

28th of May – 3rd of June

The formation of Wellington's army.

By the end of May, Wellington had most of his reserve assembled in and around Brussels: Picton's division [¹], the brigades of Best and Von Vincke and the Brunswickers. ²

It was on the 3rd of June that the reserve was inspected in the centre of Brussels by Wellington and the duke of Brunswick ³

It was Trip's brigade of heavy cavalry of the army of the Netherlands which changed positions in the first days of June. As the prince of Orange felt that the brigade did not have sufficient space to practice manoeuvring in the positions it had since the beginning of April, near Braine l'Alleud, he asked the duke of Wellington for permission on the 1st of June to move the brigade to the villages of Lens, Jurbise, Montignies le Lens, Cambron St.Vincent, Cambron Casteau, Herschies, Erbaut, Erbisoeul, Ghlin, Gages, Bauffe and Baudour. ⁴ The 2nd of June Wellington granted his request by stating: "I have no objection to the disposition you propose for the heavy brigade of cavalry of the Netherlands, You will of course give them orders in case of attack." ⁵ Trip was accordingly ordered by Constant Rebecque on the 2nd of June to move to these villages on the 4th of June, which Trip did. ⁶

The meeting of Wellington and Blücher.

Apparently, Wellington invited Blücher to dine with him on the 28th of May and to take a tour with him on the 29th. In this context, the duke wrote to sir Henry Hardinge on the 24th: "General Röder promised me he would ask the marshal to come over and dine with me on Sunday; to take this little tour on Monday; and he might return on Tuesday; and I can only repeat that I should be most happy to see him." ⁷

The duke of Wellington welcomed Blücher and his staff on the 28th of May and the day after they rode out for a tour to the fields between Jedeghem and Schendelbeek, at the Dendre river about 3 kilometres north-east of Grammont where the Anglo-Hanoverian cavalry of the Anglo-Netherlands-German army was to be inspected by Wellington and Blücher. They were accompanied by the prince of Orange, lord Uxbridge, the duke de Berry, the duke of Brunswick, Gneisenau, the Prussian ambassador etc. ⁸

The cavalry was formed up in three lines. The first line along the banks of the river Dendre was composed of hussars with wide intervals between squadrons, and a battery of 9-pounders on either flank. The second line was made up of the heavy cavalry, with a battery of 24-pounder howitzers and 9-pounders in the centre, and two more batteries of 9-pounders on either flank. The third line was also formed with close intervals and was composed of light dragoons with a 9-pounder battery on each flank. The cavalry paraded in front of the group in three lines in parade order. ⁹

After they had enjoyed a dinner at Ninove, both Wellington and Blücher returned to Brussels on the 30th of May and it was the day after that the duke visited Ghent, where he met the duchess of Angoulême and the duke De Feltre. ¹⁰

Around this date (late May) sir Hudon Lowe was succeeded by colonel Sir William Howe de Lancey. The duke had insisted having him as his Quarter master general as he disliked Lowe and he refused to accept him in that capacity. ¹¹

A few days after the revue was held by the cavalry, it was Von Müffling who reported to Gneisenau on the fact that general Von Röder felt that the invitation formally should have run through him, but at the same time Von Müffling saw this was not always the way:

“Es ist wahr dass es ein englischer Grundsatz ist, alle Sachen lieber durch eigne als durch fremde Gesandten anzuthun, und so wird Herzog Wellington lieber durch Obrist Harding, als mich, mit Euer Excellenz communiciren, allein, diess hat dem General Röder wohl keinen Schaden gethan. Ich habe nie dem Obrist Harding etwas gesagt was nicht allgemein bekannt war; allein da Hardinge dem Herzog täglich schreibt, und der Fürst viele Dinge bey Tisch erzählt, so kann es nicht fehlen, dass der Herzog manches erfährt.”¹²

It can also be questioned whether Von Müffling was aware that Blücher and Gneisenau would come to Brussels as on the very same day that both these men got there, he wrote them a document which he could have handed them over in person and possibly could have been discussed right away. Von Müffling writes: “Euer Durchlaucht überreiche ich gehorsamst in der Anlage das Resultat eine Unterredung, welche ich mit dem Feld Marschall Herzog Wellington hatte, und glaube, dass höchstieselben mit den Ansichten zufrieden sein werden, welche der Herr Herzog hier geäussert hat. Ich würde es für zweckmässig halten, wenn der General Kriegs Comisair [sic] der Armée sich hierher begäbe, um mit dem der englischen Armée die nöthige Rücksprache zu nehmen.”¹³

On the 2nd or 3rd of June, king Willem left Brussels for Liège, where he arrived on the 3rd of June. From there, he moved on the 6th of June through Tongres, Maastricht and other Dutch cities in the south of Holland to The Hague where he arrived on the 13th of June.¹⁴

Wellington’s intelligence.

