

**B**eyond Gembloux, Von Hobe found the extreme rear-guard of Vandamme's corps. As Von Hobe advanced, he had two squadrons of the 6<sup>th</sup> regiment of Neumark dragoons in front, followed by the brigade of Von der Marwitz, horse battery nr.20, the brigade of Von Lottum and the two regiments of Kurmark Landwehr cavalry of the 3<sup>rd</sup> corps. <sup>1</sup>

As the French posts pulled off, they drew Von Hobe to a position where the extreme rear-guard had taken a brief position, just north of the village of Rhisnes. Here, Von der Marwitz launched a squadron of his 7<sup>th</sup> regiment of uhlans led by major Von Raven, but these received a volley from some French infantry from behind a hedge and halted. Despite their success, the French fell back to their main body which had in the meantime established itself on the plateau beyond the village, in front of the Bois Dortez and near the road which led through it towards Namur.

It consisted from left to right of the 20<sup>th</sup> regiment of dragoons, four guns and two squares of infantry (of Lefol's division) which had some cavalry between them. <sup>2</sup>

As Von der Marwitz saw this, he advanced with the 8<sup>th</sup> regiment of uhlans, led by count Dohna and led them around the village towards the French position. It was his intention to manoeuvre to his right, and from there to wheel to the left against the French. Yet, as this manoeuvre did not materialize, he asked Dohna to lead the column, while Von der Marwitz himself kept it in formation further to the rear. As the Prussian uhlans approached the French dragoons, they awaited them in rear of a hollow road.

Though their horses were tired and their speed not very high, two squadrons of the 8th regiment of uhlans which were in advance of the other units charged the French. The 2nd squadron, which was in front, forced the French dragoons back, despite the carbine-fire which was unleashed by the horsemen. <sup>3</sup>

As Von der Marwitz witnessed the uhlans' success, he ordered the squadrons of the 7<sup>th</sup> regiment of uhlans led by major Von Raven and Von Preusser, the 4<sup>th</sup> squadron of the 8<sup>th</sup> regiment of uhlans and a part of the 12<sup>th</sup> regiment of Saxon hussars to support them. In this advance, the squadron of the 8<sup>th</sup> regiment of uhlans for some reason suddenly halted and in this way hindered the hussars behind them. Initially, the squadron did not hear the signals to resume its charge, and when it did it did so in a trot, but soon went over in a step.

In its initial success, the Prussian cavalry had driven off the French cavalry. Yet, as Dohna's charge started to stagnate, Von der Marwitz now immediately engaged Von Preusser's squadron. Major Von Raven with his squadron followed in his wake, as well as the two squadrons of dragoons led by Von Borcke as a further support.

Eventually, Von der Marwitz was able to commit the Saxon hussars. These charged one of the squares which was placed to the right of the French position. The attempt proved in vain, as the horsemen were repulsed. Yet, the second charge succeeded as the French panicked and they were just able to find protection in the Bois Dortez. <sup>4</sup>As the Saxon hussars saw the French soldiers flee into the wood, they saw the other square move towards them, covered by some cavalry.

In the meantime, Von Lottum had advanced with the 3rd squadron of the 7<sup>th</sup> regiment of dragoons and the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> squadron of the 9<sup>th</sup> regiment of hussars from Rhisnes towards the French right flank. <sup>5</sup>

The French infantry got cover from a battery which opened fire from an open field near the edge of the wood, and it was this battery which now caused high losses amongst the Prussian dragoons. Though these men came to a halt near the edge of the wood, both squadrons of the 9<sup>th</sup> regiment of hussars still advancing now turned to the left and were now led by major Von Hellwig to the French guns. Despite the heavy canister fire, the Prussian hussars of the 1<sup>st</sup> squadron managed to take two guns; a third gun, a howitzer - after the French had carried it off for some distance - was taken by lieutenant Nippe, who spiked it on the spot as he had no

means to carry it the rear. A fourth gun was taken by lieutenant Von Rettberg of the 4<sup>th</sup> platoon of the 1<sup>st</sup> squadron of the 7<sup>th</sup> regiment of dragoons.<sup>6</sup> It was not long after though that dragoons of the 20<sup>th</sup> regiment retook two of these guns; in the act they also took an enemy howitzer.<sup>7</sup> Grouchy, having been informed of the confrontation near La Falise, realised the risk for the 4<sup>th</sup> corps of being seriously compromised by the enemy, in case Vandamme would pull off towards the Sambre too soon. Grouchy decided to act and sent the full division of Vallin, headed by the 1<sup>st</sup> regiment of hussars (led by colonel Clary), to the plateau of La Falise in order to disengage Vandamme's rear-guard.<sup>8</sup>

The moment Von Lottum and Von der Marwitz were still engaged with the French cavalry and infantry, Clary was able to intervene in the *mêlée* in such a way to gain time for the units of Vandamme's rear-guard to pull back into and beyond the Bois Dortez.<sup>9</sup> It was not only because of this intervention but also due to the state of the area that the Prussian cavalry refrained from a further pursuit. At that moment, a confrontation between the vanguard of Pirch's corps and the 4<sup>th</sup> French corps took place at the Namur road.

During the rear-guard action at La Falise, the 4<sup>th</sup> corps continued its course along the Namur-road to Namur. While his rear-guard was bombarded by Prussian artillery and guided on its flanks by Von Sohr's cavalry, general Vichery was able to pull his forces back in safety by smart defensive manoeuvring, without getting actually engaged.<sup>10</sup>

It was near Belgrade that the French made a stand by establishing some French guns, covered by a strong line of skirmishers. Yet, the enemy gunfire proved superior, and soon after three French guns were silenced. Von Sohr at the same time pushed through and fell upon the 30<sup>th</sup> regiment of the line, which was formed in two squares. As it fell back *pie à pie*, it drove back Von Sohr's men several times.<sup>11</sup>



The *chaussée* at Belgrade.

