat  
Frederick Francis II

### Strength

9,000–12,000 soldiers    31,000–60,000 soldiers  
70 artillery pieces<sup>[1][2]</sup>    140 artillery pieces<sup>[1][2]</sup>

### Casualties and losses

817 soldiers    Up to 8,000 soldiers killed and wounded,<sup>[1]</sup>  
37 officers killed and wounded<sup>[1][2]</sup>    100 taken prisoner<sup>[2]</sup>

## Battle of Loigny–Poupry

Part of the Franco–Prussian War



*Hugo von Kottwitz with the Lübecker Bataillon*

<b>Date</b>	2 December 1870
<b>Location</b>	Loigny-la-Bataille, France
<b>Result</b>	German victory

### Belligerents



North German Confederation



### Commanders and leaders

Friedrich Franz II, Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin    Antoine Chanzy

### Strength

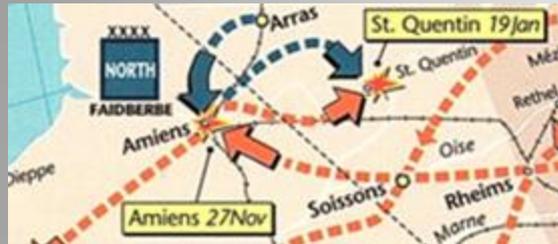
35,000    45,000

### Casualties and losses

4,139    6,000–7,000  
3,500–4,500 killed or wounded  
2,500 captured



# BATTLES IN THE NORTH



## Battle of Bapaume

Part of the Franco-Prussian War



Part of the panoramic painting "Battle of Bapaume" of Charles Édouard Armand-Dumaresq showing General Faidherbe.

Date	3 January 1871
Location	Bapaume, France
Result	Prussian strategic victory

### Belligerents

Prussia France

### Commanders and leaders

Edwin Freiherr von Manteuffel Louis Faidherbe

### Strength

18,000 33,000

### Casualties and losses

750 soldiers 1,569 soldiers  
52 officers 53 officers

## Battle of St. Quentin

Part of the Franco-Prussian War



Prussian forces in St. Quentin, 1871

Date	19 January 1871
Location	St. Quentin, France
Result	Prussian victory

### Belligerents

German Empire France

### Commanders and leaders

August Karl von Goeben Louis Faidherbe

### Strength

33,000 40,000

### Casualties and losses

2,400 3,500 killed and wounded,  
9,000 captured

# BATTLE IN THE WEST

## Battle of Le Mans

Part of the Franco-Prussian War



**Date** 10–12 January 1871  
**Location** Le Mans, France  
**Result** German victory

### Belligerents

 Germany  France

### Commanders and leaders

 Prince Friedrich Karl  Antoine Chanzy  
 Frederick Francis II

### Units involved

*Second Army* *Armée de la Loire*

### Strength

73,000 100,000  
 324 guns

### Casualties and losses

3,650 44,200  
 180 officers 6,200 killed and wounded  
 3,470 men 18,000 captured  
 20,000 deserted  
 17 guns  
 2 colours