Another (undated) report of May 1815 reported about the French corps in positions on the borders in the north and northeast:

1st, at Lille (d’Erlon)

2nd, at Valenciennes (Reille)

3rd, at Charleville (Vandamme)

4th, at Metz (Gérard)

5th, at Strassbourg (Suchet)

And another (undated) report of May 1815 on the strength and spirit of the French garrisons (at Valenciennes, Douai, Arras, Dunkerque, Lille etc.): totalling 23.300 men.¹⁵

It may have been around the 28th of May that Wellington received the report written by prince Wrede from Mannheim on the 25th of May:

“En effet, tout énorme que les efforts qu’il [=Napoleon] fait pour organiser son armée échouent en partie, en général il paraît qu’il a renoncé de prendre ou commencer l’offensive. Vue à vue de moi à commencer du Rhin jusqu’à la Moselle les forces que Napoleon a placé dans l’Alsace et la Lorraine ne sont pas très considérables, quoique entre Strasbourg et Landau elles ont augmenté depuis 8 jours, près de Hilden sont arrivé quelque renforts; mais en revanche mes postes le long de la Saar me rendent compte que plusieurs regiments d’infanterie, et le 6e de housards sont subitement partis de la Saar et des environs de Metz pour se rendre en Flandre.”¹⁶

On the 30th of May, the duke De Feltre reported again about the French forces. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd corps would each have a strength about 20.000 men while the Imperial Guard and the 4th corps each would count about 15.000 men, as well as the 5th corps. For a possible campaign Napoleon could concentrate about 115.000 men. The duke De Feltre had no information on the strength of the forces in the Provence, near Chambéry, the Pyrenees and in the Vendée.¹⁷

Wellington was far from complacent about Napoleon’s overall strength, for when ambassador Brockhausen, hearingt from Prussian sources of French retirements from the frontier, drew a too simple conclusion of French weakness, the duke replied: “On the contrary, the enemy is

strengthening daily.”¹⁸ That day, Von Müffling wrote to Von Boyen: “Ein Officier höhern Grades der französischen Armée, der im Einverständnis mit uns ist, hat gestern noch Mittel gefunden, uns zu benachrichtigen: wir möchten uns auf den 4 Juny gefasst machen, angegriffen zu werden.”¹⁹

On the 31st of May Von Dörnberg reported to the duke of Wellington about French forces marching from the frontier to the interior and that there would be serious troubles in the Vendée and Bretagne. The Champ de mai would have been postponed.²⁰

The next day he wrote to the duke about the French strengthening their line in front Valenciennes, in what was in Von Dörnberg’s view to mask the movement of troops towards the interior.²¹

It was on the 1st of June that general Von Müffling wrote to Gneisenau of the rumours of a considerable rise in the Vendée. The Champ de Mai would have been postponed.²²

On the 2nd of June Von Dörnberg reported to the duke about the presence of infantry in the villages along the frontier and about the presence of numerous troops at Chimay and Macon. Reports would also have been spread that 17.000 men would also have been sent from the line between Lille and Maubeuge towards the interior.²³ The same day, Hardinge wrote Wellington about the French cavalry as having moved from Avesnes to Landrecies.²⁴ On the 3rd of June, the following was published in the Oracle:

“Le grand quartier-général de l’armée du Nord étant établi à Laon, les administrations de l’armée qui étaient à Avesnes, l’ont rejoint. On a approvisionné avec abondance de nombreux magasins de réserve à Laon, Soissons, Guise et Avesnes. Le 4^e d’infanterie légère se rend de Paris dans cette dernière ville. Un corps d’armée imposant, commandé par le général Lamarque, se porte dans l’Ouest. Des troupes de la jeune garde sont parties en voiture de Paris, ainsi qu’un train d’artillerie, pour la même destination. Les troupes qui étaient à Orléans ont pris la route de la Bretagne. Le général Corbineau, aide de camp de l’empereur, va, dit-on, prendre le commandement de Nantes. Le général Miollis est nommé gouverneur de Metz.”²⁵

And from Charleroi, Constant Rebecque was informed on the 29th of May by lieutenant De Wesener through a report which had dropped in there at that day from an informant who had come back from Maubeuge, Landrecy and Avesnes, stating: “... qu’a Maubeuge la garnison est en ce moment composée de six mil hommes dont la plus grand partie sont des gardes nationaux, il s’y trouve quelques sapeurs qui dirigent les ouvrages que l’on fait à la fortification nommément en rampart qui donne vers la chaussée allant a Mons; environ quatrevingt canons de differens calibres sont broqués, on en attend d’autres pour completer les batteries. On demolis les maisons avoisinantes la ville de Maubeuge. La Garde Nationale cantonnée dans les villages rapprochent journalièrement la frontière.