As the 4<sup>th</sup> corps had entered Namur through the *porte de Bruxelles*, Teste's division was pulled from its position north of the road on the heights between Belgrade and St.Servais, to one on the other side, near Salzinne as an extra and last precaution to block the access to the narrow entrance towards Namur here as well. As he got there, Teste sent two battalions (one of the 8<sup>th</sup> regiment of light infantry, plus one of the 75<sup>th</sup> of the line) into the city.<sup>12</sup>

It was now Vandamme's turn to enter the city through the same gate, while coming from La

Papeterie and St.Servais. Vandamme's movements were eventually near Salzinne not only covered by Teste, but also by Lefol's division and the brigade of Lagarde of Berthézène's division.<sup>13</sup> Here, units of both Von der Marwitz and Von Sohr attempted to drive the French away, but this proved impossible, as the squares gave each other mutual support in their volleys and this in combination with fire unleashed from favourably placed guns.<sup>14</sup> Meanwhile, the large column of both the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> corps moved through Namur towards the defile of Dinant. By now it was about 5 p.m. and as Von Krafft's brigade had arrived on the spot, general Pirch I decided to attack the French rear-guard with this infantry.<sup>15</sup> To do so, Pirch formed the brigade in three columns of attack. The first – which moved along the north side of the road towards a small wood here- was formed of the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion of the 9<sup>th</sup> regiment, the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the 26<sup>th</sup> regiment and the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion of the 1<sup>st</sup> Elbe Landwehr-infantry regiment, led by major Schmidt.<sup>16</sup>

The centre column advanced immediately along the left and right side of the road to fall head-on upon the French rear-guard. It was composed of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion of the 26<sup>th</sup> regiment, the 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion of the 9<sup>th</sup> regiment (this part was led by colonel Von Reuss), the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the 1<sup>st</sup> regiment Elbe Landwehr (this part was led by colonel Von Bismarck), the whole under the command of general Von Krafft himself. The column was accompanied by a battery of artillery.<sup>17</sup>

A third column, composed of the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the 9<sup>th</sup> regiment, the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the 14<sup>th</sup> regiment [<sup>18</sup>] and the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the 23<sup>rd</sup> regiment, and led by major Von Petery, advanced to the right of the road, towards the Sambre to find a ford so as to cut off the communication of the French.<sup>19</sup>

After a brief preceding bombardment, the columns were launched to the attack. In the left column the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the 26<sup>th</sup> regiment got the cover of the Jäger, led by captain Von Bardeleben, in front as skirmishers. During the advance over the open terrain, the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion suffered of the French shell-fire. At the same time, the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion of the 9<sup>th</sup> Kolberg regiment extended itself to the right of the fusiliers and the Jäger. Further to the rear, the battery advanced, as well as both musketeer battalions of the same regiment.

Still, this was not enough to meet the strength of the French rear-guard: initially these troops were supported by four platoons of the fusiliers, but soon colonel Von Reuss came to the conclusion that he had to bring the whole fusilier battalion in extended order. At the same time, both musketeer battalions of the 26<sup>th</sup> regiment moved to the right of the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion of the 9<sup>th</sup> regiment of Kolberg infantry and with this manoeuvre, the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion of 1<sup>st</sup> regiment of Elbe Landwehr infantry came in the second line.<sup>20</sup> To the right, the Prussian column was unable to accomplish its purpose.<sup>21</sup>

It was shortly after the Prussian attack that Vandamme evacuated his position and fell back through the suburb of Namur.<sup>22</sup> It was there that the Prussian artillery started to bombard the French again. As it had silenced the French guns after about 30 minutes, the Prussians were about to storm the position, but it was right at that moment that the French fell back into Namur itself. As Vandamme had done so through the *porte de Bruxelles*, Teste eventually did so by the *porte de Louvain*. In pursuing the French, the Prussians of the left and central column now entered the suburb, having their skirmishers and Jäger-detachments in front, and approached Namur in their turn.

Since ancient times, the city of Namur – situated on the left bank of the confluent of the rivers Sambre and Meuse- was dominated by its citadel, and in 1815 this was no different. Yet, by then, the city's fortifications themselves were in a state of decay. Parts were torn down, while others were heavily overgrown or converted into pedestrian areas. With this, they had lost their military power.<sup>23</sup>

The city citadel was located on the right bank of the Sambre, in the confluence of both rivers; it was here that the sole two bridges over the rivers were located: one connected the city with the citadel over the Sambre, while the other, further south, connected the citadel with Jambes, on the right bank of the Meuse. So, for the French, to reach the defile of Dinant, they had to traverse the city to the south, cross the Sambre, pass along the citadel and from there cross the Meuse. Access to the city was possible through three main gates. Though in a state of decay too, the *porte de Bruxelles* did so from the road which came from Temploux, from the north-west.<sup>24</sup> Some 500 meters further to the east, the *porte de Louvain* gave access to the road which came from Louvain.<sup>25</sup> The gate itself was composed of a high and massive building, flanked by two half-round towers; in its front was a bridge covering three arches, plus a drawbridge. A third access point to the city was located at the bank of the Meuse, further east. It was called the *porte de Nicolas*, but the gate itself had been removed after a bombardment in 1695.<sup>26</sup>



The *porte de Louvain* during its demolition in 1862.

The ultimate defence of the city was assigned by Grouchy and Vandamme to the division of Teste. His task was to hold it as long as was necessary for the whole of Grouchy's detachment to reach the right bank of the river Meuse.<sup>27</sup> Grouchy had calculated this to be until about 6 p.m.<sup>28</sup> The task proved not easy as the city lay virtually open due to the poor state of the defence line around it.

Before he actually entered into Namur with the majority of his forces, Teste had sent one battalion of the 8<sup>th</sup> regiment of light infantry and one of the 75<sup>th</sup> regiment of the line there (see above). Of the last battalion, five companies were placed on the bastion which overlooked the Sambre, two companies of grenadiers were placed at the *porte de Louvain*, while one company of voltigeurs was in observation on the heights of the citadel. The remainder of the division (five companies of the 75<sup>th</sup>, five companies of the 65<sup>th</sup> and two battalions of the 8<sup>th</sup> regiment of light infantry) were divided along the city walls and in the city itself.