# BATTLE NEAR ALSACE AND THE SWISS BORDER

## Battle of the Lisaine

Part of the Franco-Prussian War



**Date** 15–17 January 1871  
**Location** near Héricourt, [Lisaine River](#), France  
**Result** German victory

### Belligerents

 German Empire  France

### Commanders and leaders

 August von Werder  Charles Denis Bourbaki

### Units involved

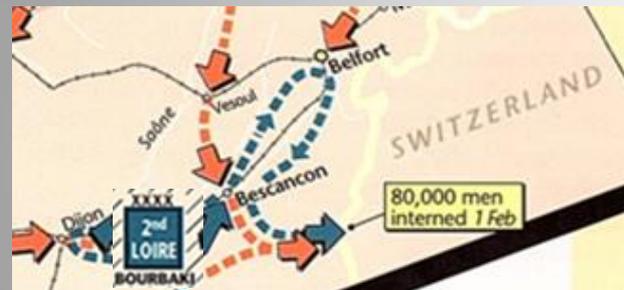
XIV Corps *Armée de l'Est*

### Strength

40,000–45,000 110,000  
 146 guns

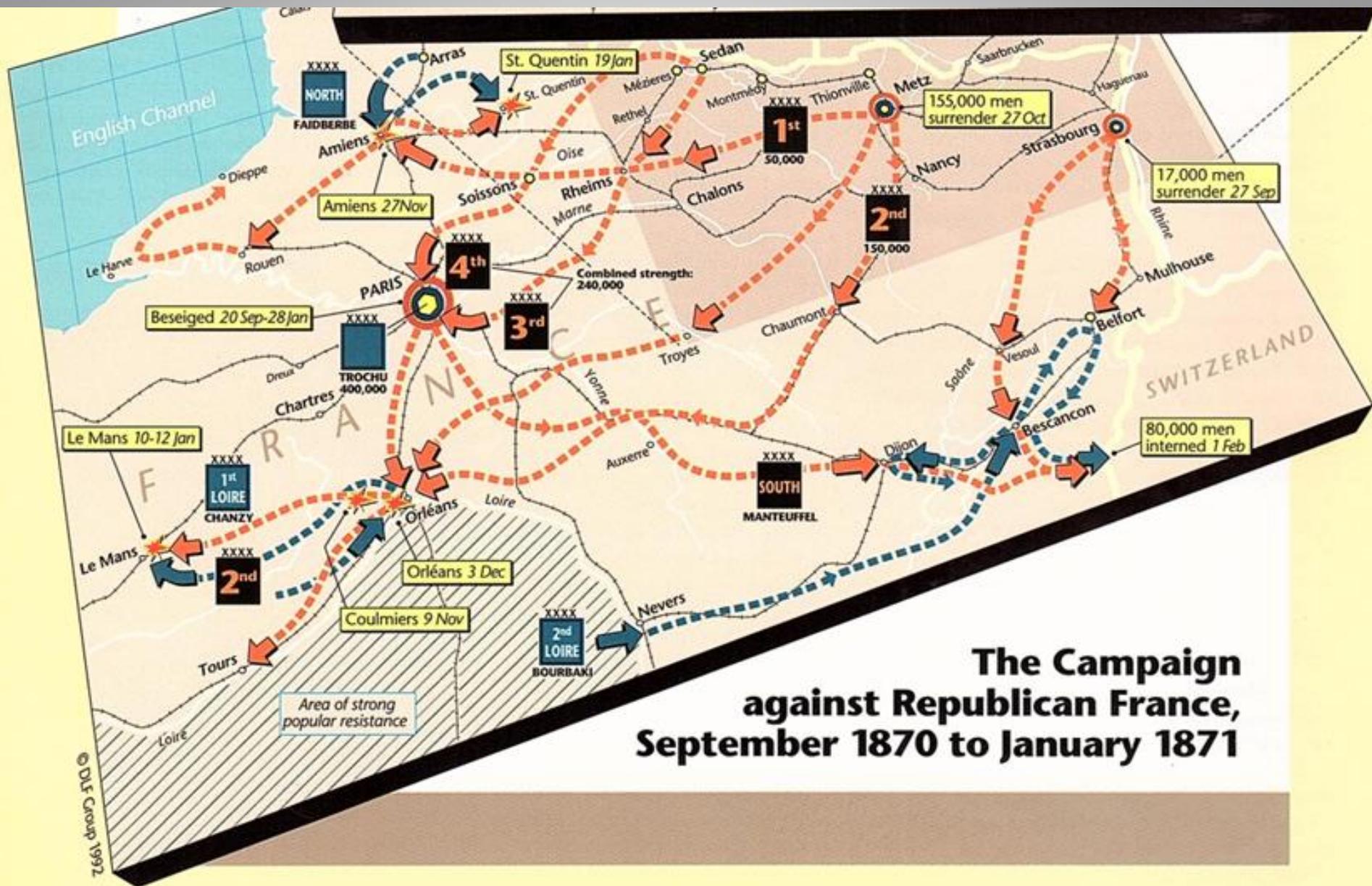
### Casualties and losses

1,646 6,000–8,000  
 1,500 dead  
 4,500 wounded

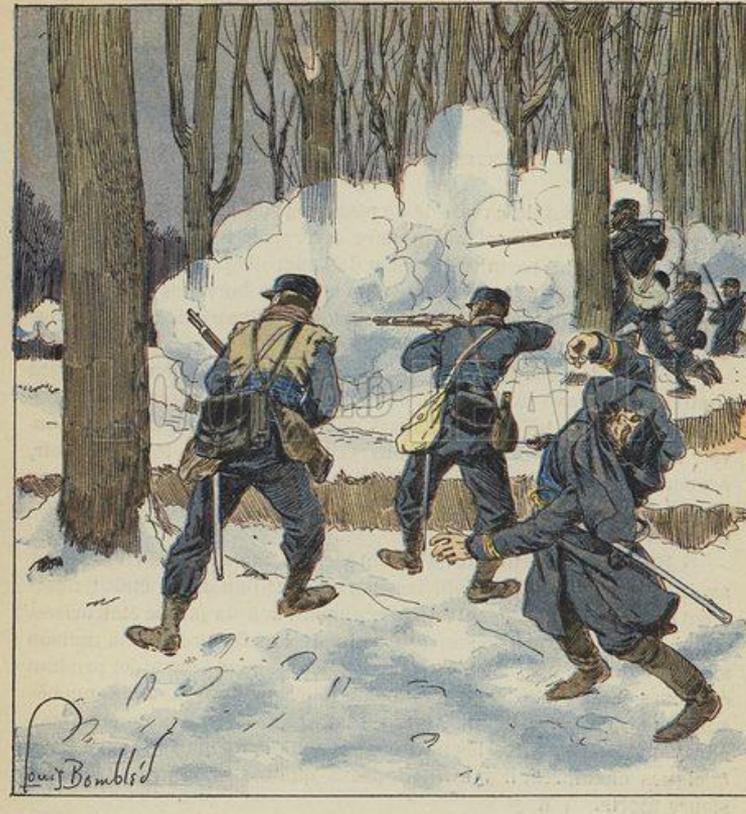




Bourbaki army lays down its arms at the Swiss border. Part of the **Bourbaki-Panorama** in Lucerne, Switzerland



**The Campaign  
against Republican France,  
September 1870 to January 1871**



The Germans were unprepared for French irregular warfare in 1870–1 and tended to react with extreme severity. Partisans wearing a recognizable uniform, bearing arms and subject to some sort of discipline could be treated as legitimate enemies, whereas at the other extreme even the more legally minded French condemned undisciplined, garishly dressed gangs who were simply bandits and whose depredations were more feared in some districts than the methodical exactions of the Germans.<sup>20</sup>

## Les Franc-Tireurs, 9.

1870-1871



