

## Grouchy's march from Walhain to Wavre.

**F**rom Walhain, Exelmans advanced through Saint-Martin and Corbais (<sup>1</sup>) in a northern direction as far as La Baraque, where his dragoons arrived between 9 and 10 a.m. Their scouts pushed through as far as the farm of l'Auzel, four kilometres south of Wavre. It was here that they saw a large Prussian force of all weapons. <sup>2</sup> Exelmans now informed Grouchy of his findings through chef d'escadron d'Estourmel. <sup>3</sup> Exelmans, uncertain about his situation and lacking infantry support, decided to halt and now sent the brigade Vincent to the farm of la Bloquerie, two kilometres west of La Baraque and two and a half kilometres east of Mousty. <sup>4</sup> Further, he sent the brigade of Berton to Neuf-Sart. <sup>5</sup> Exelmans left two squadrons near La Baraque and pulled the remainder of his corps, the main body of the division of Chastel, towards Corbais. <sup>6</sup>

By moving to La Baraque, Exelmans had turned the detachment of lieutenant colonel Von Ledebur, which was in and around Mont Saint Guibert. The detachment consisted of the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pommeranian regiment of infantry nr.11, the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the 1<sup>st</sup> regiment Pommeranian Landwehr, the 10<sup>th</sup> regiment of hussars (four squadrons) and two pieces of horse battery nr.12

Captain Von Reyher, a detached staff officer sent out by general Von Ryssel, had left Vieux Sart (the position of the brigade of Von Ryssel) at 5 a.m. and arrived early that morning at Mont Saint Guibert. <sup>7</sup> Von Reyher carried some orders for Von Ledebur.

First of all, Von Ledebur was only allowed to leave his positions in case he was forced to do so. In that case he had to withdraw towards Wavre (and not Vieux Sart). In all cases he had to report to Bülow, and not Von Ryssel. <sup>8</sup>

That morning Von Ledebur sent out three cavalry-patrols: one through Tourinnes, one downstream along the Dyle, towards Genappe and one towards Gembloux. It was at 12.30 o'clock that colonel Von Ledebur wrote the following report to Bülow.

*Bivouac bei Mont Saint Guibert, den 18.Juni 1815; Mittags 12 1/2 Uhr*

*Ew. Excellenz melde ich ganz gehorsamst, dass mich der Feind bis jetzt nicht beunruhigt hat; nur hin und wieder haben sich Patrouillen in der Ferne her sehen lassen von Chennbry [sic] her. <sup>9</sup> Ich habe drei Patrouillen abgeschickt, eine über Tourinnes hinaus, eine in der Direktion auf Gembloux und eine auf den Weg nach Genappe. Bis jetzt ist keine derselben zurückgekehrt. Ew. Excellenz Befehl zufolge werden wir so lange stehen bleiben, bis der Feind mich drängt.*

*Von Ledebur* <sup>10</sup>

It may have been between 1.30 and 2 p.m. that the report reached general Bülow and Blücher. <sup>11</sup> Shortly after 12.30 o'clock it became clear that the French cavalry had cut off the detachment from Wavre. <sup>12</sup> Though patrols and pickets had been sent out, the Prussians were taken by surprise. <sup>13</sup>

At that time, the brigade of Vincent was near the farm of La Bloquerie, while Berton was at Neuf Sart, two squadrons of dragoons near La Baraque and the remainder of the 2<sup>nd</sup> French

cavalry corps in and around Corbais.<sup>14</sup>

Accompanied by the 10<sup>th</sup> regiment of hussars and two guns of the horse battery, lieutenant colonel Von Ledebur and captain Von Reyher now rode via the farm of Grand Jaldime in a northern direction to the road which leads from Corbais to La Baraque. North of La Baraque they found the squadrons left there by Exelmans.

Von Reyher, believing the French had no artillery, decided to charge them, hoping they would fall back to the east of the road. Von Reyher succeeded in doing so and the French kept up a fight with flankers only.<sup>15</sup> Having done that, Von Reyher ordered back the two battalions, still at Mont Saint Guibert, to go back as far as the farm of l'Auzel.<sup>16</sup> This farm is located where the road Corbais-Wavre crosses the forests of Warlombrou and Sarats.<sup>17</sup> Von Reyher had the two battalions go back through a cover over the right bank of the Dyle. The infantry reached the farm of l'Auzel around 1.30 p.m. Von Reyher placed it at the southern border of the wood and by doing so, barricaded the road which, near the farm, led into the wood.