Teste had no artillery available and had to make maximum use of his engineers, of whom captain Gueze was of great service. Where ramparts were open, they were barricaded as much as possible. The city gates were closed and its adjacent buildings reinforced and loop-holed. Additionally, the engineers started preparations for barricading the bridge over the Sambre.<sup>29</sup>

The French had barely installed themselves, or the Prussians emerged from the suburb. General Pirch I realised that the enemy could not have the intention to keep to the city at all costs. The main purpose for its occupation was to cover the retreat of the convoys and the forces into the defile of the Meuse, between the woods of Marlagne, Geronsart and Damée, offering the enemy a protection for a further retreat into France.

Because of this, plus the fatigue of his own forces, Pirch decided not to make an all-out attack upon the city. Instead, he sent a swarm of skirmishers against the Brussels-gate and detachments to positions in front of the Louvain-gate and the one of Saint Nicolas. The one opposite the last gate was the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion of the Elbe Landwehr regiment.<sup>30</sup> By now, it was about 6 p.m.<sup>31</sup>

Despite their fatigue and instructions from above, the Prussian advance was swift because of the enthusiasm of the soldiers.<sup>32</sup> The former central and left column, having traversed the suburb of Namur, now arrived in front of the Brussels-gate, covered by their skirmishers and Jäger detachments. However, before getting there, the men had to cross an open area of about 100 meters wide. It was here that they got the cross-fire of the French from the gate, the walls and an old redoubt some 200 meters away to their left. Having some lost some officers (like colonel Von Bismarck, major Von Kerkering, major Von Dorsch, captain Von der Mosel, 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant Von Reuss I and 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant Schneel) and about 60 men, they retreated to the safety of the street of the suburb they had come from.

Before attacking the walls again, colonel Von Reuss decided to drive the French out of the redoubt. As a result, he sent out the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> companies of the 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion of the 26<sup>th</sup> regiment led by 1<sup>st</sup> lieutenant Von Seydlitz II, as well as some skirmishers of the same battalion, led by lieutenant Schmedding, to his left. Initially they succeeded in approaching the redoubt unseen under the cover of the houses and later by using some favourable inequalities in the ground. As soon as the Prussians reached the glacis of the redoubt the French opened a sharp fire. Now, while the 9<sup>th</sup> company kept its position, while firing, on the glacis, the 10<sup>th</sup> company stormed the redoubt by crossing the dry moat and climbing its parapets. Here they came to close quarters with the French infantry, but these were in low numbers and evacuated the site.<sup>33</sup>

However, after some time, Von Seydlitz had to give up the redoubt again, even though he had his men shelter in its moat. The reason was the strong French musketry-fire from the walls of the town; now he led his men back to the fusilier-battalion of his regiment.

Meanwhile, the musketeers of the 26<sup>th</sup> regiment had attempted to storm the gate with ramrods under strong French fire several times, but all efforts were in vain. Here, colonel Von Reuss, captain Von Radecke, lieutenant Behrendt and lieutenant Wucherer I had got wounded.<sup>34</sup>

The role of the battalions of the 1<sup>st</sup> Elbe Landwehr regiment and the 9<sup>th</sup> regiment Kolberg infantry here is not entirely clear. Of the first regiment however it is known that the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the 1<sup>st</sup> Elbe landwehr infantry regiment, led by captain Von Borcke (after the death of major Von Jagow at Ligny), was about to leave the protective lane in the suburb of Namur (which was covered by a strong wall to the right) when it was recalled: just at the time it was about to storm the gate, Pirch I sent a counter-order to halt the attack and get his men back, out of the French fire.<sup>35</sup> The order to fall back did not reach the skirmishers of the musketeer battalions of the 26<sup>th</sup> regiment: they had a favourable position in a sandpit near the gate and fired with success on the French on top of the parapets.<sup>36</sup> At the *porte de Bruxelles*, it was also the French lieutenant Borremans of the 75<sup>th</sup> regiment who distinguished himself up to the last moment.<sup>37</sup>

The moment the Prussians approached Namur through its suburb from the west, a detachment of the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> company of the 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion of the 26<sup>th</sup> regiment, as well as the Jäger detachment of the brigade Von Krafft, was detached through the suburb towards Louvain to assault the gate there. The Prussians here, led by colonel Von Zastrow, commander ad interim of the brigade, carried out at least two attacks. In the first one, Von Zastrow tried to blow up the barricaded gate, but the attempt stranded upon the murderous fire coming from the walls and houses.

In the second action Von Zastrow, accompanied by his adjutant, lieutenant Von Goltdammer, and under cover from musketry-fire, aimed at passing along the wall from the Louvain-gate to the left to find an entrance into the city further east. While doing so, Von Zastrow was hit by a bullet in his chest, upon which lieutenant Von Goltdammer asked for the assistance of

lieutenant Neumann, the adjutant of the regiment, to lead Von Zastrow back out of the firing line. Goltdammer reported the loss to general Von Krafft, who then was in front of the *porte de Louvain*.<sup>38</sup>

The attack also failed because of a lack of material to storm the gate and the ramparts. While some of the soldiers tried to collect these, a captain named Von Bredow entrenched the houses opposite the gate and maintained his fire from there. Meanwhile, the detachment here was protected on its left flank by the detachment of Jäger led by lieutenant Von Gontard (after the fall of lieutenant Von Grevenitz).<sup>39</sup>

General Pirch now decided to pull his forces out of the firing-line and sent out his adjutant captain Von Wilissen to spread this news. The only forces which were kept there were the skirmishers and a part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion of the 9<sup>th</sup> regiment led by lieutenant Von Sacken, which maintained its position in the low ground in front of the *porte de Louvain*.<sup>40</sup>

Von Krafft's brigade was now relieved by the one of Von Brause which had just arrived. He instructed him, as well as Von Sohr, to enclose the city; the remaining units of the 2<sup>nd</sup> corps which were further to the rear were to take bivouacs near Temploux.<sup>41</sup> By now, it was about 6 p.m.<sup>42</sup> As a result, Von Brause placed the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the 22<sup>nd</sup> regiment in a covered position about 400 paces opposite the Louvain-gate and the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Elbe Landwehr-infantry opposite the Brussels-gate.<sup>43</sup> The main body of the brigade (four battalions of musketeers), led by colonel Von Schon (commander ad interim of the 7<sup>th</sup> brigade) came in position in rear of the suburb of Namur.<sup>44</sup>



The tombstone of colonel Von Zastrow.