Chaque jour on travaille aux fortifications du camp de Rosier, trois redoutes sont établies en avant vers la frontière, jusqu’a ce jour il n’y a point de canon, cette troupe qui travaille aux fortifications.

De Maubeuge à Avesnes vers la moitié du chemin on y a élevé deux forts retranches du chemin. Les pionniers sont encore occuper à couper les grandes routes, et à faire de tout cotés des abbatis.

De Avesnes on y relève les ramparts, et l’on travaille à mettre les long a Lentour il y a un quartier général. En arrière de Landrecy il y a un parc d’artillerie composé de dix pièces de canons et de 12 caissons, la garnison est peu consequente, les lanciers qui s’y trouvoient (environ 300 h.) en sont parti hier pour aller vers Bossu, extrême frontière. A Sort sur Sambre sur la grande route de Mons à Beaumont les francais y ont préparé le pond, de facon qu’a la minute ils peuvent détruire le passage; ils viennent d’en faire de même des ponds situés a Jennond [?] et a Marpend. Les chevaux pour la cavalerie et artillerie manquent, l’on continue à prendre les chevaux de la gendarmerie. La Garde Nationale du départements du Nord persiste

à refuser de marcher. Le militaire force les gens aisés des villes à aller travailler aux fortifications. De tout cotés en France l'on construit avec fassines, & ce que l'on appelle des fosses aux loups, afin d'empêcher le cavalerie &." ²⁶

On the 2nd of June, he reported to Constant Rebecque again in which he drew attention to the fact that French troops would have been withdrawn from the northern frontier. General Vandamme would have held an inspection of his troops and throughout the whole of France means were taken for the defence of the country. ²⁷

Plans for the invasion of France.

Von Müffling reported to Von Boyen on the 30th of May: "Euer Excellenz werden aus meinem Rapport an S.Majestät den König ersehen haben, dass ich im H.Q. des Herzogs Wellington angekommen bin und bereits Gelegenheit gehabt habe, mich über die Absichten des Herzogs beim bevorstehenden Kriege zu unterrichten.

Ich ersuche Euer Excellenz, mich gefälligst zu unterrichten, über welche Gegenstände Sie ausser den wichtigen Begebenheiten des Kriegs Nachrichten verlangen, damit ich mein Augenmerk darauf richten kann.

Die französische uns gegenüberstehende Macht ist bis jetzt der unsrigen nicht gewachsen, und übersteigt nach allen Anzeigen nicht 80.000 Mann, jedoch mit dem bei Laon und als Reserve dieser Armée bey Paris aufgestellten Corps wird sie 110.000 Mann betragen. Im Fall der Feind die Offensive gegen uns ergriffe, würden wir daher uns mit einer Übermacht von 70.000 Mann gegen ihn schlagen können. Dehmongeachtet glauben jetzt eine Menge Menschen, dass Napoleon die Offensive ergreift, wenn das Champ de May glücklich für Ihn ausgeht.

Ein Officier höhern Grades der französischen Armee, der im Einverständnis mit uns ist, hat gestern noch Mittel gefunden, uns zu benachrichtigen, wir möchten uns auf den 4. Juny gefasst machen, angegriffen zu werden. Die Pariser Blätter vom 21. May lassen auch darauf schliessen, dass N. die Absicht habe, uns jetzt gleich anzugreifen, allein ich glaube, dass er nur glauben machen will, er sey in der Verfassung anzugreifen, und es vorziehen wird, sich zu vertheidigen. Wie es mir aus allem, was ich von Paris aus höre, scheint, so wird N. hier an der Grenze nicht Stand halten, sondern sich schnell bis Laon zurückziehen, von wo an bis Paris hin seine Vertheidigung organisirt wird. Diess erfordert von unsrer Seite die Bestimmung: ob wir damit anfangen wollen und uns in den Besitz des Postens von Laon unter Aisne zu setzen, oder ob wir die vorzunehmenden Belagerungen durch eine Aufstellung an der Sorre decken wollen.

Der Herzog Wellington hat 76 Stück Belagerungs Geschütz auf Schiffen bey Antwerpen, so dass sie in 24 Stunden hier sein können.