The Prussian skirmishers took up their positions in the wood, as well as those of the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the 1<sup>st</sup> Pommeranian regiment (brigade Von Ryssel). Their positions extended as far as Louvrange.<sup>18</sup> While doing so, the Prussian hussars held the French dragoons at bay by sending out flankers, who were later supported by platoons as the French flankers were reinforced as well. Some French artillery also came in action. Then, the hussars fell back.<sup>19</sup> Von Ledebur had got the instruction to defend this post until he would be forced to go back in case of French numerical superiority.<sup>20</sup> From his position south of Wavre, Von Ledebur had meanwhile sent out a second report. It reads:

*Der Feind hat mich um 1 Uhr mit Cavallerie angegriffen und es haben sich 3-4 feindliche Cürassier Regiment gezeigt. Ich habe mich daher bis auf 1 Stunde von Wavre zurückziehen müssen und stehe jetzt auf den hier befindlichen Höhen. Meine Infanterie ist zum Soutien aufgestellt und hinter dieser hat der Obrist Leutnant Von Sohr mit der Avantgarde der Brigade Von Pirch eine Stellung genommen. Wir müssen hier das Flankörgefecht fortsetzen gegen einen unvergleichlich stärkeren Feind, weil noch die Armee-Corps bei Wavre defilieren. Der Feind scheint auf seiner linken Flanke fortzugehen wozu ihn das Terrain sehr begünstigt, indessen uns wahrscheinlich deshalb in der Front zu drängen, um [die] Absicht zu erreichen. Er hat weder Artillerie noch Infanterie.*<sup>21</sup>

Shortly after, Von Ledebur wrote a short third note which reads:

*Nach einer eben durch eine Patrouille eingebrachte Nachricht hat sich eben eine feindliche Colonne Infanterie im durchziehen durch das von uns besetzt gewesene Dorf Mont Saint Guibert gezeigt.*<sup>22</sup>

Both reports probably arrived at St.Lambert at 2.30 and 3 p.m.<sup>23</sup>

The moment it became clear Exelmans approached La Baraque and threatened to charge the baggage, prince Wilhelm of Prussia, the commander of the reserve cavalry of the 4<sup>th</sup> corps, was ordered to halt his brigade of Von Sydow and confront it to the enemy. The regiments chosen to do so were the 2<sup>nd</sup> regiment Pommeranian Landwehr-cavalry and the 1<sup>st</sup> regiment of Silesian

Landwehr-cavalry. The Silesian Landwehr advanced in front, led by major Von Schill but even before a fight ensued the French went back.<sup>24</sup>

Von Sydow now instructed these two regiments of his brigade to be relieved by cavalry of the 2<sup>nd</sup> corps, and then to proceed to Saint Lambert through Wavre. Yet, this proved to be impossible as this cavalry was already beyond the defile and the commander of the rear-guard, Von Borcke, ordered them to stay until his own forces had reached the Dyle.<sup>25</sup>

Von Ledebur would have succeeded in establishing contacts with this cavalry and also those of Von Sohr. Von Sohr had spent the night near Mont Saint Guibert and early that morning he had got the instruction to rejoin the 2<sup>nd</sup> corps. Accordingly, Von Sohr left his position around 5.30 a.m. and found the corps just breaking up from its bivouacs south of Wavre, near Aisémont. Now, Von Sohr placed his brigade south of Bierges and had pickets placed to the south. That morning, Von Sohr sent about 150 men of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brandenburg regiment of hussars nr.3 led by captain Von Ditzfurth, plus two horse guns to Von Ledebur.<sup>26</sup>

Meanwhile, that morning the brigades of the 2<sup>nd</sup> corps had prepared themselves for a march to Chapelle Saint Lambert; both the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> brigade left their bivouacs between 7 and 8 a.m. but soon after they had to halt due to the presence of Bülow at Wavre the fire which broke out there (cf. the march of the 4<sup>th</sup> corps). Both the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> brigade were still in column near their former bivouacs when the information reached them that the French were approaching. Now both brigade commanders, colonel Von Brause and Von Reckow, sent out their cavalry to reconnoitre the area; they soon found out that the enemy was on the other side of the forest.<sup>27</sup>

As Von Ledebur had taken up a position, he was now supported on the edge of the forest by two battalions of the brigade of Von Reckow, the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion of the 21<sup>st</sup> regiment and the fuselier battalion of the 23<sup>rd</sup> battalion.<sup>28</sup>

Von Brause had asked Von Reckow to bring up some battalions to the left of the road near l'Auzel in order to receive Von Ledebur. Sohr was to the right of the road with his two regiments of hussars and half a battery of horse artillery.

Almost at the same time, general Pirch I – in or near Wavre- was informed of the French approach by Von Sohr (he reported the presence of French cavalry to the left) and by Von Ledebur (he reported the approach of two strong French columns of infantry, six regiments of cavalry and ten guns). As a result, Pirch I left the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> brigade behind south of Wavre.