Not long after Von Brause had taken these measures, he rode out to the 3rd battalion of the 22<sup>nd</sup> regiment to assess the situation there. Just as he got there, a rumour spread that the enemy was breaking out. Believing this news, Von Brause immediately ordered the commander of the battalion, major Von Jochens, to exploit this situation in order to penetrate into the city. At the same time, Von Brause promised Von Jochens that four battalions, two squadrons and half a battery of artillery would follow in his wake. As major Von Jochens reached the *porte de Louvain* with his battalion he found skirmishers of Von Krafft in full action. In conjunction with them, Von Jochens attacked the gate, upon which the enemy abandoned it, as well as the adjoining buildings. As the Prussian soldiers were able to break into a small custom-house by cracking a window, they were able to open iron gate from within.<sup>45</sup> It was now running towards 7 p.m.

It had been one hour before that the last units of Grouchy's main column had left the city; now the last units which Teste had left at the outer ring of the city pulled back as swiftly as they could towards the bridge over the Sambre.<sup>46</sup> The time the Prussians needed to break into the city enabled the French extreme rear-guard, consisting of the grenadiers of the 75<sup>th</sup> regiment to leave the city in safety. Here, they crossed the river by using the parapets of the bridge, which had meanwhile been barricaded by a detachment of engineers. These engineers, as the very last

rear-guard, had entrenched themselves in the adjoining buildings. As soon as the Prussians came in sight, they unleashed a sharp musketry-fire and then went back, while skirmishing, towards the *porte de la Plante* (the one of Jambes and Dinant). From the citadel, a company of voltigeurs of the 65<sup>th</sup> regiment did the same.<sup>47</sup> Here, before evacuating the site for good, they barricaded the street and had set fire into the gate and its adjoining houses with the aid of burning bundles of branches, straw and wood which had been covered in tar.<sup>48-49</sup>

From all sides, Prussian units now streamed into the city. At the *porte de Louvain*, it were the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the 22<sup>nd</sup> regiment led by major Von Jochens, followed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion of the 9<sup>th</sup> regiment, led by major Von Luckowicz.<sup>50</sup> At the same time, major Von Schmidt (commander of the 9<sup>th</sup> regiment) had penetrated into Namur with part of the 6<sup>th</sup> brigade through the Brussels-gate.<sup>51</sup> Major Von Mirbach (commander of the 14<sup>th</sup> regiment of the brigade of Von Brause) and Von Lindern (commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion 2<sup>nd</sup> regiment Elbe Landwehr-infantry) advanced with the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion 2<sup>nd</sup> regiment Elbe Landwehr-infantry in closed columns through the city, which was occupied right away.<sup>52</sup>

As the Prussians reached the *porte de la Plante*, the French had already gone. They had left the city here by 8 p.m.<sup>53</sup> The total losses Teste had suffered in the defence of the city amounted to 62 men.<sup>54</sup> Due to the lack of cover, the fierce French resistance, and the impetuosity of the men, Prussian casualties had been extremely high: after 90 minutes, Pirch's corps had lost 1646 men.<sup>55</sup> To complete the occupation of the city, major Von Schmidt took, at the head of his 9<sup>th</sup> regiment, the command at the gate of Dinant, while major Von Jochens did the same with the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion 22<sup>nd</sup> regiment at the bridge over the Sambre. The remaining forces of the 7<sup>th</sup> brigade, as well as some battalions of the 6<sup>th</sup> brigade, were placed by general Von Brause on the market-place in the city centre.<sup>56</sup>

### **Grouchy's retreat and the Prussian pursuit. Observations.**

Grouchy's situation after the loss of the army at Mont Saint Jean was grave. Beyond Wavre and the Dyle, he was now in complete isolation of the remains of the Armée du Nord, which was supposed to be by now south of the river Sambre. At the same time, the victorious enemy was on his flank and thus able to cut him off by manoeuvring south-east. Additionally, Grouchy felt he was not strong enough to make a diversion. Weighing this situation, it was through Namur that he chose to pull out from the Netherlands back to France.

This route would not only lead him along the enemy's flank, it would also lead him through a familiar territory. Other than that, it was the shortest way to get to Namur, a place which allowed a cover by both the Sambre and the Meuse for a further retreat upon Givet.

Being faced with Prussian forces in his rear (towards Chapelle Saint Lambert) and in his front (towards Ottenbourg – St.Achtenrode), Grouchy's idea for the retreat was one in two columns, of which the one on the right would move first, while the one on the left would act as a rear-guard against Thielmann at Wavre until late in the evening. It didn't work that way though as Vandamme set his forces in motion not long after Vichery had done.

Grouchy had good reasons to take extra care of the column on the right as it also included the wounded and convoys, which would slow it down. At least in its initial stages, it also suffered from disorder.

Grouchy's fear for Prussian forces as potentially coming from Chapelle Saint Lambert so as to penetrate between both columns by crossing the Dyle at Limale, proved unfounded though. Such a stalemate was imminent the next day near La Falise, but the situation was timely corrected by Grouchy himself. Vandamme's premature retreat upon Namur then had compromised the other column of the 4<sup>th</sup> corps for a moment. Eventually, all forces converged



as it was planned: as the 4<sup>th</sup> corps had moved into the city, the 3<sup>rd</sup> corps followed, assisted by the division Teste. By skilful manoeuvres of this division, as well as by the rear-guard of Vichery, the French did not suffer significant casualties as they entered into Namur.