Euer Excellenz sind nicht dafür, dass wir Givet angreifen, und mehr für den Angriff auf Mézières. Ich glaube aber, dass wir nicht die Mittel zur Belagerung des letzten Orts haben, so lange Givet nicht in unsern Händen ist. Die Maas ist in diesem unfruchtbaren Gebürsland unsere einzige und beste Chaussée.

Valenciennes ist, so viel wir wissen, mit Allem sehr gut versehen worden. Ich würde daher dafür sein, es nicht anzugreifen. Wenn wir Cambray, Landrécy, Avesnes und Maubeuge hätten, so würden wir den Krieg systematisch gegen Frankreich ausführen können. Givet deckte noch unsern linken Flügel und würde als Defensiv-Festung anzusehen sein.

Wenn Vorschriften über die Operationen gegeben werden sollten, so vermitteln Euer Excellenz ja, dass es allgemeine sind, wie diess auch hier Herzog Wellington am passendsten sein dürfte. Übrigens gebe der Himmel, dass N. den Krieg anfängt, sonst sehe ich uns noch bis July hier die belgischen, nicht an den Krieg und Einquartierung gewöhnten Unterthanen zur Verzweiflung bringen." ²⁸

The day after, Wellington wrote to Uxbridge about the coming invasion:

“Have you settled anything about the cavalry outposts ? I think there is reason to hope we shall move soon, and it probably would be the best not to alter them now.”²⁹

And on the 2nd of June he wrote to his brother, sir Henry Wellesley: “We have as yet done nothing here. The Russians are not yet arrived upon the Rhine; but I believe that Woronzoff’s advance guard entered Francfort this day. The whole of Schwarzenberg’s army will not be collected on the Upper Rhine till towards the 16th, at about which time I hope we shall begin. I shall enter France with between 70.000 and 80.000 men. The Prussians near me with as twice as many. There is certainly a serious insurrection in La Vendée, and the French have already moved some of their force from the frontier; but I do not think we can move till we shall be certain of the movements of prince Schwarzenberg.”³⁰

And to Schwarzenberg he reported on the 2nd of June: “Je reçois des nouvelles, auxquelles je dois ajouter confiance, que le corps du comte Reille, c’est-à-dire le 2^{me} corps d’armée, a marché en grande partie, ou peut-être en entier, dans l’intérieur de la France, et que d’autres troupes venant du côté de Metz, et même de Strasbourg, ont pris la même direction. Il est certain qu’il y a une insurrection sérieuse dans la Vendée. J’en ai des nouvelles, quoique peu détaillées, de la côte, aussi bien que celles que je reçois de l’intérieur, et des traces qu’on voit dans les journaux Français.

Sous ces circonstances il est très important que je sache aussitôt que possible quand vous pourrez commencer vos opérations; et de quelle nature elles seront, et vers quel tems nous pouvons attendre que vous serez arrivé à une hauteur quelconque, afin que je puisse commencer de ce côté-ci de manière à avoir l’appui de vos opérations.

Le maréchal Blücher est préparé et très impatient de commencer; mais je lui ai fait dire aujourd’hui qu’il me paraissait que nous ne pouvions rien faire jusqu’à ce que nous fussions certain du jour auquel vous commenceriez, et en général de vos idées sur vos opérations. J’ai reçu hier des lettres de Rome du 22. Je vous félicite de tout mon coeur de vos succès en Italie.”³¹

This letter reached Heidelberg towards the 10th of June, as at that date Schwarzenberg wrote to Wellington: “J’ai reçu la lettre par laquelle Votre Excellence me fait l’honneur de m’informer des mouvements des troupes Françaises qui se trouvent en position vis-à-vis de son armée, et je m’empresse de vous en faire mes remerciemens, Monsieur le Maréchal.

Les deux empereurs étant réunis, ils viennent de s’accorder sur la manière de disposer leurs armées pour opérer l’invasion en France. Mon premier aide-de-camp, le colonel comte de Baar, aura l’honneur de vous remettre la présente. Il est instruit de tous les détails sur les opérations que je vais commencer avec l’armée que je commande, et qui pourraient vous intéresser. Vous verrez, my lord, que pour ne pas découvrir la flanc gauche de l’armée du prince Blücher, l’empereur Alexandre marche avec 150.000 Russes par Trèves, tandis que le maréchal Wrede a l’ordre de se porter droit en avant pour passer la Saar, et en tournant les Vosges d’effectuer par Luneville et plus promptement que possible sa jonction avec le reste de mon armée, dont il forme l’aîle droite. Un corps d’armée Russe, au nombre de 50.000 hommes, marche sur la même hauteur que le maréchal Wrede, pour former le blocus des forteresses situées sur la Saar, la Moselle et la Meuse. Si ces deux corps se trouvaient attaqués par des forces supérieures, ils sont assez forts pour faire un beau mouvement rétrograde, et laisser ainsi le temps suffisant pour que l’armée Russe et Prussienne puisse tomber sur le flanc de l’armée ennemie. Je passerai le Rhin le 24 Juin sur différents points près de Bâle; je ferai longer le Rhin par un corps de troupes destiné à former les blockades des forteresses situées dans cette vallée, et je filerai avec l’armée par Altkirch sur BÉfort; je bloquerai cette place ainsi que Besançon; je ne néglirerai rien pour presser mon mouvement de manière à arriver le

