

Turin and made contact with Victor Amadeus's little force. Knowing that time was running out, the French commanders launched three desperate assaults to capture the citadel. Each was repelled with heavy casualties on both sides. Meanwhile the relieving army took up position opposite the weakest sector of the French lines, between the Dora and the Stura, northwest of the city. At dawn on September 7 Prince Eugene and Victor Amadeus attacked the French lines, and after a hard fight, began to roll them up. This was the signal for the garrison to conduct a sortie, backed up by battalions of the city militia. The French army started to break up. The soldiers abandoned their artillery and equipment and streamed westwards, towards the Alps and home. At mid-afternoon Victor Amadeus and his cousin entered Turin in triumph, and attended a *Te Deum* in the cathedral, followed by a celebratory banquet. Meanwhile hundreds of wounded and dying soldiers were carried into the city, to receive whatever care the overtaxed convents and monasteries could provide. The siege had been very costly in human life. About 25,000 men, or over half the French army, were either captured, killed or wounded in the course of the siege and the final battle; the defenders lost a total of about 5,200 men, along with a few dozen civilians killed by the French bombardments.

The victory was momentous, and its repercussions were felt throughout Europe. Louis XIV had been humbled, and Turin and the Savoyard monarchy saved. The defeated French armies evacuated the Italian peninsula, which ceased to be a theater of conflict. At the Peace of Utrecht that ended the War of the Spanish Succession in 1713, Victor Amadeus's allies rewarded him for the climactic victory he had won outside the walls of Turin. Thanks especially to British diplomacy, and to the special favor of his cousin Queen Anne, Victor Amadeus was granted the former Spanish kingdom of Sicily, and thus elevated to royal rank. A few years later, in 1720, he would be forced to exchange Sicily for another kingdom, Sardinia, but he did not forfeit his kingly title. The House of Savoy had now joined the crowned heads of Europe, and Turin became a royal city, the capital of the Kingdom of Sardinia.

9. *Turin, A Royal Capital.*

After 1713 Victor Amadeus II returned to the task of internal reform. Several of his reforming initiatives would have a direct impact on Turin. In 1717 he reorganized the central bureaucracy of the state, dividing it into separate departments with clearly defined areas of re-