And what was more, the way Teste organized the defence of Namur made it impossible for the Prussians to push it out of the city just like that. In fact, its firepower was also such that it inflicted high losses to the enemy. The French even used bayonets to defend the city.<sup>57</sup>

Grouchy's retreat to France was crowned by a resounding success, but this was not Grouchy's merit alone. Obviously, the speed at which it was carried out is remarkable as the French were driven by a single and unambiguous focus: to leave enemy territory as soon as possible. Having said that, the success was yet also possible because of the lack of a vigorous pursuit by the Prussian army and this was caused by multiple causes.<sup>58</sup>

The moment the battle of Waterloo had come to an end and the French army was in full retreat along the road to Charleroi, the Prussian leadership saw a chance to cut off Grouchy from his line of retreat which was assumed to be through Namur. Presuming he stood at Wavre with the French in his front, Gneisenau ordered Thielmann towards midnight to go over into the offensive. At the same time, parts of the 2<sup>nd</sup> corps were sent to Mellery in an attempt to intercept Grouchy from there.<sup>59</sup>

Pirch's movements to Mellery were slow, but because of the fatigue of the men, the nightly hour and the state of the field (he had to pass the Lasne, the Dyle and the Thyle), this was to be expected. Less so, was the fact that Pirch basically took up an observation position at Mellery. Yet, his observations and intelligence there proved highly insufficient as even during the afternoon of the 19<sup>th</sup> of June he hadn't received any confirmation about a French withdrawal from Wavre. Misled by the intelligence of Von Borcke and by his patrols towards Mont Saint Guibert, it was possible for Grouchy to pass along Pirch's position virtually unnoticed.

The exact order for Pirch from headquarters has not been preserved, but apparently it was non-committal and not unambiguous to such a degree that Pirch wrote in his report "ich glaube unter diesen Umständen, die mir in der Marschdisposition gestattete Freiheit für heute dazu benutzen zu müssen, dass ich den Abmarsch des Marschalls Grouchy abwarte, um möglichst nachtheilig auf ihn zu wirken." Clearly, Pirch was only to act in case he could be fairly sure he could cut Grouchy off.

In this situation, the head-start Pirch had had in time upon Grouchy was neutralized by his passivity and very long halt at Mellery. Due to the large distance and enemy presence, coordination with Thielmann was very hard indeed, but at least Pirch could have surveyed large parts of the right bank of the Dyle to find out about the presence of enemy forces and draw his conclusions.

The moment he learned about the French presence beyond Gemboux, Pirch suddenly acted swiftly to gain the French rear-guard. Apparently, he saw a chance there to do damage to the French. By that time though, Prussian high command had shifted its priority fully to the utter destruction of Napoleon's main army. Resulting, it had ordered Pirch to move his forces to Thuin, and to forget about Grouchy, leaving it in the hands of Thielmann.

Pirch decided not to comply with the order which he received by 3 p.m. Though he realized that Grouchy would not go for an all-out defence of Namur and that he would not be able to overtake his forces west of this city, he pursued the French towards Namur and even launched an offensive against it. Pirch might have been encouraged by the presence of Thielmann upon his left flank, but there is no excuse for this senseless initiative, the more so as Blücher had told him that morning to refrain from any further pursuit. Senseless as it already was, Pirch's idle attempt to cross the Sambre so as to try to cut off the French near the citadel couldn't add anything to it, if this would have added anything at all.<sup>60</sup>

Had Grouchy slipped away right under Pirch's nose as he stood at Mellery, the same took place with Thielmann as he stood at St.Achtenrode and Ottenbourg. Blücher's order of the late hour of the 18<sup>th</sup> of June for Thielmann to attack Grouchy most probably didn't reach him because of the French presence around Wavre. If he would, he would have learned by the early morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> of June that Pirch I was sent to Mellery in an attempt to cut off Grouchy. It might have prompted him to act immediately, even though the order most probably was also not that unambiguous.<sup>61</sup>

The most probable scenario is that Thielmann received the order as yet somewhere during the evening of the 19<sup>th</sup> of June.<sup>62</sup> What caused Thielmann to wait so long for an offensive before he received this order remains unknown, even though he could safely presume that Grouchy would pull out after the defeat at Mont Saint Jean. In case this may not have been the actual reason, then the screen the French had left right in front of him had worked extremely well, but on the other hand it is hardly acceptable that Thielmann would have been that naive and cautious.<sup>63</sup>

Thielmann has been blamed for falling back to St.Achtenrode / Ottenbourg, as this made it impossible for Von Borcke to reconnect himself to the 3<sup>rd</sup> corps on the afternoon of the 19<sup>th</sup> of June.<sup>64</sup> It should be remarked however that the position of Von Borcke by that time was something which had been planned that way. In falling back towards Louvain, it was for Von Thielmann not more than logical to do so without taking account the one brigade of Von Borcke; after all, it was able to connect itself to the main army.

Other than that, the mere fact of the French presence between both Von Borcke and Von Thielmann simply prevented Von Borcke of doing so. As a result, isolated as he was, he kept stationary on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June east of Chapelle Saint Lambert. Von Borcke, in his turn, has been blamed for not advancing up to the Dyle (Limale) the moment the French had crossed this stream here in their retreat upon Namur. In itself, this could have been the right course to do, but on the other hand Von Borcke had no information about the 3<sup>rd</sup> corps whatsoever and thus it could very well have been an isolated action. It was for this reason that he sought communication with Thielmann first to coordinate his further actions with him.<sup>65</sup>

Von Thielmann had reported to Blücher by 1 a.m. on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June. At that moment, he was about to attack the French in their positions in front of the road to Brussels. Despite this presence, the messenger was able to reach Prussian headquarters at Genappe or Gosselies. For this reason, it is remarkable to observe that Blücher, by the morning of the 20<sup>th</sup> of June, was still not aware of Von Thielmann's retreat in the direction of Louvain and that he was uncertain where the 3<sup>rd</sup> corps exactly was. Either Von Thielmann simply did not report back to general headquarters, or somehow communication was broken.

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<sup>1</sup> The two squadrons of the 6<sup>th</sup> regiment Neumark dragoons were accompanied by some skirmishers. Cf. Marwitz, Von der - Aus dem Nachlasse etc. p.124

2. Von Damitz speaks of the same forces, but speaks of chasseurs à cheval instead of dragoons. In: Geschichte des Feldzugs von 1815 p.365-366

According to Von Förster there were four regiments of cavalry. Cf. Förster, Von - Geschichte des königlich preussischen Ulanen-Regiments Graf zu Dohna nr.8 p.75

The exact identity of the French infantry remains a mystery.