The real problem, of course, was how to regard resisters who fell between these extremes. French guerrilla activity was widespread from the very beginning of operations in 1870. German cavalry crossing the Moselle in mid-August were frequently fired on by villagers and by way of reprisal hanged the culprits – or suspects – whenever they caught them. The roads between Sedan and Paris were haunted by *francs-tireurs* who were treated as murderers. When Favre complained to Bismarck that German civilians had done the same in 1813, the chancellor grimly replied, ‘That is quite true; but our trees still bear the marks where your generals hanged our people on them.’ In the later stages of the war some 60,000 *francs-tireurs* were active in all but the most thoroughly patrolled districts, their motley companies swelled by foreign sympathizers of every kind.<sup>21</sup>

# THE LAWS OF WAR, and War Crimes....

For many centuries, there have been efforts to limit, focus, or channel the violence of war to avoid unnecessary destruction. The reasons for this include—

- Morality, religious belief, and simple human decency.
- Unwillingness to damage a region's productivity when that may be used or annexed.
- Awareness that unrestrained brutality will be counterproductive to achieving military goals.

In terms of Clausewitz's "trinity," the "primordial violence" that is part of war must be "subordinated" to policy and made "subject to reason."

## THE ELEMENTS OF THE TRINITY

Clausewitz's trinity comprises three specific elements. The identity of those elements is readily evident to anyone who actually reads the first paragraph of his description: It is "composed of