Pirch I, accompanied by colonel Von Aster and major Von Weyrach, was now near l'Auzel and observed the situation. He then gave colonel Von Brause the command over the rear-guard.<sup>29</sup>

Von Brause was ordered to fall back as slowly as possible so that the remainder of the 2<sup>nd</sup> corps could cross the defile of the Dyle. Further, Pirch I reinforced Von Sohr with the 11<sup>th</sup> regiment of hussars and four guns of horse artillery. This detachment joined Von Sohr around 1 p.m.<sup>30</sup>

The 9<sup>th</sup> brigade, the one of Von Borcke, of the 3<sup>rd</sup> corps, was then still near Aisémont. This brigade had the instruction to form the rear-guard of the 3<sup>rd</sup> corps, while leaving a detachment at Wavre in order to receive the rear-guard of the 2<sup>nd</sup> corps.

Von Reckow now posted his troops between Manil (2 kilometres south-west of Wavre) and St.Anne, on the road which leads from the farm of l'Auzel to Wavre. The horse battery no.12 came on a height to the right of the brigade, while the cavalry (Von Sohr, the regiments of major Kamecke and Schill) in rear of them. Colonel Von Brause posted his brigade in line as a reserve in rear of Von Reckow's.<sup>31</sup>

Meanwhile, Von Sohr had sent out patrols to find out about the state of the road which leads to

the bridge near the mill of Bierges. The road appeared to be in a good condition and therefore Von Sohr was permitted, if need be, to withdraw over this road and cross the Dyle there. Just to be sure, the bridge was occupied right away by two companies of the 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion of the 14<sup>th</sup> regiment (Brause) led by captain Von Haidter.<sup>32</sup>

As the French vanguard began to develop more and more artillery, the Prussian artillery was soon outnumbered even though it had been reinforced with two guns. The French soon opened fire and the Prussian guns returned it; however, due to the uneven ground, the French couldn't do very much harm.<sup>33</sup> Von Reyher and Von Ledebur were able to keep up the fighting with skirmishers till about 3 p.m.<sup>34</sup>

Right at that time the vanguard of the 3<sup>rd</sup> French infantry corps was approaching. Coming from Walhain, Grouchy had joined the division of Habert – the vanguard of this corps - at Nil Saint Vincent by 1 p.m. where it had been awaiting further orders since about noon.<sup>35</sup> As Grouchy had launched it in order to attack the Prussian rearguard at l'Auzel, Vandamme moved his forces.<sup>36</sup> By then it was around 1.30 p.m.<sup>37</sup>

It was about half an hour later, around 2 p.m., that an officer of the staff of Pajol presented himself to Grouchy. Pajol's forces had departed at dawn from their position at Mazy for Grand Leez and from there to Tourinnes in the expectation to find enemy forces. As they could not be found there, Pajol had sent the officer to Grouchy to report about this; he was also to ask the marshal for further instructions. Grouchy instructed the officer to tell Pajol to take up a position at La Baraque and to await further orders there.

Though Exelmans had concentrated his corps, he was obliged to wait as he had no infantry at his disposal. The brigade of Vincent now also re-joined it corps, though Exelmans wasn't informed about this.<sup>38</sup> Grouchy now ordered Exelmans to turn the enemy by moving through Dion le Mont.<sup>39</sup> It was the news about this move which triggered Von Thielmann to write the following note to Gneisenau:

*Der Feind steht in diesem Augenblick mit 8 Escadrons vor St.Anne bey Louvrance, es ist daher alles für unsere Communication mit Louvain zu fürchten.*

*Wavre, den 18 Juny 1815*

*Frhr. Von Thielmann*

*NB*

*Ich hoffe dass unsere Bewegungen auf St.Lambert des Feindes Aufmerksamkeit dahin richten und von der Strassen nach Louvain absehen werden.*<sup>40</sup>

The move was carried out too late or too slow, as the enemy moved back as soon as Vandamme had developed his columns of attack on the road, with on his flanks artillery which was covered by cavalry.<sup>41</sup>

By now it was shortly after 3 p.m.<sup>42</sup> Initially, Von Reckow had infantry advance to reinforce the rear-guard, but soon he realized the French became too strong for him there and he decided to fall back towards Wavre before an actual fight could take place.<sup>43</sup>

Having had his two battalions in front of l'Auzel, he now moved them back to a position between St.Anne and the wood of Manil. To the right of the road he posted the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the

fusilier battalion of the 23<sup>rd</sup> regiment, covered by their skirmisher-detachments, plus the one of the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion. These detachments had their positions near the edge of the wood, of which the one of the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion had its post on the extreme right flank, towards the hamlet of Trou de Houx. To the left of the road was the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion of the 21<sup>st</sup> regiment, covered by its skirmishers-detachment. <sup>44</sup>

After these skirmishers had received the Prussian units which pulled back towards Wavre, they saw the French emerging from the bush of the wood of l'Auzel. These, in their turn, directed their advance to the point where the skirmishers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion of the 23<sup>rd</sup> were posted. As the Prussian skirmishers saw that their French counterparts were too far advancing from their supports, they charged them in their front and flanks and drove them back to their supports, which in their turn got messed up as well. <sup>45</sup> In doing so they forced back the French skirmishers, and in this they were supported by the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> regiment of Silesian infantry nr.11, led by captain Von Krosigk. <sup>46</sup> These actions were rear-guard actions intended to cover the retreat of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> brigade to Wavre.

