

C - Summary of Hessen-Kassel Wars

THIRTY YEARS' WAR, 1631-48

Army Commanders - Landgraf Wilhelm V, 1631 to Sept 1637 (died); Peter Melander (who became Peter von Holzapfel), Sept 1637 to July 1640; Kaspar Eberstein, July 1640 through 1644; Johann Geyso, 1644-45; Kaspar Mortaigne de Potelles, Jan to July 1647; Johann Geyso (again), July 1647 through 1648

Though Hesse raised a few units for the Protestant Union forces in the 1620's, its participation as a major player in the war began when the Landgraf supported Gustavus Adolffus' invasion of Germany in 1631. By 1648 H-K had a far larger army than any other Protestant German state. Of course this wasn't due to the "state" as such, but rather to the immense subsidies which the Landgraf received from France. This enabled him to build an army far beyond the limited capacities of H-K. Hessian units fought under Gustavus Adolffus at the Battles of Alte Veste and Lutzen, later under Baner in Pomerania, and finally on the lower Rhine in the last part of the war.

The foot regts raised in 1631 and the following years varied greatly in size, between 3 and 15 companies apiece, and between 400 and 1500 men. The total strength, around 1634, was 88 companies with 8,562 men. Cavalry regiments had between 2 and 9 comps, and the comps consisted of 50 to 90 men apiece. Total strength was 41 companies with 2,633 men. By 1648, most of the regiments had standard organizations (12 comps apiece for the foot, 10 comps for the horse).

Unlike other contemporary princes, Landgraf William V maintained strict control of his regiments by supplying and paying them directly rather than merely contracting out to the colonel-Inhabers. However, as the Hessian lands were devastated by enemy actions, the government and army became increasingly dependent on French and Swedish support to stay alive.

16 March 1632 - First Battle of Hoxter

For full Protestant O/B, see "Sweden"; the Hessian contingent under Uslar was the largest on the field - 6000 foot and 2000 horse

- IR Leib [11], White [17], Red [12], Blue [13], Bright Red [16]
- CR F. Dalwigk [8], E. Dalwigk [9], Seekirch [9], Leib [6]; DR Scharkopf [12]
- Two horse Frei Comps plus the "Landgraf's Mounted Jaeger"

27 June 1632 - Battle of Volksmarsen

Hessians made up the entire Protestant force under Uslar; most of the force were cavalry (about 2000), but there was also an infantry detachment of 600 men (composition unknown); artillery were 6 guns and there were also 10 small regimental guns