1 Juillet sur les bords de la Saône, et le 4 près de Langres. Cet endroit, très avantageusement placé, doit avoir été fortifié avec beaucoup de soins par l'ennemie, ainsi que le château de Montbeillard. C'est alors, monsieur le duc, que je me trouverai à la même hauteur que vous. Le général Frimont doit arriver le 27 à Genève, d'où il se dirigera sans délai sur Lyon.

Voici en peu de mots mes projets pour le première époque de mes opérations: ne pas doutez du zèle qui anime toute l'armée; nous brûlons du désir de nous rapprocher de vous pour travailler conjointement avec vous à écraser le monstre qui infeste le globe.”³²

Yet, in view of the distance, the letter probably reached Brussels after the hostilities had broken out (see below).

While Wellington was in doubt when the Austrians could start their operations for the invasion into France, it was sir Charles Stuart who wrote, from Ghent, on the 2nd of June to lord Castlereagh: “The emperor of Russia is expected to arrive at Heilbronn about the 2nd of June. The departure of the other sovereigns from Vienna authorize the belief that the moment when hostilities are to commence is rapidly approaching; the Austrians expect to cross the French frontier between the 10th and the 15th of June, at which time at least half the Russian force now marching through Germany will have passed the Rhine. The preparations in the Netherlands indicate that the armies under the duke of Wellington and marshal Blücher will assemble on the frontier about the same period. The measures of the enemy continue to manifest an intention of covering the capital by the defense of the line of the Somme.

The accounts from the frontier state that several corps have been directed to march upon Laon and Soissons, in case of a reverse after the commencement of the hostilities. Preparations have been made for destroying several magazines in the rear of the cantonments actually occupied by the army.

Movable columns have traversed the departments of the Pas-de-Calais and of the North during the last fortnight with a view to force the execution of the decrees for the levy of the national guards. Nothing certain has been received from the Vendée; and notwithstanding the advantages which are stated to have been gained over the royalists, it is certain that a detachment of the guard and the greater part of the force in the west and south has marched with great expedition.”³³

On the 2nd of June, Von Müffling wrote to Gneisenau: “Nachdem ich dem Herzog Wellington die Nachrichten vom 1. Juni über die feindlichen Bewegungen und die Schlussfolge des Majors von Bardeleben vorgelegt hatte, erwiederte er mir, er habe dieselben Nachrichten (nur nicht so detaillirt) gestern Abend vom General Dörnberg erhalten und dieselbe Schlussfolge gezogen.

Er habe hierauf gestern Abend nochmals in Ueberlegung genommen, was unter diesen Umständen zu thun sey, und er glaube unser jetziges System sey gut, und zwar aus folgenden Gründen, welche ich dem Fürsten vorlegen möge:

Wenn wir jetzt den Krieg anfangen, so würde uns die Belagerung 15 bis 20 Tage beschäftigen, denn er rechne darauf, in den ersten 5 Tagen selbst vor dem Platz zu bleiben, den er belagere, und die grösste Thätigkeit hinein zu bringen, ja wenn es nöthig wäre 10/m. Arbeiter zu geben. Späterhin liesse sich die Truppenzahl vor dem eingeschlossenem Platz vermindern.

Wenn nun nach diesen 20 Tagen wir in Frankreich stehen bleiben und die grosse Armee abwarten müssten, um mit ihr vereint nach Paris zu gehen, so schiene ihm das in vieler Hinsicht nachtheilig, abgerechnet, dass Napoleon dann völlig Zeit hätte, alle seine Kräfte gegen uns zu führen und seine Festungen zu entsetzen.