By the time the tête of the 8<sup>th</sup> brigade had reached Wavre, Von Brause called back his rear-guard as it was being threatened to be cut off by the French who now moved to their right. This withdrawal of the skirmishers was led by lieutenant Von Dehrmann and lieutenant Renmann.

The unit which had the highest risk to be cut off was the one of the skirmishers of the 1st battalion of the 23<sup>rd</sup> regiment, led by captain Von Busse (near Trou de Houx), particularly at the moment a line of French skirmishers, supported by another body of infantry, approached. As its left wing had no support, Von Busse charged it and managed to roll it up. By doing so he managed to distract the attention of the other French units to him and not to their right, which enabled the other Prussian skirmisher-detachments to pull back. Now, the French still had Von Busse on their left, but kept pressing on to their right, between the wood and Wavre. By moving north-west, however, Von Busse now had to continue his retreat towards the mill of Bierges where he eventually crossed the Dyle. The French, meanwhile, advanced further towards Wavre. <sup>47</sup>

The Prussians here, weakly pursued by Vandamme [<sup>48</sup>] got to the defile of Wavre and began crossing the Dyle here at 4 p.m. These units were the brigades of Von Brause, Von Reckow and the detachment of Von Ledebur, of which the 10<sup>th</sup> regiment of hussars formed the extreme rearguard. The brigade of Von Borcke crossed the Dyle at Basse Wavre. <sup>49</sup>

Von Sohr rode with his brigade, the 11<sup>th</sup> regiment of hussars and two battalions of the brigade of Von Reckow to the bridge near the mill of Bierges and crossed the Dyle there. In doing so, the two companies of the 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion of the 14<sup>th</sup> regiment were relieved there by the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> regiment of Elbe Landwehr infantry (Von Brause). <sup>50</sup> While doing so, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brandenburg regiment of hussars nr.3 suffered under some French artillery fire. <sup>51</sup>

By now, Vandamme advanced through the defile of l'Auzel towards Wavre. Vandamme had got instructions from Grouchy via the aide de camp Bella to proceed to the heights which dominate the town, take up positions here, reconnoitre the bridges over the Dyle and to wait for further orders there. <sup>52</sup> Shortly after 4 p.m., Vandamme's division of Habert arrived on the heights opposite Wavre. <sup>53</sup>

Meanwhile, Grouchy –accompanied by a very small escort - rode from l'Auzel through the Bois de Warlembrou to the heights of Limelette sometime to get some more idea about the confrontation which took place further to his left. It was here that he realized that a major battle

was indeed taking place near the forest de Soignes.<sup>54</sup> Grouchy then returned to l'Auzel where he met Gérard. Just then, somewhere around 3.45 p.m. Grouchy received the order written by Soult at 10 a.m.<sup>55</sup> He directed him to cross the Dyle with his corps at the mill of Bierges.<sup>56</sup> As Gérard sent his vanguard (Hulot's division) there, he became aware of the fact that both remaining divisions of his corps were still further behind. Both men, accompanied by some members of their staff, decided to see for themselves about the situation at La Baraque. Having waited in vain for the divisions of Pécheux and Vichery until 4.30 p.m., Grouchy sent his aide de camp Bella out to speed them up. Additionally, he left another officer at La Baraque to lead them to the crossing at Bierges.<sup>57</sup> Grouchy then left for Vandamme in front of Wavre, and Gérard for Hulot's division which was by now heading for the crossing at Bierges.<sup>58</sup>

