

Commemorative Reproduction of the Battle of Leuthen on December 5, 1757 (1758)

Abstract

After Prussia conquered Austrian Silesia in the wars of the 1740s, Maria Theresa and her chancellor, Wenzel Anton Kaunitz-Rietberg, forged a new coalition against Frederick II (“the Great”). Believing an attack was imminent, Frederick initiated the Seven Years War (1756-63), thereby exposing Prussia to a powerful force of Austrian, Saxon, French, and Russian troops. Britain was his only source of support. The Battle of Leuthen (December 5, 1757), where Frederick defeated a much larger Austrian army under the command of Charles of Lorraine, became a legendary and vaunted example of his ability to prevail against all odds. But the victory was narrow and costly. In the end, Prussia escaped defeat in the Seven Years War chiefly because Czarina Elizabeth I died (r. 1741-62) and Russia subsequently withdrew from the war. The image below is a commemorative reproduction of the battle plan used in Leuthen.

Source



Source: Copperplate engraving (subsequently colored) by an unknown artist, 1758.

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