

## LOTT 06 - Rupert Surveyed the scene in front of him

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LOTT's days finally reached an end at the hands of Archaon, leader of the Chaos hordes in the Storm of Chaos (2005 summer campaign). There are two stories of the battle. The first is an overview summary, featuring names of some of the admin who helped co-ordinate the storm. [05 - The final surge of the Conclave]. The second is told from the point of view of Rupert, one of Ricold's sons [06 - Rupert Surveyed the scene in front of him] - I've left Ricold's offspring quite ambiguous, and Asa doesn't get mentioned later either. This basically leaves an open end if I ever want to fill it in.

Rupert surveyed the scene in front of him, even 6 months on, it was a mess. The walls of Middenhiem still showed clear stains and marks from the chaos bodies that died laying siege to the great city. Where flayerkin had stuck their great claws, and where various horrendous devices had just plain rammed the walls. But lined with the empire's best troops, those walls had held solid as ever. - Those had been long, hard, endless days indeed. Rupert had travelled under his father, Ricold, with the rest of the army from the Conclave of Light. They had been a much smaller force than Karl Franz's, but they had also been a few days ahead of the King's army. - Rupert recalled the final few nights before Middenhiem. Spirits had been high since those reports that had come from the front line were promising, suggesting that Middenhiem was holding, and holding strong. They had just set up camp and started cooking when orders filtered down from the leaders. This would be their final full camp. Scouts would be ahead constantly now until they reached the city, and sleep would be a few hours, sleeping and eating out the saddles, so they were to ensure they had rations to eat for at least 3 days. This dampened morale somewhat, as the men realised that the time for the biggest battle of their lives was drawing near. If the reports of the Chaos hordes were to be believed, then it was likely that most of the people Rupert was chatting with would be dead before the week was out. Everyone came to this conclusion, and no-one really liked it. But they were all here because they believed in the causes they were fighting for, and like all the knights present, Rupert was prepared to give his life in service of Bretonnia, if that was to be his fate. - And so for 3 days and nights they set a firm pace to Middenhiem. Nothing was fast with an army as large as this and mostly infantry too. At the lead were the Bretonnians, and many of the elves. The elves keen sight made them fantastic scouts, and the few High Elf forces they had picked up along the way had some Silver Helms too, that, while high and mighty, were supreme fighters all the same, and \*fast\*. Behind the cavalry were the Infantry lines. With virtually all the good races represented here, it was a fantastic, if odd, sight to behold. There were even a few odd forces of dubious alignment that were travelling with them, because any help is good help, and so far they had all proved they would defend the right cause. Mind, the vampire on the western flank still scared Rupert witless. Quite a few others too by the wide birth they gave him. But he was friendly to chat too, and if you could forget that he was bloodthirsty, you might even start to like his company. Maybe. Bringing up the rear from the Infantry was the artillery train, and support. All the war machines were tied up to carts, and being carefully hauled, while fletchers, blacksmiths, woodsmen, hunters, and the other supporting people which an army this size needed were doing a good trade. Rupert had done some duty as flank protection, and had seen that this was a truly formidable army, which normally would crush, if they weren't outnumbered by chaos, many times over. - However, after the third night in the saddle, they passed the peak that brought the city into view. Rupert was horrified, the reports of the Chaos numbers were not as overestimated as Rupert had thought, and many should have died since the last report to filter down to the troops. Many of the men around Rupert visibly prepared themselves to face the death they were about to suffer. - Rupert was deployed on the east flank with most of the rest of the Bretonnian forces. He was leading a unit of enthusiastic knights, and had to keep holding them back from trying to take on the whole of the Chaos army on their own. - The hold order kept filtering through, until critically, no messenger came, and Rupert could hear enough of a battle to just engage. Their lances pierced flesh, for their first target was a band of chaotically deformed warriors. In horrendous armour, they seemed to be... Rupert couldn't put a word to it, but it was... horrid. - The rest of the day was somewhat a blur for Rupert. Every move was either an attack, or a counter attack on whatever was in range. Occasionally orders would filter down from the HQ, but as they seldom made sense enough to follow, Rupert used his instinct. - One moment did stick clearly in Rupert's mind though. As he broke through to the peak of a hill, Rupert had a clear view of the battlefield. It stretched as far as Rupert could see, and was largely dead bodies. His unit was spread out, and many were dead. He needed to join up with another force. As he watched, he saw a unit of Dwarves hit by a unit of Chaos that almost doubled the Dwarves in size. Knowing the dwarves needed help, and knowing there wasn't anything between, Rupert pushed forward what troops were in shouting range to engage. As he did so, he saw none other than Ricold, fighting on the front line! Rupert was amazed his father still felt up to it. As he lowered his lance to get the charge, one of the mutated -things- knocked Ricold from his horse. Rupert could do little from this range but watch helplessly as his father was crushed underfoot, as the push of the Chaos hordes forces the Dwarves to give ground. - Rupert woke two days later, in a Bretonnian medical camp. The healer told him that his injuries were not extensive, and if he felt no raw pain, then he could leave. They had treated him as best they could, and despite losing an eye, he would survive. Rupert well knew there would be others that needed the healer more than he did, so he headed out to see what the situation was. - The camp outside was mourning. A small group had brought, found or made instruments, and were lamenting the dead. The overall camp certainly looked so much smaller than their last one, not 5 days back. Rupert went over to a few knights he knew by sight, and sat down when they offered him food. The stew was plain, obviously scrounged from what was edible locally, and some food people had brought with them. There was a solemn silence around the fire, so Rupert left once he'd eaten, and found somewhere to sleep. - ~~~~~ - The next morning, Rupert woke early, to the sound of trumpets. A messenger had entered the camp, and rumour said he had come from Karl Franz. As the day reached its zenith, the morale had increased, as the army approaching them from behind was confirmed as the Altdorf army, being led by Karl Franz. As the force approached from behind, the word went out to any able fighters to take up arms, and help. Rupert however had lost his horse, and with more knights than horses,