Cf. Berthézène. Souvenirs p.398-399

Lefol. Souvenirs etc. p.82-83

3. Cf. Förster, Von - Geschichte des königlich preussischen Ulanen-Regiments Graf zu Dohna nr.8 p.75

<sup>4</sup> Grouchy claims both squares resisted the enemy cavalry perfectly. Cf. his report dated 20<sup>th</sup> of June to Napoleon.

5. Cf. Bredow, Von - Geschichte des 2.Rheinischen Husaren-Regiments Nr.9 p.14

Förster, Von Geschichte des königlich preussischen Ulanen-Regiments Graf zu Dohna nr.8 p.75

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Bredow, Von Geschichte des 2.Rheinischen Husaren-Regiments Nr.9 p.14

Röder, C.von Erinnerungen etc. p. 328

Gneisenau mentions the taking of five guns by the count Dohna. Cf. his letter to ms. Von Clausewitz and the countess Dohna, dated 24<sup>th</sup> June 1815. In: Delbrück, H. Das Leben etc. Vol.IV p.536

Von der Marwitz claims the hussars found the two guns, which were actually taken some time before by the squadron of the 8<sup>th</sup> regiment of uhlans, led by major Von Horn. In: Aus dem Nachlass etc. p.127-128

7. Grouchy in his report to the emperor, dated 20<sup>th</sup> of June.

The two guns involved must have been the same as those Lefol refers to as taken back from the wood. In: Souvenirs etc. p.83

8. Cf. Grouchy, in his report dated 20<sup>th</sup> of June.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Grouchy, in his report dated 20<sup>th</sup> of June.

Förster, Von - Geschichte des königlich preussischen Ulanen-Regiments Graf zu Dohna nr.8 p.76

He confirms the arrival of French reinforcements in cavalry, even though he indicates some of them as having been cuirassiers.

<sup>10</sup> Hulot. Documents inédits etc. p.33

Marwitz, Von der – Aus dem Nachlass etc.p.128

11. Captain Francois (30<sup>th</sup> regiment line-infantry). In: Journal p.891-893

The fact that the Prussian cavalry, at least the 2<sup>nd</sup> regiment of Brandenburg hussars nr.3 came into action is confirmed by Von Ardenne. Cf. Ardenne, A.von - Geschichte des Zieten'schen Husaren-Regiments p. 494

<sup>12</sup> General Teste. In: Souvenirs p.243

13. Lieutenant Putigny (33rd regiment, division Berthézène). In: Le grognard Putigny p.172

14. Ph. Gerbet (37<sup>th</sup> regiment line infantry, division Lefol). In: Souvenirs d'un officier p.22-23

The fact that Von Sohr stranded on the strong French infantry is confirmed by count Von Wedel. Cf.Count Von Wedel of the 1<sup>st</sup> regiment of Pommeranian hussars nr.5 In: Wedel, C.von Geschichte eines Offiziers etc. p.254

Borgnet speaks of French artillery placed at a site called Trois Pilliers (at St.Servais). In: Promenades dans Namur p.338

15. Colonel Biot gives 4 p.m. In: Campagnes et garnisons p.260

According to captain Von Borcke (3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the 1<sup>st</sup> Elbe Landwehr infantry regiment) it was towards the afternoon that his brigade approached Namur. Cf.Captain Von Borcke, 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion 1<sup>st</sup> Elbe Landwehr infantry regiment. In: Kriegerleben etc. p.319

<sup>16</sup> Bagensky, Von – Geschichte des 9ten Infanterie Regiments genannt Colbergsches p.244

<sup>17</sup> A Prussian battery, placed on a height, was covered by the 11<sup>th</sup> regiment of hussars: the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> squadrons in front and the other two as a reserve a few hundred paces further to the rear. There is no further information available about the identity of this battery. Cf. Eck, Von - Geschichte des 2.Westfälischen Husaren Regiments nr.11 p.152

<sup>18</sup> Geschichte des 3.Pommerschen Infanterie Regiments nr.14 p.58

It claims the battalion entered the town through the Brussels-gate.

<sup>19</sup> Busse, Von - Geschichte des Königlich Preussischen 23.Infanterie-Regiments etc. p.184

According to Von Stuckrad the left column was supported by a horse battery. Cf. Stuckrad, B.von - Geschichte etc. p.116

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Stuckrad, B.von - Geschichte etc. p.116

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Bagensky, Von – Geschichte des 9ten Infanterie Regiments genannt Colbergsches p.243

A platoon of skirmishers of the fusilier battalion of the 23<sup>rd</sup> regiment, led by lieutenant Hartig, seems to have drowned in the Sambre in trying to find a ford. Cf. Busse, Von Geschichte des Königlich Preussischen 23.Infanterie-Regiments etc. p.187

22. Report of Pirch I.

In the actions, the brigade of Lagarde of the division Berthézène suffered a high number of casualties. Cf. Lieutenant Putigny (33<sup>rd</sup> regiment, division Berthézène). In: Le grognard Putigny p.172

The 33<sup>rd</sup> regiment lost sixteen officers and the 86<sup>th</sup> ten. In: Martinien, A. – Tableaux etc. p.197, 300

<sup>23</sup> Cf. General Teste. Souvenirs etc. p.243

Borgnet, J. – Promenades dans Namur p.617

All city walls were demolished between 1862 and 1865. Cf. Navez, L. - La campagne de 1815 Vol.I p.370

Biot describes the city walls as earth walls, half a man high [?]. In: Campagnes et garnisons etc. p.261

24. The gate is also called the one of "*En trieux*". Part of it had tumbled down on 7th of April 1798.

Wit, F.de - Stedenatlas Vol.II

25. Other names in use are *porte de Fer*, *porte de Samson*, *porte de Heuvis*.

Cf. Wit, F.de - Stedenatlas Vol.II n.p.

It was demolished in 1862.

26. It was also known as the *Porte des Herbattes* or the *Porte d'Andenne*.

De Wit still depicts it in his atlas. In: Stedenatlas, Vol.II n.p.