Wenn es ihm alsdann durch Uebermacht gelingen sollte, einen Vortheil zu erhalten, so würde ganz Europa über uns schreien, dass wir das Schicksal des Krieges aufs Spiel gesetzt hätten, da es jetzt so sicher schiene. Dies sey seine militarische Ansicht; nun die politische:

Wenn wir noch eine Zeitlang müssig gehen und ein Land durch unsre ungeheueren Bedürfnisse bedrücken müssten, so sey es besser, dass dies Loos Belgien treffe, als Frankreich, weil es bei unsern Allirten ohne Folgen seyn würde, und wir dagegen manche Mittel hätten, ihnen Vortheile und Vergütungen zuzugestehen. In Frankreich könne es durch den Druck die Verzweifelung und den Nationalkrieg herbeiführen. So sehe er die Sache an; er können sich irren, aber er wünsche dass man seine Gründe prüfe.

Ich erwiderte: dass diese Ansichten ganz die des Feldmarschalls Fürsten Blücher gewesen wären, allein, durch die Zurücksendung der feindlichen Truppen ins Innere, ganz neue Verhältnisse einträten, und daher die Frage entstehen müsse, ob nicht die Eröffnung des krieges zu beschleunigen seyn dürfte.

Der Herzog erwiderte, dass er dies allerdings wünsche, allein allgemein, nicht partiell, denn gerade diese Rücksendungen aus der Gegend von Strassbourg wären uns hier nachtheilig, da diese Truppen mit gegen uns gebraucht werden könnten, wenn wir die Feindseligkeiten eröffneten, was nicht möglich sey, wenn sie an der Grenze getanden hätten.

Ich berechnete nun, dass die Zeit unsrer Belagerungen auf wenigstens 23 Tage angenommen, wir grade damit fertig seyn würden, wenn die Oesterreicher in Langres einträfen, um mit uns zugleich nach Paris vorzurücken, da diese Armee sich nicht durch Belagerungen würde aufhalten lassen.

Der Herzog erwiderte, dass wenn der Tag bestimmt wäre, an welchem die Oesterreicher den Krieg anfangen wollten, er kein Bedenken fände, dass wir denselben Tag hier die Feindseligkeiten eröffneten, und der Herzog versprach mir, noch heute einen Kurier an den Fürst Schwarzenberg mit der Frage abzusenden: welchen Tag sie dort den Krieg eröffnen wollten ?”³⁴

On the 3rd of June, Von Müffling added for Gneisenau on a draft tableau for the advance into France as sent on the 1st of June [³⁵] the following two assumptions upon which it was based:

- that Wellington and Blücher would start operations at the same time
- that both men were fixed upon a battle near Maubeuge and Valenciennes

As, meanwhile, the French 3rd and 4th corps had united, the proposal of Von Müffling for the march of the 3rd corps was to go via Namur towards Binche, so as to avoid these French forces (along the line Florence or Beaumont). In the draft, on the 7th day all would enter France, and the whole army ready for battle.

Gneisenau’s proposal for the operations differed from Von Müffling’s in the fact that

- the 1st and 3rd Prussian corps would start the war one day earlier as Wellington’s army
- on the third day, when the Prussian army would be between Maubeuge, Avesnes and Landrecy, only two corps would be ready for a battle and that these would be separated from Wellington’s forces by the Sambre or large distances and from the 3rd and 4th corps.
- From Liège to Maubeuge is 16 (German) miles; the march to and the taking of Maubeuge in four days would be too short.

Wellington would be very short of material for siege warfare, taken in this proposal.³⁶

When it came down to the invasion into France, it may have been on the 28th of May that Wellington received news from prince Wrede from Mannheim, as sent on the 25th of May:

“J’ai vu aujourd’hui le prince de Schwarzenberg, qui a depuis hier son quartier-général à Heidelberg. Il a reçu ce matin un courier de Vienne, qui lui annonce l’arrivée des souverains pour le 2 juin à Heilbronn.

L’armée Russe est arrivé en Nuorin [?] , c’est-à-dire deux têtes de colonne. Jusqu’au 8 juin 100.000 hommes d’eux seront arrive, et je pense donc que vers le 10 le plus tard on pourra commencer les operations. Nous perdons beaucoup de tems, et fatiguons les pays dans lesquels nous cantonnons si longtems.”³⁷

The same day, Lord Stewart had written from Vienna to Wellington that he had given the duke's letter of the 8th of May through lord Cathcart to the Russian emperor and the Prussian king and that both fully agreed with Wellington's ideas expressed in this letter. And from his side, earl Cathcart added from Vienna to Wellington:

“The emperor of Russia appears to me to approve very much of your notions concerning the plan of operations, and desired me to take the first opportunity of assuring you from him that his army will arrive on the Rhin as soon as it is physically possible.”³⁸

It was also on the 3rd of June that Wellington met with sir Charles Stuart and Russian, Austrian and Prussian delegates to discuss the stipulations of a convention which had been drawn up in virtue of the treaty of the 25th of March to ensure the supplies of the allied armies after they would have entered France. They entered into full agreement about the arrangements stated.³⁹

The Prussian army.