**primordial violence, hatred, and enmity, which are to be regarded as a blind natural force;**

**of the play of chance and probability within which the creative spirit is free to roam;**

**and of its element of subordination, as an instrument of policy, which makes it subject to reason...."**

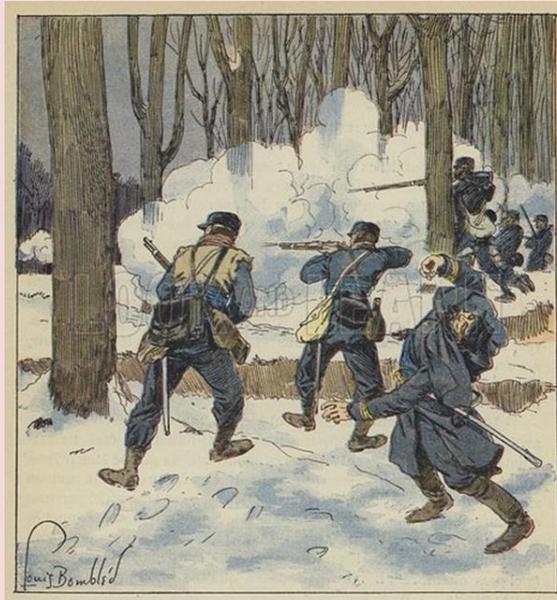
This set of elements is usually labeled

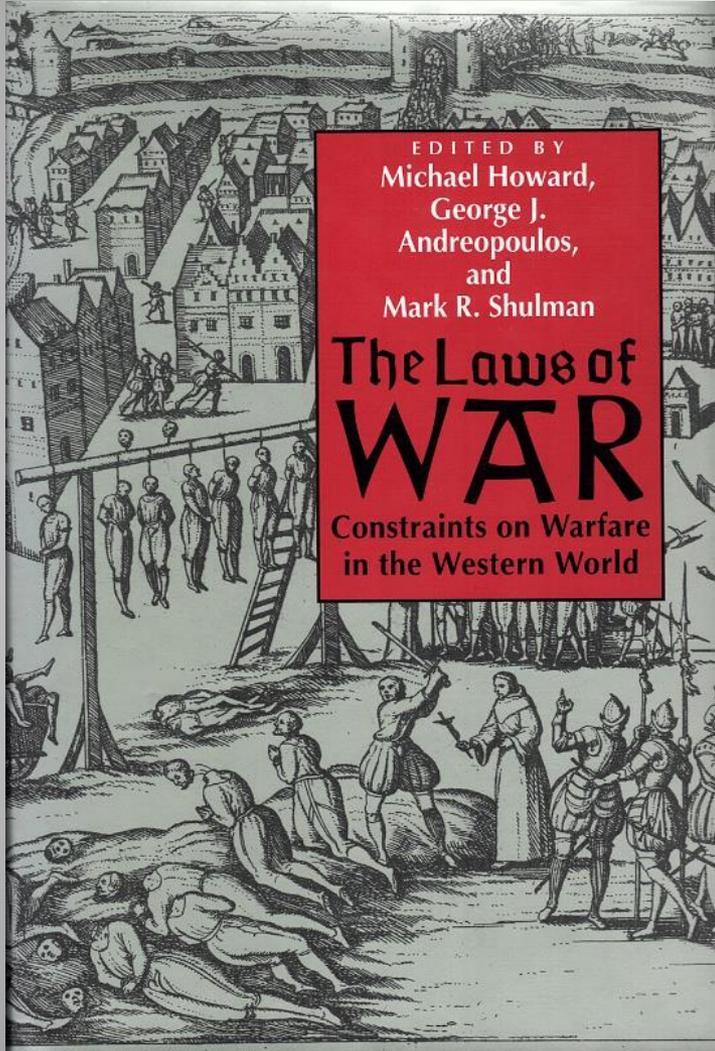
**"emotion / chance / reason";**

As a general rule, wars between opponents who are culturally similar and appreciate their “common humanity” will see the Laws of War observed. If the opponent is seen as “alien,” “utterly different” or “inferior,” war crimes are much more likely to occur.

In the Franco-Prussian War, the two sides usually abided by the Laws of War. For the German armies, exceptions and violations occurred in two categories:

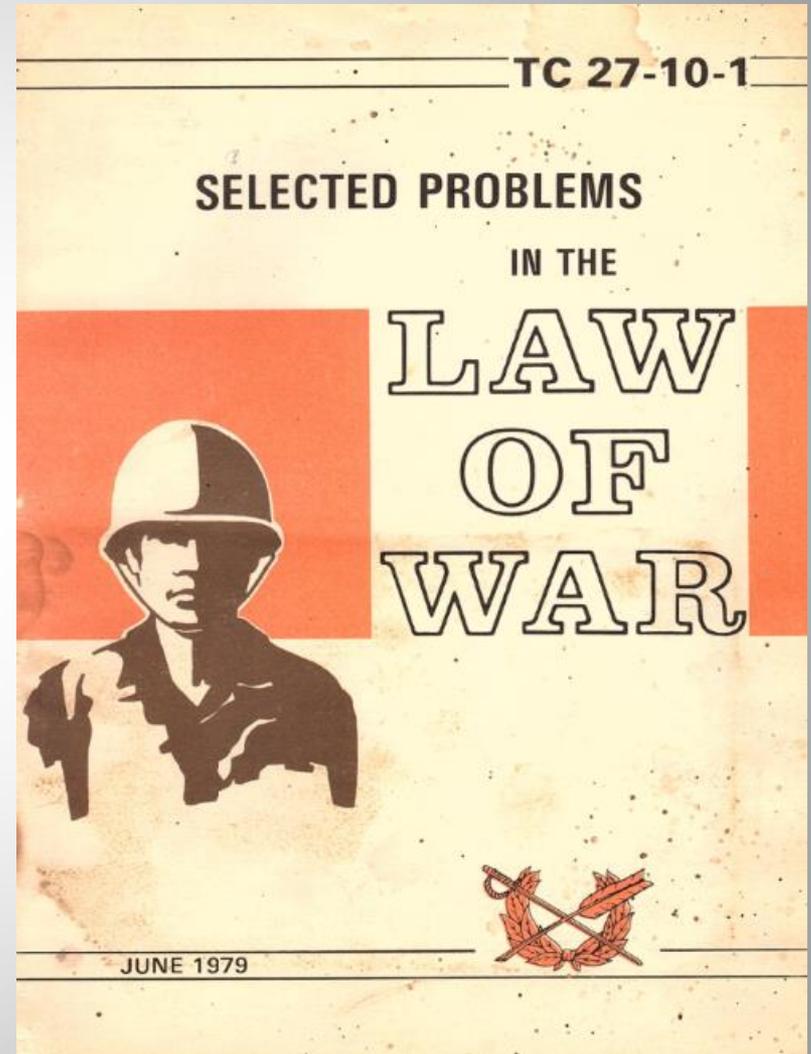
- francs-tireurs (guerrillas, partisans).
- the French tirailleurs (“Turcos”), dark-skinned North African soldiers.