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1. Berton, J.B. - Précis historique, militaire etc. p.54
2. Exelmans in his letter to Gérard. In: Gérard, Dernières observations p.13-14  
 Declaration of colonel De Bloqueville. In: Mémoires du maréchal de Grouchy Vol.V p.146-151  
 Baron Bonnemains. Cf. his account. In: SHD, nr.C15.5  
 Further, Exelmans claims he saw a Prussian convoy, escorted by a few thousand men, near the *cabaret à Tout Vend*, heading towards Louvain. This was the baggage of Bülow's corps heading for Louvain, according to Bülow's disposition
3. Cf. the chapter dealing with Grouchy's presence at Walhain.
4. Exelmans in his letter to Gérard. Cf. Gérard. Dernières observations p.13-14  
 The map of Capitaine gives the name of the farm of la Plaquerie. The farm itself has since long gone.
5. Exelmans in his letter to Gérard, dated 1<sup>st</sup> February 1830. In: Dernières observations p.25  
 Berton claims the corps was initially sent to the road Namur-Louvain via Nil-Saint-Vincent and that it approached the farm at 2 p.m. This is not correct. However, it may have been that Berton sent out patrols from Neuf-Sart towards this road. Cf. Berton, J.B. – Précis etc. p.56  
 Cf. Houssaye, H. – 1815.Waterloo p.456
6. Exelmans in his letter to Gérard, dated 1<sup>st</sup> February 1830. In: Dernières observations p.25  
 Bonnemains. Cf. his account. In: SHD, nr.C15.5  
 Report of captain Von Reyher. In: Ollech, Von – Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.209
7. Ollech, Von - Geschichte des Feldzugs p.208  
 Von Reyher passed the farm of Grand Jaldime; this is still in existence under the name of de Grange à la Dime.
8. Bewegungen und Gefecht des Detachements der Arriergarde 4ten Armeekorps etc. In: Militär Wochenblatt no.34 p.144  
 Account of colonel Von Ledebur. In: Thielen, H.von - Geschichte des Magdeburgischen Husaren-Regiments nr.10 p.19
- 9 Von Lettow Vorbeck reads here Chambry, but what is meant is the dialect form of St.Géry.  
 Cf. Von Pflugk Harttung In: GSA, HA VI,nr.V.1.p.36
10. In former Kriegsarchiv, nr.VI.C.3.II.205 In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von - Von Wavre bis Belle Alliance p.616 and in GSA, VI.1.p.36  
 The report was actually written by Von Reyher and signed by Von Ledebur.

<sup>11</sup> Pflugk Harttung, J.von In: GSA, VI HA,nr.V.1.p.37

12. Pflugk Harttung, J.von - Von Wavre bis Belle Alliance p.616

13. Cf. Account of captain Von Reyher, dated 6<sup>th</sup> July 1815. In: Ollech, Von – Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.208

Another source states that Von Ledebur would have learned already after 9 a.m. that the French were showing towards Gembloux. As a result he would have sent a company of infantry to reinforce the sentry; then he left with his detachment for Wavre when he learned the French had cut him off. Cf. Bewegungen und Gefecht des Detachements der Arriergarde 4ten Armeekorps etc. In: Militär Wochenblatt no.34 p.144

The fact that Von Ledebur learned about this presence at that time is confirmed by Von Ledebur himself, but he doesn't write about the reinforcement of the sentry. Cf. his account. In: Thielen, H.von - Geschichte des Magdeburgischen Husaren-Regiments nr.10 p.19

This claim is however impossible to maintain, otherwise Von Ledebur would have definitely have mentioned this presence in his reports; in fact, by 11.30 a.m. none of his patrols had returned to Mont Saint Guibert.

Later, as some of the French dragoons of Vincent were at or in the vicinity of Mont Saint Guibert, they were driven off by Von Falckenhausen's men of the 3<sup>rd</sup> regiment of Silesian Landwehr cavalry.

<sup>14</sup> It was in the vicinity of Mont Saint Guibert that a few hundred men of Exelmans had been encountered by major Von Falckenhausen; in the encounter, he took 28 men prisoner (cf. the Prussian flank-march).

15. Captain Von Reyher. In: Ollech, Von – Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.208

Colonel Von Ledebur. In: Thielen, H.von - Geschichte des Magdeburgischen Husaren-Regiments nr.10 p.19

Bewegungen und Gefecht des Detachements der Arriergarde 4ten Armeekorps etc. In: Militär Wochenblatt no.34 p.144

Bonnemains doesn't mention the action, but at that particular time Bonnemains was near Corbais.

16. Account of captain Von Reyher. In: Ollech, Von – Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.208

Colonel Von Ledebur. In: Thielen, H.von - Geschichte des Magdeburgischen Husaren-Regiments nr.10 p.19

Cf. map Ferraris. Capitaine mentions the farm the one of l'Auxel.

17. Cf Maps of Ferraris and Capitaine. Sometimes later the wood of Warlombrouit is referred to as the Bois de l'Auzelle. Nowadays one finds the name Bois de Lauzelle for the Bois de Warlombrouit; the Bois de Sarats has for the most part been cut down.

<sup>18</sup> Bewegungen und Gefecht des Detachements der Arriergarde etc. In: Militär Wochenblatt nr.34 1836 p.144

19. Cf. Captain Von Reyher. In: Ollech, Von – Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.208  
Colonel Von Ledebur. In: Thielen, H.von - Geschichte des Magdeburgischen Husaren-Regiments nr.10 p.20

Dunker, A. – Geschichte des Magdeburgischen Husaren-Regiments nr.10 p.12

The local tradition confirms there was an action in the fields near the low ground called l’Aurnwé at about 300 metres south of the farm of l’Auzel and north of La Baraque; also some men and horses would have been buried there. In: Mortier, A. - Au Blan Tchfau p.56-63

<sup>20</sup> Account of colonel Von Ledebur. In: Thielen, H.von Geschichte des Magdeburgischen Husaren-Regiments nr.10 p.20

<sup>21</sup> Cf. KA, VI.E.3.II.201 In: GSA, VI HA,nr.V.1.p.38

The message was sealed because of its importance. It was directed to St.Lambert through Wavre, as Von Ledebur couldn’t be sure where the headquarters might be.