a fully fit fighter took priority over Rupert, with only the one eye. While dejected, Rupert was happy to stay behind, and care for the wounded. As Karl Franz's army pushed forward, and started to drive the chaos forces back, Rupert headed out with the medics to help the wounded on the field. There were so many of them, it was horrible. But between the forces of the Empire, and those already in the area, slowly the mutated forces of chaos started to give ground. It was three days later that Rupert heard that his father had definitely died in that first battle. Rumour said he died at the hands of the Chaos general, but Rupert doubted that. Rupert spent three days searching for his father's body, but to no avail. He did, however find his father's saddlebags, helmet, and what remained of the horse. He took the saddlebags and helmet back to camp, and went to see if he could track down the Dwarves that were fighting in the front line that day with Ricold. The unit of Dwarves had survived; although they looked distinctly thinner on numbers than they had when Rupert last saw them. They recounted the tale that Ricold had insisted at fighting at the front, despite the insistent opinions of the various nobles that had come with the army. He had fought gallantly, and bravely. They confirmed to Rupert that he had indeed come to blows with Archaon, leader of the chaotic hordes. It had been Archaon that Rupert had seen knocking Ricold from his horse, and the surge the chaos knights had put forward had prevented the Dwarves from trying to recover Ricold from the field. One of the dwarves confided that he had actually seen one of the knights plough a sword through Ricold on the ground, before the body, and his horse, had been trampled. The body would be unrecoverable, especially with the number that had died that day and then again on the same fields when Karl Franz arrived. Rupert had been involved in building the pyres that burnt the dead bodies, allied and chaos alike, where the bodies were all subject to disease that might cause problems later if buried. The stench lingered in the air for days... Rupert snapped back to reality, remembering the horrid smell of those pyres, and the weeks of cleanup that had followed, just clearing the land for rebuilding, and re-farming on. It had not mattered that the war had been won; the chaos hordes had wrecked the empire. So, Rupert turned his horse around, to face away from the city that he had lived in for the last six months, as a hero of the war, and along with the rest of his Bretonnian contingent, he kicked his horse to return to Bretonnia, where the rest of his life still awaited him.