Intelligence about the enemy.

By the 28th of May, general major Von Steinmetz had collected the following intelligence and sent it to Charleroi:

- the French headquarters would have left Avesnes, but where was unknown
- at Avesnes itself would be 2000 conscripts, but around Avesnes would be numerous units of infantry
- works would still be going on about the defence; in and around Maubeuge would not be that many troops
- in Beaumont would only be National guards”⁴⁰

By the 1st of June, Zieten translated the intelligence he had to Gneisenau as:

“Vandamme hat am 26. Mai bei Philippeville Revue über 8-9000 Mann abgehalten. Dies hat das Gerücht von seinem Abmarsch ins Innere veranlasst. Die Wege Charleroi-Merbes-le-Chateau, die Strassen Avesnes-Maubeuge, Sobre-le-Chateau-Avesnes, Beaumont-Chimay sind an mehreren Orten verhaun und durch breite, tiefe Graeben durchschnitten. Mehrere an diesen Strassen gelegene Orte werden zur Verteidigung eingerichtet.

Vandamme hat seinen Truppen am 26. Mai die Abreise des Kaisers nach Maubeuge mitgeteilt. Franz. Hauptquartier ohne Napoleon soll in Laon eingetroffen sein.”⁴¹

The very same day general Von Müffling wrote to Gneisenau of the rumours of a considerable rise in the Vendée. The Champ de mai would have been postponed.⁴²

Meanwhile, on the 29th of May, count de la Porterie wrote from Mons to Gneisenau that the *Champ de Mai* would have been postponed for an indefinite period of time, that there would be rises in Bretagne and the Vendée and that therefore garrisons from Condé, Valenciennes, le Quesnoy, Maubeuge, Landrecies, Avesnes had left for Paris and from there to these regions.⁴³

From Namur, colonel Hardinge wrote to Wellington on the 2nd of June about the French cavalry as having moved from Avesnes to Landrecies [⁴⁴], while the day after an anonymous source stated: “Junge Garde ist am 25. Mai auf Wagen nach der Vendée gesandt. Fast alle Linientruppen sind von Condé, Valenciennes, le Quesnoy, Maubeuge, Landrecies, Avesnes nach Paris abgegangen.”⁴⁵

The situation of the Prussian army.

It was this intelligence which shaped the ideas in Prussian general headquarters of which in several documents impressions can be found. On the 31st of May, Blücher wrote to general Von Kleist: “[...] Ich werde Alles so einleiten, dass beide Korps sobald als möglich vereinigt werden können. In diesem Augenblick kann Ich aber das deutsche Armee-Korps aus der Gegend von Trier nicht abberufen, da ich dort keine anderweitigen Truppen zu meiner Disposition habe. Ew.Excellenz ersuche ich daher, vorläufig noch bei dem deutschen Armee-Korps zu verbleiben, wo Ihre Anwesenheit durchaus unentbehrlich ist. Ich werde aber dem General v.Pirch die Weisung ertheilen, alles das 2. Armee-Korps betreffende sowohl Ew.Excellenz als mir zu melden, bis die Vereinigung erfolgen kann.”⁴⁶

Aus der allgemeinen Aufstellung des Feindes ist es klar, dass Ew.Excellenz keinen Angriff des Feindes zu erwarten haben. Bei jeder offensiven Bewegung von Lothringen aus werde ich sogleich mit dem Herzog Wellington die Offensive beginnen, und da wir auf dem kürzesten Wege nach Paris stehen, so würde der Feind dadurch genöthigt werden, seinerseits von jeder Offensivbewegung abzustehen. Um aber auf jeden Fall Ew.Excellenz nicht ohne die nöthige Instruktion zu lassen, will ich Folgendes über drei mögliche Fälle festsetzen:

1. Der Feind kann auf dem rechten Ufer der Saar und Mosel vorgehen. Dann bleiben Ew.Excellenz in den Stellungen von Gonz und Pellingen (1 Meile südlich von Trier) so lange stehen, bis der Feind Sie mit Übermacht bedroht und weichen hierauf über die Mosel und Sure nach der Maas zurück.

2. Wenn der Feind auf dem linken Mosel-Ufer nach Arlon etc. vordringt, so hatten sich Ew.Excellenz so lange als möglich bei Luxemburg hinter der Sure und Kyll, um bereit zu sein, in des Feindes rechte Flanke und gegen seinen Rücken zu agiren, wenn ich ihn auf der grossen Strasse von Namur auf Luxemburg angreife.