<sup>22</sup> In: KA - VI.E.3.II.203 In: GSA, VI HA, nr.V.1.p.39

<sup>23</sup> Pflugk Harttung, J.von In: GSA, VI HA, nr.V.1.p.42

<sup>24</sup> Cf.Pflugk harttung, J.von Von Wavre bis Belle Alliance p.506

<sup>25</sup> Cf. original reports mentioned by Von Pflugk Harttung. In: Von Wavre bis Belle Alliance p.506

26. Cf. Account of colonel Von Ledebur. In: Thielen, H. von - Geschichte des Magdeburgischen Husaren-Regiments nr.10 p.20

GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.V.5B.p.3

Ardenne, A.von - Geschichte des Zieten’schen Husaren-Regiments p. 491

Beitzke, H. – Aus dem Leben des königlich Preussischen General-Leutenants Fr.von Sohr p.137

<sup>27</sup> GSA, VPH-HA,VI nr.V.5B p.4-5

28. Report of lieutenant colonel Von Reckow. In: Schreiber, H. - Geschichte des Infanterie Regiments Von Borcke (4.Pommerschen) nr.21 p. 105

Lieutenant colonel Von Reckow (commander of the 21st regiment) led the 8th brigade of Von Langen, after the fall of Von Langen in the battle of Ligny.

According to Von Eberts, there were three battalions, the 2nd and 3rd battalion of the 23rd regiment and the 3rd battalion of the 21st regiment. Cf. Eberts, G.W. von - Hundertjährige

Geschichte etc. p.206

Dunker, A. – Geschichte des Magdeburgischen Husaren-Regiments nr.10 p.12

<sup>29</sup> Report of lieutenant colonel Von Reckow. In: Schreiber, H. Geschichte des Infanterie Regiments Von Borcke (4.Pommerschen) nr.21 p. 105

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Eck, Von - Geschichte des 2.Westfälischen Husaren Regiments nr.11 p.148-149  
GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.V.5B.p.6

31.Von Ollech, Von – Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.208-209

Damitz, Von - Geschichte des Feldzugs von 1815 p.260-261

Schreiber, H. - Geschichte des Infanterie-Regiments Von Borcke (4.Pommerschen) nr.21 p.104

<sup>32</sup> Bericht über das Arriergarden Gefecht bei Wavre den 18. Juni 1815 In: Militär Wochenblatt, 1836 p.2

<sup>33</sup> Bewegungen und Gefecht des Detachements der Arriergarde etc. In: Militär Wochenblatt nr.34 1836 p.144

Bericht über das Arriergarden Gefecht bei Wavre den 18. Juni 1815 In: Militär Wochenblatt, 1836 p.2

34. Ollech, Von - Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.208-209

Colonel Von Ledebur. In: Thielen, H.von - Geschichte des Magdeburgischen Husaren-Regiments nr.10 p.20

Von Ledebur mentions he held his position for about 1.5 hour, and this corresponds to the period 1.30 p.m. to 3 p.m.

It was around 2.30 p.m. that Von Reyher had assembled his full force near the farm of l'Auzel.

35. Baron Bonnemains. Cf. his account. In: SHD, nr.C15.5

According to colonel Simon Lorie, the 3<sup>rd</sup> corps had been fully assembled at Walhain by 11 a.m. In: Quelques documents etc. p.15

Lieutenant Le Gouest states Grouchy found the vanguard of Vandamme at 4.5 or 6 kilometres from Gembloux. In: Grouchy, G.de - Mémoires du maréchal de Grouchy Vol.V p.142

36. The distance between Nil-Saint-Vincent and l'Auzel is a bit more than six kilometres, taking the average speed as 3 kilometres per hour.

2 p.m. is given as time of arrival at La Baraque by general Berthézène. In: Souvenirs p.391

<sup>37</sup> Both Lefol and Berthézène confirm the long pause held near Walhain.