EDITED BY  
Michael Howard,  
George J.  
Andreopoulos,  
and  
Mark R. Shulman

The Laws of  
**WAR**  
Constraints on Warfare  
in the Western World



TC 27-10-1

SELECTED PROBLEMS

IN THE

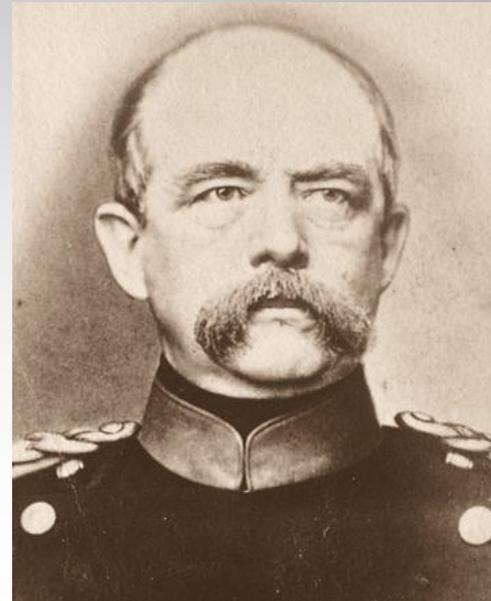
LAW  
OF  
WAR



JUNE 1979



**Phil Sheridan**



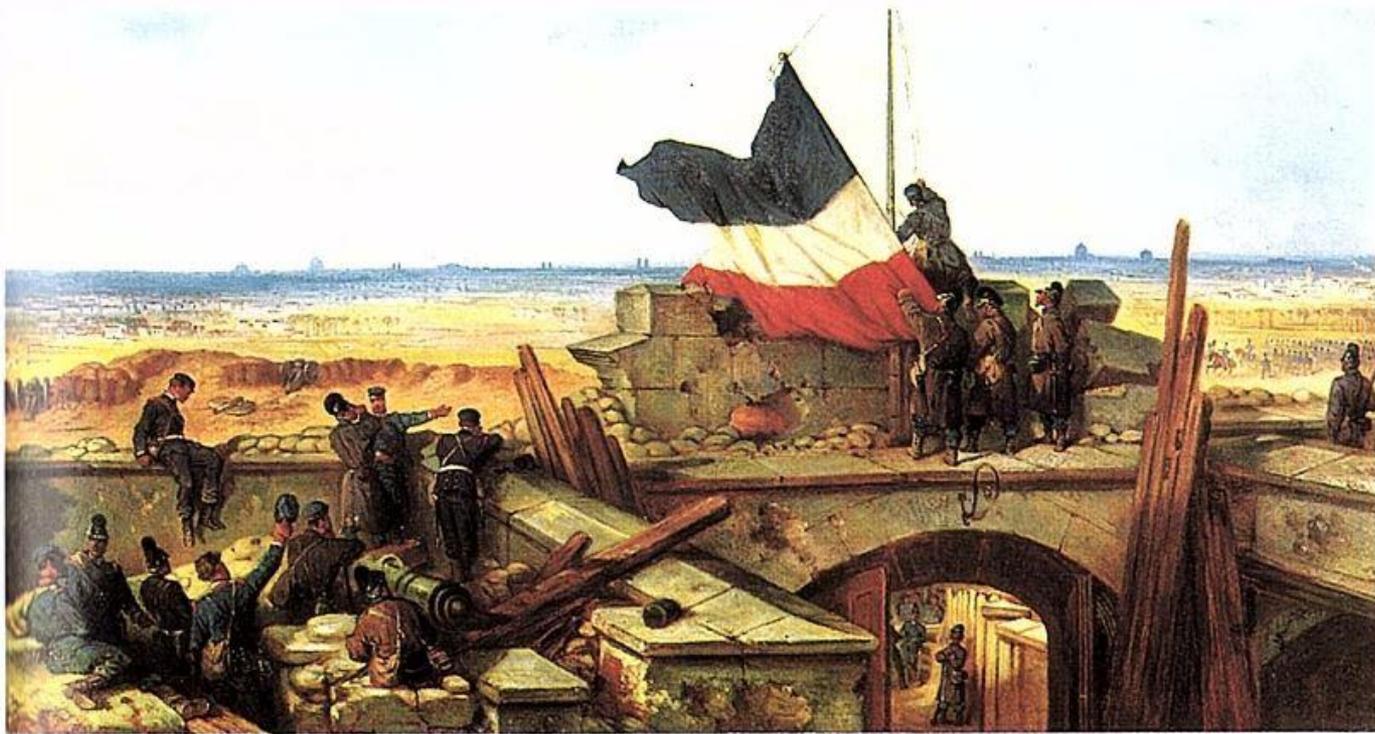
**On several occasions, Sheridan personally urged Bismarck to learn the lessons of his Shenandoah Valley campaign of 1864. He told Bismarck that so far in their war against the French, the Germans had been too humane. They ought to inflict as much damage as possible and cause “the inhabitants so much suffering that they must long for peace, and for their government to demand it. The people must be left with nothing but their eyes to weep with over the war.”**

---quoted in Jay Luvaas, “The Influence of the German Wars of Unification upon the United States,” in Forster and Nagler, eds., *On the Road to Total War*



**General Sheridan, who was with us until Sedan, said to Bismarck: “You know how to hit an enemy as no other army does, but you have not yet learned how to annihilate him. One must see more smoke of burning villages; otherwise you will not finish with the French.” And I am convinced the man is right. If we allowed our cavalry to carry out campaigns of destruction throughout the country *a la* Sheridan, many Frenchmen would lose their taste for playing at *franc tireurs* [guerrillas].**