27. Captain Francois (30th regiment line infantry, division Pécheux). In: Journal etc. p.891-893

Teste to Grouchy in his report dated 21<sup>st</sup> June 1815 from Profondeville. In: SHAT, nr.C15/5

<sup>28</sup> Cf. his statement about the division Teste, dated 12<sup>th</sup> Febraury 1834. In: General Teste. Souvenirs etc. p.245

29. General Teste. In: Souvenirs etc.p.244

Colonel Biot. In: Campagnes et garnisons etc. p.261 He erroneously claims there were two batteries placed near the *porte de Bruxelles*. Here he also speaks of the 12<sup>th</sup> regiment of line infantry, which formed part of the division Berthézène.

Borgnet incorrectly speaks of 2 guns which supported the forces of the 75<sup>th</sup> regiment near the Brussels-gate. In: Promenades dans Namur p.338

Captain Francois (30<sup>th</sup> regiment line infantry). In: Journal etc. p.891-893

30. Cf. report of general Pirch I.

Bagensky, Von – Geschichte des 9ten Infanterie Regiments genannt Colbergsches p.244, 245

31. Captain Francois (30th regiment) In: Journal etc. p.891-893

Colonel Biot states it was then 4 p.m. In: Campagnes et garnisons etc. p.261

For Von Ollech it was between 3 and 4 p.m. In: Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.273

For Borgnet it was between 4 and 5 p.m. In: Promenades dans Namur p.338

32. Cf. report of Pirch I.

<sup>33</sup> Men who distinguished themselves here were: subaltern Rühle (8<sup>th</sup> company), Sander (10<sup>th</sup> company), fuselier Gatter (12<sup>th</sup> company) and Hambach (10<sup>th</sup> company). Cf. Stuckrad, B.von Geschichte etc. p.119

<sup>34</sup> Men who distinguished themselves here were: subaltern Delles, hornblower Arends (1<sup>st</sup> company), subaltern Hänschel and musketeer Böss (2<sup>nd</sup> company), subaltern Spengler (3<sup>rd</sup> company) and musketeers Richter (4<sup>th</sup> company), Fechtner (5<sup>th</sup> company) and Fortmann (7<sup>th</sup>

company). Cf. Cf. Stuckrad, B.von - Geschichte etc. p.118

35. Cf. Captain Von Borcke, 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion 1<sup>st</sup> Elbe Landwehr infantry regiment. In: Kriegerleben etc. p.320-322

In commemoration of the actions around the *porte de Bruxelles* a plaque was unveiled on the fence of the Parc Marie Louise, on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May 1986 by the Association pour la conservation des monuments Napoléoniens bearing the following text: "*Ici s'élevait la Porte de Bruxelles. Le 20 Juin 1815 cette porte fut témoin des combats opposant l'arrière garde du maréchal Grouchy à l'armée Prussienne. ACMN.1986.*"

J.Borgnet speaks of high Prussian losses near the *maison Breugette*, to the right and at a short distance from the Brussels-gate. In: Promenades dans Namur p.338

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Stuckrad, B.von Geschichte etc. p.119

<sup>37</sup> Borgnet, J. – Promenades dans Namur p.338-339

38. Von Zastrow was transferred in the evening to the city, where he died in a house, nowadays rue Grouchy 20. He was buried at the old cemetery of Namur, north of the city, a few hundred meters east of its suburb. In 1865, when the cemetery was dismantled, his gravestone was transferred to the cemetery of Belgrade, where it can still be seen today (to the left of the entrance). Its inscription is hardly readable, but reads:

*"Heinrich von Zastrow Oberst in ... [Kommandantur?] des Königlich Preussischen Infanterie Regiment 6e BI fiel an der Spitze des Regiments beim Sturm auf Namur am 20.Juni 1815. Das Offizier Korps des Regiments dem Andenken seines tapferen Führers."* The original stone helmet is nowadays in the military museum of Namur.

Cf. Damitz, Von – Geschichte des Feldzugs p.369

Bagensky, Von – Geschichte des 9ten Infanterie Regiments genannt Colbergsches p.246

Priesdorff, K.von Soldatisches Führertum Vol.7

Speeckaert, I – Les vestiges etc. p.56

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Stuckrad, B.von Geschichte etc. p.117

<sup>40</sup> Bagensky, Von – Geschichte des 9ten Infanterie Regiments genannt Colbergsches p.246

41. Report of Pirch I.

42. Ollech, Von – Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.273

Von Damitz speaks of 5.30 p.m. In: Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.370

<sup>43</sup> Geschichte des 1.Oberschlesischen Infanterie-Regiments Nr.22 p.119

According to Von Stuckrad, both battalions of the 7<sup>th</sup> brigade were placed in front of the Brussels-gate. Cf. Stuckrad, B.von - Geschichte etc. p.119

<sup>44</sup> Geschichte des 1.Oberschlesischen Infanterie-Regiments Nr.22 p.119

45. Geschichte des 1.Oberschlesischen Infanterie-Regiments Nr.22 p.119

Damitz, Von – Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.371

Von Ollech claims that the gate was blown up. In: Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.274

According to Von Stuckrad, the rumour about the French outbreak was the reason for Pirch I to engage the two battalions of the brigade of Von Brause. Cf. Stuckrad, B.von - Geschichte etc. p.119

All this would mean that the Prussians made three attempts against the *porte de Louvain*, which is confirmed by Teste himself. In: Souvenirs etc.p.244

<sup>46</sup> General Teste. In: Souvenirs etc. p.244

47. General Teste. In: Souvenirs etc. p.244

This gate is sometimes also erroneously referred to as the *porte de France*.

Borgnet here speaks incorrectly of members of the 22<sup>nd</sup> regiment, which formed part of the division of Habert. In: Promenades dans Namur p.339

48. General Teste. In: Souvenirs etc. p.244

Von Damitz – Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.369

Lefol. Souvenirs p.82-83

Geschichte des 1.Oberschlesischen Infanterie-Regiments Nr.22 p.119

Cf. Stuckrad, B.von Geschichte etc. p.120

Borgnet, J. – Promenades dans Namur p.339

According to captain Francois (30th regiment line infantry) Teste had the bridge of Jambes blown up, but this is incorrect. Cf. Grouchy stating he lacked the means to do so in his report to the emperor dated 20<sup>th</sup> June.

Teste also doesn't mention such measure.