In: Souvenirs sur le retour de l'empereur Napoleon de l'île d'Elbe et sur la campagne de 1815

p.81

In: Souvenirs militaires de la République et de l'Empire p.393

38. Cf. Letter of Exelmans to Gérard. In: Dernières observations p.13-14

39. Grouchy. In: Réfutations du livre Gourgaud etc. In: Mémoires du maréchal Grouchy Vol.V p.121

Von Ollech asserts it was a move through Vieux Sart to St.Anne (two kilometres west of Dion le Mont). Cf. Ollech, Von - Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.209

Bonnemains doesn't recall this move but claims the corps was kept in reserve for the remainder of the day from the moment Vandamme attacked the Prussian rear-guard. Cf. Baron Bonnemains in his journal. In: SHD, nr.C15.5

<sup>40</sup> Original in Kriegsarchiv, nr. VI E.3.II 207. In: GSA, VPH-HA VI, V.5b. p.16

41. Bericht über das Arriergarden Gefecht bei Wavre den 18.Juni 1815 In: Militär Wochenblatt, 1836 p.2

Bonnemains claims the French infantry made an actual attack, but this isn't confirmed by any of the main German historians.

F.F.Herpigny, former mayor of Wavre, claims the French launched an attack in which colonel Marion of the 19th regiment of infantry was killed. However, this regiment was no member of the corps of Vandamme. Cf. Sonmereyn, A.Ch. - Les combats de Wavre des 18 et 19 Juin 1815 p.68

42. Von Damitz believes it was between 3 and 4 p.m. In: Geschichte des Feldzugs von 1815 p.261

F.F.Herpigny asserts it was after 4 p.m. Cf. Sonmereyn, A.Ch. - Les combats de Wavre des 18 et 19 Juin 1815 p.68

According to another source, the retreat of the Prussians started around 2.30 p.m. Cf. Bericht über das Arriergarden Gefecht bei Wavre den 18.Juni 1815 In: Militär Wochenblatt, 1836 p.2

<sup>43</sup>. Bewegungen und Gefecht des Detachements der Arriergarde etc. In: Militär Wochenblatt nr.34 1836 p.144

43. Ollech, Von – Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.209

Damitz, Von - Geschichte des Feldzugs von 1815 p.261

According to Von Damitz the 3rd battalion of the 1st Pommeranian Landwehr led by major Von Krüger would have distinguished itself during this retreat, but there are no indications this battalion actually participated here in any action. Cf. Damitz, Von - Geschichte des Feldzugs von 1815 p.261

<sup>44</sup> Busse, Von - Geschichte des Königlich Preussischen 23.Infanterie-Regiments etc. p.179-

180 Von Busse claims it was the fuselier battalion of the 21st regiment, but this battalion was not present in the campaign until the 20th of June. It was probably the battalion which had been in front of the wood before, the 1st.

<sup>45</sup> Busse, Von - Geschichte des Königlich Preussischen 23.Infanterie-Regiments etc. p.180

<sup>46</sup> Eberts, G.W. von - Hundertjährige Geschichte etc. p.207

<sup>47</sup> Busse, Von - Geschichte des Königlich Preussischen 23.Infanterie-Regiments etc. p.180-181

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Bericht über das Arriergarden gefecht bei Wavre den 18.Juni 1815. In: Militär Wochenblatt, 1836 p.3

Lieutenant colonel Von Reckow writes about French gunfire in his report. In: Schreiber, H. Geschichte des Infanterie-Regiments Von Borcke (4.Pommerschen) nr.21 p.105

49. General Von Borcke himself. In: KA, VI.E.22 In: GSA, HA-VI, nr.V.8.p.33

Ollech, Von – Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.209

Major Von Holleben (commander of the fuselier battalion of the 8th regiment). In: Aus den hinterlassenen Papiere p.141

Thielen, H.von Geschichte des Magdeburgischen Husaren-Regiments nr.10 p.17

According to Von Ledebur his detachment suffered during this retreat severely from French canister fire. Cf. the report of Von Ledebur himself. In: Thielen, H.von - Geschichte des Magdeburgischen Husaren-Regiments nr.10 p.20

50. Bericht über das Arriergarden Gefecht bei Wavre den 18. Juni 1815 In: Militär Wochenblatt, 1836 p.2

Eck, Von - Geschichte des 2.Westfälischen Husaren Regiments nr.11 p.150

According to Julius von Pflugk Harttung, Von Sohr had the bridge broken and the mill set on fire. Cf. GSA, VPH-HA,VI nr.V.5B.p.8

What became of the 1st battalion is not known, but it can be presumed that it rejoined its brigade later.

<sup>51</sup> Ardenne, A.von Geschichte des Zieten'schen Husaren-Regiments p. 491 The regiment would have lost 3 hussars and 8 horse killed and 2 hussars wounded.

