

Lieutenant general Girard after the 16th of June 1815. ¹

Lieutenant general Girard already had two contusions when he was hit by a musket ball, which broke his right arm, passed under his shoulder and entered his spine. ²

At about 6 p.m. the surgeon d'Héralde was allowed to leave the battlefield and bring Girard to Charleroi. Here he was brought to the house where Letort had been brought the day before, the house of Delbruyère. D'Héralde accompanied Girard on his way to Philippeville and attended him at Rocroi and Reims. Having been left unattended for a while in an inn at about 50 kilometers from Paris, his wife had managed to find him and to bring him to Paris. Here he died at the rue de Rochechouart nr.79 at 4 p.m. on the 27th of June 1815. ³ Initially, Girard was buried at the communal churchyard of Ménilmontant. On the 29th of June however he was reinterred at Père Lachaise. However, in September 1831 his remains were excavated on his widow's request and re-buried in an till now unknown place.

To the memory of lieutenant general Girard a tablet was placed on the farm of La Haye on 31st of March 1990 by the Association pour le conservation des monuments Napoléoniens. It reads: "*Ferme de la Haye. Ici est tombé mortellement blessé le 16 juin 1815 le général Girard A.C..M.N. 1990.*"

Because of his contribution to the battle of Ligny Napoleon wrote a decree on the 21st of June in which he was assigned the title Duc de Ligny. It reads:

Paris, le 21 juin 1815

L'Empereur, Général, a été satisfait de votre conduite à la bataille de Ligny, sous St.Amand. Sa Majesté estime que si chacun avait fait son devoir comme vous nous n'aurions éprouvé aucun revers.

Au milieu des préoccupations les plus tristes et les plus importantes, l'Empereur a songé à reconnaître votre dévouement et vous a nommé Duc de Ligny.

Signé, Maréchal d'Eckmühl ⁴

This decree was found in 1873 back in the family-archive by a daughter of Girard. After that it has been put in the archives at Vincennes. Despite the fact that it is not written on official paper, it can be assumed that it was official as not all official documents of that time have been written on official papers and Davout in particular didn't always use that paper. The letter was brought to the dying Girard who probably was unconscious when he got it. ⁵ It was because of this that Girard never was able to make any documents which enabled his family to patent the title. By the way, as Girard only had daughters, the title was doomed to disappear.

Girard's widow, in all probability, was aware of the document bearing the signature of Davout but she must have kept it secret, until it was discovered in 1873. This secrecy had to do with the problems she faced with the government after the fall of Napoleon about the promises which had been done about payment to her and her children. The problem was that the promises which had been done by the temporary government immediately after the fall of Napoleon could not be fulfilled.

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1. Cf. Conrady, E.von - Geschichte des Königlich etc.p.245

Girard already had two contusions when he got this third one. This bullet broke his right arm, passed below his right shoulder and got stuck in the spine. Cf. D'Héralde, D. Etat de mes services etc. In: Delloye, S. Les mémoires du chirurgien D. d'Héralde p.26

Marchand, L.J.N. - Mémoires etc. p.440. Note 125

It was around 6 p.m. that d'Héralde was permitted to leave the field and to escort Girard to Charleroi. Here Girard was treated by the surgeon of the guard who had also treated Letort, Blondy. Girard was also brought to the house where Letort was, the house of Delbruyère.

On the morning of the 18th d'Héralde left for his division again. When he returned on the 19th to Charleroi, Girard had just been carried off to Paris. Cf. D'Héralde, D. Etat de mes services etc. In: Delloye, S. Les mémoires du chirurgien D. d'Héralde p.26

Napoleon nominated Girard as duc de Ligny on the 21st of June. Cf. Houssaye, H. 1815.Waterloo p.173

This nomination was proposed by the following letter:

" L'Empereur, général, a été satisfait de votre conduite à la bataille de Ligny, sous Fleurus. Sa Majesté estime que, si chacun avait fait son devoir comme vous, nous n'aurions éprouvé aucun revers. Au milieu des préoccupations les plus tristes et les plus importantes, l'Empereur a songé à reconnaître votre dévouement et vous a nommé Duc de Ligny. " In: SHAT. File Girard. No.502/G/D/2

Cf. Grouchy, G.de - Mémoires du maréchal de Grouchy. Vol.IV p.11

The nomination has never been effected however by an imperial decree. Girard, having been left in an inn unattended about 50 kilometres out of Paris, was brought to the capital by his wife. There he died on the 27th of June. Cf.

Delloye, S. Jean Baptiste Girard duc de Ligny. In: Bulletin SBEN (1992) nr.16 p.15-42

According to Houssaye Girard died the 25th of June. In: 1815.Waterloo. p.173 (footnote)

Girard died at the rue Rochechouart 79.

Delloye, S. Jean Baptiste Girard duc de Ligny. In: Bulletin SBEN (1992) nr.16 p.15-42

But according to Speeckaert and Delloye it was at nr. 79. Cf.

Speeckaert, G.P. & I.Baecker -Les 135 vestiges etc. p.49

In his will, Napoleon left 100.000 francs to Girard's children.

1. Cf. S. Delloye: Jean Baptiste Girard, Duc de Ligny. In: Bulletin SBEN, nr.16 (1992) p.15-41
S. Delloye - Les mémoires du chirurgien Dominique d'Héralde. In: Bulletin SBEN, nr.14 (1992) p.19-36
These memoirs are also referred to by H. Lachouque in the footnotes of: Marchand, L.J.N.
Mémoires de Marchand. Vol.II, p.441
2. Cf. Surgeon d'Héralde (12th regiment light infantry). In: Bulletin SBEN, nr.14 (1992) p.19-36
3. Aerts, W. – Etudes etc. p.380
Houssaye, H. 1815. Waterloo p.173
4. SHAT, file of Girard nr.502/SD/2
Also see: Mémoires du maréchal de Grouchy Vol.IV.p.11
5. Cf. Delloye. Delloye believes the ball in the spine must have caused a sepsis which led to unconsciousness.