Biot adds that he held a council in the city whether or not to destroy the bridges. In: Campagnes et garnisons p.260

49. General Von Pirch claims that general Vandamme was almost taken prisoner by skirmishers near the gate to Dinant. Cf. his report.

Vandamme had got slightly wounded by a musket-ball, but exactly is unclear. Cf. Teste. Souvenirs etc. p.243

It was not such that he couldn't execute his functions as corps-commander (see below in relation to adjudant Baptiste). Cf. orders of Grouchy to Vandamme on the 20th of June and later.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Harkort, F. Die Zeiten des ersten Westphalischen etc. p.67

Bagensky, Von – Geschichte des 9ten Infanterie Regiments genannt Colbergsches p.247

<sup>51</sup> This detachment of about 20 men led by 1<sup>st</sup> lieutenant Von Zitzwitz had stormed the wall near the gate with ladders, overwhelmed the French here and opened the gate from the inside. Cf. Stuckrad, B.von Geschichte etc. p.119

52. In the evacuation of the *porte de Bruxelles* by the members of the 75<sup>th</sup> regiment of line-infantry, its doors were closed in presence of Vandamme himself by adjudant subaltern Francois Baptiste; he also took the keys. After the death of Baptiste (he died on the 18th of August 1861), his heirs gave them to the Musée historique Lorrain at Nancy, where they still are (registered under inventory number 1301). In the box, there is the following accompanying note:

*Moi, Vandamme, lieutenant général de l'Empire, déclare que le Sr.Baptiste Francois, adjudant au 75e régiment de ligne, a en ma présence fermé les portes de la ville de Namur le 19 [sic] juin 1815, malgré le feu et la mitraille, et qu'il sauva par cette action une partie de l'artillerie du 3e et 4e corps d'armée.*

*Fait à Givet le 21 Juin 1815*

*Vandamme*

53. Grouchy. In: his report for Napoleon dated 20<sup>th</sup> June.  
Cf. his declaration about the division Teste, dated 12<sup>th</sup> of February 1834. In: General Teste. Souvenirs etc. p.246  
General Teste - Souvenirs etc. p.244  
Von Stuckrad believes it was at 7 p.m. Cf. Stuckrad, B.von Geschichte etc. p.120  
Von Clausewitz mentions 6 p.m. In: Campagne de France p.135

Borgnet claims Prussians were able to wade through the Sambre at the (porte de) Gravières, and to cut off some Frenchmen. This claim is not corroborated by any other source. In: Promenades dans Namur p.339

<sup>54</sup> General Teste - Souvenirs p.247

Since 1857, there was a French monument to the French victims of the actions around Namur on the old cemetery of Namur, but this monument has disappeared under unknown circumstances. 13 men of Teste's division would have been buried here. Cf. Navez, L. – La campagne de 1815 Vol.I p.371  
Speeckaert, G.P. - Les 135 vestiges etc. p.75

Ollech speaks of an unlikely high number of French casualties for the 20<sup>th</sup> of June of 700 to 800. In: Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.274

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Plotho, Von - Annex XXI. This document specifies the casualties as 1320 for the 6<sup>th</sup> brigade, 198 for the 7<sup>th</sup> , 117 for the 8<sup>th</sup> , 8 for the reserve cavalry and 3 for the reserve artillery.

Bas, F.de & T'Serclaes de Wommersom. La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.220-221

Ollech, Von – Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.273

Von Clausewitz speaks of 1100 casualties. In: La campagne de France p.136

Biot speaks of 1500 casualties. In: Campagnes et garnisons p.262

Grouchy in his report to Napoleon of the 20<sup>th</sup> of June mentions 1400 men.

Von Bagensky mentions 1276 men and 44 officers for the 6<sup>th</sup> brigade. In: Bagensky, Von – Geschichte des 9ten Infanterie Regiments genannt Colbergsches p.247

According to trumpeter-major F.Klinkhardt of the 26<sup>th</sup> regiment of infantry, his regiment alone lost during the attacks 800 men and 32 officers. In: Feldzugs-Erinnerungen etc. p.104

56. Damitz, Von – Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.369

According to general Pirch it was then after 9 p.m. Cf. his report.

Lefol speaks of 9 p.m. In: Souvenirs etc. p.83



<sup>57</sup> General Teste. Souvenirs etc. p.244

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Uffindell, A. - On the fields of glory p.309  
Damitz, Von – Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.374

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Blücher's orders to both Pirch and Thielmann of the 20<sup>th</sup> of June. In: Ollech, Von – Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.271-272

<sup>60</sup> Von Damitz blames Pirch I for not putting more energy in attempts to cross the Sambre, the more as there would have been several fords and bridges there (these are not to be found on the Ferraris map though). In: Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.373

Von Clausewitz blames Pirch for assaulting Namur and believes in the chance Pirch had in this alternative way by slowing down and thwart the French retreat, but realizes that it would take a huge effort. In: La campagne de France p.137-138

<sup>61</sup> Blücher writes on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June to Thielmann: "Es ist meine Absicht gewesen, dass Ew.Excellenz den Feind, welchen Sie sich gegenüber gehabt, *womöglich* sofort angreifen *möchten*." (Italics are mine) (see below)

<sup>62</sup> It might have been through the messenger who initially stranded to Von Borcke's position in the late afternoon.

<sup>63</sup> Von Clausewitz clarifies Von Thielmann's lack of pursuit on the 19th from the fatigue of the men and his expectation that the French would not pull back before dark. In: La campagne de France p.135

<sup>64</sup> Lettow Vorbeck, Von – Napoleons Untergang Vol.III p.465

<sup>65</sup> Von Pflugk Harttung and Von Lettow Vorbeck criticize Von Borcke for not hindering Grouchy in his retreat, despite the fatigue and hunger of his men. Von Pflugk Harttung claims that the action around Limale would have triggered Von Thielmann to attack the French, as Von Thielmann awaited the action in rear of Grouchy.

However, by the time Von Borcke saw the French crossing the Dyle at Limale, Von Thielmann was not yet aware of the possible presence of Pirch there. It can also be questioned whether the action would have caused Von Thielmann to act, because of the large distance. In: GSA, VPH-HA VI nr.V.8.p.36-37  
Napoleons Untergang Vol.III p.465