52. Grouchy in his questionnaire to adc Bella. In: Relation succincte 4e série p.45

Grouchy. In: Relation succincte p.35

Colonel Bloqueville. In: Mémoires du maréchal Grouchy Vol.IV, p.148

53. Cf. Ph.Gerbet (member of the 37<sup>th</sup> regiment of the line, division Lefol). In: Souvenirs p.18 Mémoires pour servir etc. p.155

Vandamme himself says it was 2 p.m. Cf. his letter dated 9th February 1830 to Simon Lorière. In: SHAT, nr.C15/5

The same hour is mentioned by lieutenant Desnoyers (of the artillery of the 3<sup>rd</sup> corps) in his letter dated 21st June 1815, cited by Sonmereyn. In: Les combats de Wavre des 18 et 19 Juin 1815 p.66

Grouchy claims it was between 1 and 2 p.m. In: Observations sur la relation etc. De l'influence p.139

54. Grouchy Relation succincte etc. p.35

Grouchy in his questionnaire to advc Bella p.45

Cf. Fragments historiques etc. Barthélémy. (1829) In: Mémoires du maréchal de Grouchy. Vol.V p.313

In: Fragments historiques etc. De l'influence etc. p.26

Colonel Le Sénécal. Statement dated 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1830. In: SHAT, nr.C15/5

Colonel De Bloqueville. In: Mémoires du maréchal de Grouchy Vol.V p.148 and SHAT, nr.C15/5

55. Grouchy. In: Relation succincte etc. p.35

Zenowicz. Déposition etc. p.30-31

Zenowicz describes how he found Grouchy, with general Gérard, in a house (which was transformed into an ambulance). In the context of the advance of Grouchy and his forces at that moment, the point referred to is most probably l'Auzel or possibly La Baraque.

Le Sénécal believes the place Zenowicz describes was La Baraque. In: Encore Waterloo etc. p.24

Sonmereyn believes the house actually to be the former *ferme aux Poules*, opposite the church of Bierges [?]. This farm would have been torn down for the construction of the road Brussels – Namur. I have not been able to trace this spot. Cf. Sonmereyn, A. Les combats etc. p.56

Grouchy incorrectly states he got the order between 12.30 and 1 p.m. Cf. his questionnaire to Bella. In: Relation succincte 4e série p.43

Colonel Le Sénécal also claims this impossible hour of arrival of the order at 12.20 o'clock. In: Encore Waterloo p.22

Cf. his statement dated 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1830. In: SHAT, nr.C15/5

<sup>56</sup> General Vichery. Cf. his letter to Gérard. In: Lettre de monsieur le maréchal comte Gérard etc. p.5

Captain Thouvenin of the artillery of the 4<sup>th</sup> corps states he was sent on a mission to investigate the Dyle near the mill. He found out that it was wide and had low, marshy banks and adjoining fields. He reported this back his superior, general Baltus. In: Mémoires du maréchal de Grouchy Vol.V p.139

<sup>57</sup> Bella himself. He speaks of Limale though (cf. observations). In: Questionnaire of Grouchy. In: Relation succincte 4me série p.53

Both divisions of Pécheux and Vichery had halted at Walhain between about 1.30 and 3 p.m. Captain Francois (30<sup>th</sup> regiment of the line, division of Pécheux) speaks of a period between 1 and 3 p.m. In: Journal etc. p.887-888

As they resumed their march, the first units of Pécheux reached the crossroads about one kilometre south-east of Mannil (which lies about 2000 metres beyond l'Auzel) around 5.30 p.m. and this is where they halted again (see below). It meant that the division of Hulot had a head-start of about 1½ hours to them, as this division got there by 4 p.m. (see below).

Vichery's division formed the rear-guard of the 4<sup>th</sup> corps. He also claims his division was at La Baraque by 4.30 p.m., but this was later. Cf. Vichery's letter to Gérard. In: Lettre de monsieur le maréchal comte Gérard etc. p.5

Some participants of the campaign, even Grouchy himself, situate this return of Gérard and Grouchy to La Baraque at a later hour that day, so that both men left the front-line at Wavre for some time. Apart from the fact that it would be for persons of such high rank absurd to leave their posts, the distance from Wavre to La Baraque is about three times larger as the one between l'Auzel and La Baraque. More importantly, it is Grouchy himself who confirms our version of the events in his report for Napoleon, dated 20<sup>th</sup> June.

The fact that the ride of both men took place much earlier as is often represented is proven by Gérard's statement that the attack on the mill of Bierges took place long after the moment he and Grouchy had gone to La Baraque.

Cf. Gérard. In a letter to colonel Simon Lorière. In: SHAT, nr.C15/5

Colonel Le Sénécal (statement dated 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1818) and De Blqueville. In: SHAT,nr.C15/5  
Grouchy. In: Réfutations du livre de Gourgaud etc. In: Mémoires du maréchal de Grouchy Vol.V p.124

58. Cf. Grouchy. In: Questionnaire to adc Bella. In: Relation succincte 4me série p.37

Colonel Le Sénécal. Cf. his statement dated 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1830. In: SHAT, nr.C15/5

Hulot's division had been at Walhain around noon and around 3 p.m. at La Baraque. Around 4 p.m. it was passing in between the woods in its course towards Bierges, where it eventually arrived by 5 p.m. (see below).