---Count Alfred von Waldersee, *A Field Marshal's Memoirs*



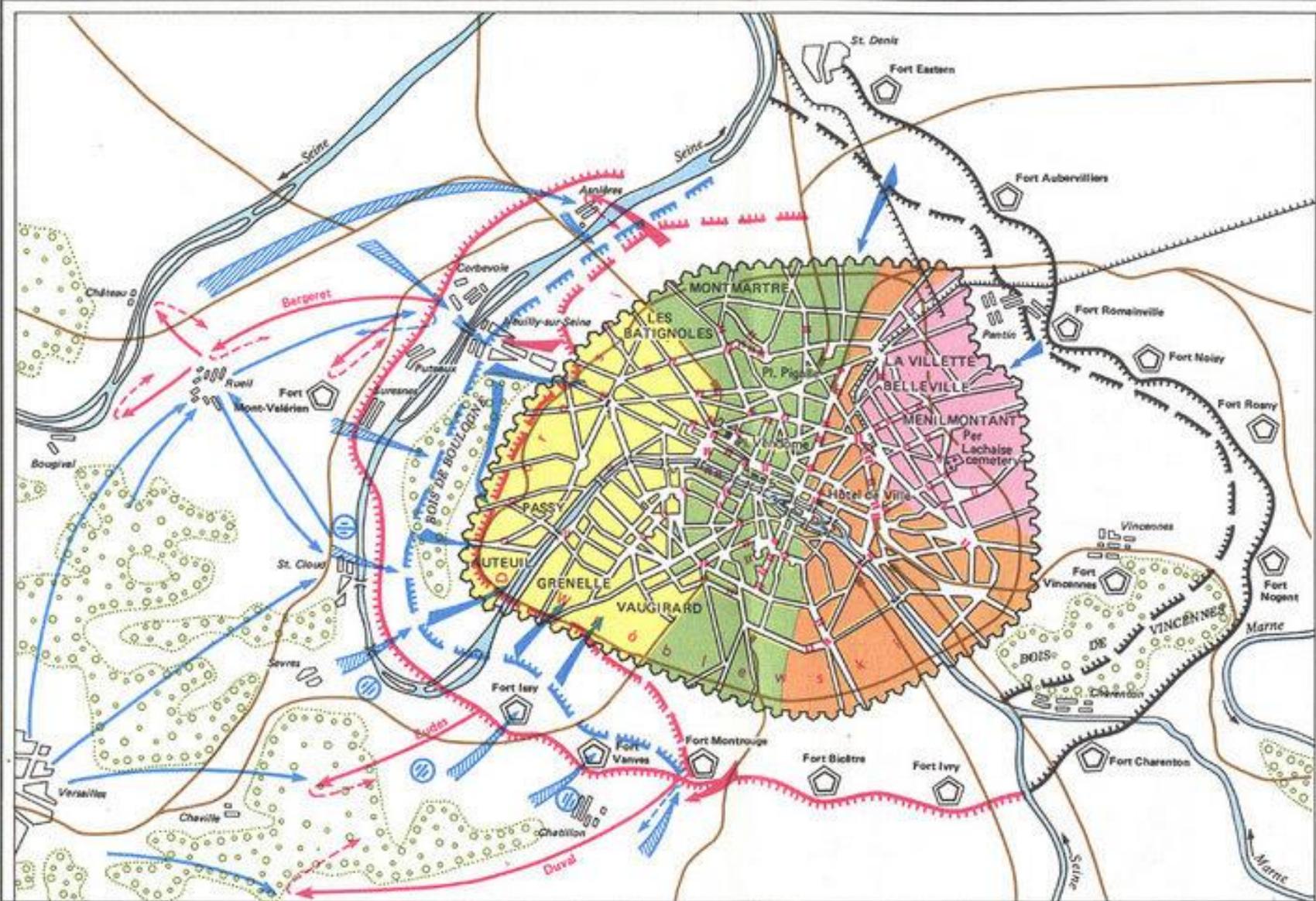
### Raising the German Flag at Fort Vanves outside Paris, January 19, 1871

[Eugen Adam, 1878]

On January 18, 1871, William I was proclaimed German emperor at the Palace of Versailles. The following day the besieging German troops—Bavarian soldiers in this scene—hoisted the new German flag at Fort Vanves southwest of Paris. The flag's colors are those of the North German Confederation: black, white, and red. Since 1848 the king had regarded the colors black, red, and gold with suspicion; they had a whiff of revolution and democracy. Bismarck attached little importance to the flag's design: "To tell the truth, I

couldn't care less about the colors. As far as I'm concerned, they can use green and yellow and roses in springtime, or the flag of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. It's just that the old Prussian trooper [i.e., the king] won't hear of black-red-gold." How black-white-red came to be chosen is not clear. All that mattered to Bismarck is that this combination was not associated with any party inside the country. They were not declared the national German colors until 1888.





Positions of the Versailles on May 20	Sections of Paris occupied by the Versailles on	Positions of the Communards	Numbers denote:																						
Main movements of the Versailles troops	<table border="0"> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>21-22 May</td> <td>23-24 May</td> <td>25-26 May</td> <td>27-28 May</td> </tr> </table>					21-22 May	23-24 May	25-26 May	27-28 May	<table border="0"> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 April</td> <td>20 May</td> </tr> </table>			2 April	20 May	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Arc de Triomphe</li> <li>2. General Staff</li> <li>3. Palais de Justice</li> <li>4. Tuileries</li> <li>5. Louvre</li> </ol>										
21-22 May	23-24 May	25-26 May	27-28 May																						
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