3. Geht der Feind auf beiden Ufern der Mosel mit grosser Macht vor, so weichen Ew.Excellenz auf Koblenz und weiter Rheinabwärts aus. Vermeiden Sie unglückliche Gefechte, aber gewöhnen Sie Ihre Truppen durch kleine Gefechte abmählig an den Krieg.

Sobald die Offensive aller Armeen beschlossen ist, werde ich das deutsche Armee-Korps über Luxemburg, Arlon etc. näher an die Maas rücken lassen. Die beiden hessischen Brigaden werde ich dann mit dem 2.Armee-Korps vereinigen, die übrigen deutschen Truppen aber zu Einschliessungen oder Belagerungen, je nach den Umständen, verwenden. Oberst-Lieutenant v.Witzleben habe ich interimisch zum Chef des Generalstabes bei Ew.Excellenz deutschem Korps bestimmt.”⁴⁷

Two days later he told Hardenberg: “Ich bin bei Wellington gewesen; er ist ganz mit mich einverstanden [to start operations against France] und wenn der Befehl zum Vorrücken ausbleibt, die Unruhen in Frankreich zunehmen, so mache Ich es wie in Schlesien und schlage los. Wellington akkompagniert mich sicher. [...] Meiner Armee ist im schönsten Zustande und in eine Stimmung wie man sie nur wünschen kann.”⁴⁸

Der alte Wellington ist die Gefälligkeit selbst und ein sehr bestimmter Mann. Wir werden eine gute Ehe miteinander führen. Er hat mich 6000 Mann schöne Kavallerie gezeigt; sie ist beinahe zu schön, um gebraucht zu werden.”⁴⁹

That day, colonel Hardinge told about the situation from his point of view to lord FitzRoy Somerset thus: “The reports of insurrections in France, together with the marching of troops from our front into the interior, have made this head-quarters very impatient to begin operations. The power of undertaking any operation in concert with the duke of Wellington was formally given to general Gneisenau by the King, shortly after the duke’s first application for the Prussians to move forward; and I think it may be as well mentioned to the duke that marshal Blücher, in talking of the reported state of things in France, said to me pretty publicly that he was quite ready to begin if the duke would. General Thielmann, who was here today, states that many of the troops in his front have also marched; and general Zieten has repeated

the report I mentioned in my letter of the 31st, of the cavalry having moved from Avesnes and Landrecies.”⁵⁰

And it was on the 3rd of June that colonel Hardinge reported to Wellington: “There is nothing new from the front, further than the continued reports of the marching of troops into the interior of France, and the increasing impatience of this head-quarters to begin operations.”⁵¹ And Blücher then wrote to his wife: “[...] In Zeit von höchstens 10 Tagen wird die Büchse wohl losgehen und wir nach Frankreich hineingehen. Bonaparte greift uns nicht an, davor könnten wir hier noch ein Jahr stehen, seine Angelegenheiten stehn [sic] so brillant nicht. Vor einige Tagen bin Ich in Brüssel bei dem König der Niederlande und dem Herzog Wellington gewesen. Man hat mich sehr gut aufgenommen und Wellington hat mir sechstausend Mann der schönsten Kavallerie gezeigt. Ich steje [sic] hier nun mit 130.000 Mann preussen, die im schönsten Stande sind etc. [...]”⁵²

Observations.

From Wellington’s letter of the 24th of May to Hardinge it becomes clear that it was Wellington who had invited (through Von Röder) Blücher and his staff to come over to Brussels etc. on the 28th, 29th and 30th of May.

What triggered him to do so remains unclear. Yet, the atmosphere in which this particular passage is written is one of informality. In this sense it was probably a courtesy visit in which Wellington wanted to surprise the Prussian leadership by showing at least his cavalry which, by now, was complete.⁵³

Apart from this informality, in the time-frame of this chapter, the invasion strategy of France was the main subject in the correspondence of both commanders and their subordinates. Therefore, without a doubt, this was a major subject during the meeting and both commanders, once again, agreed upon a swift start of the invasion into France.⁵⁴

Yet, the situation was that Blücher only wanted to do so when Wellington would be ready to do the same. If it was up to him, Blücher expected to start his operations on the 13th of June.

But it was Wellington who had a very strong condition before he would do so: the assurance that the Austrian army, led by Schwarzenberg would start its operations. As long as Schwarzenberg hadn’t done so, the duke was determined not to advance. In this situation, Wellington wrote on the 2nd of June to Schwarzenberg to enquire when he would be ready to start his operations. At that time, the duke must still have been in the presumption, as Blücher was, that Schwarzenberg would be ready by the 16th of June and that, accordingly, the invasion would start not before that day.⁵⁵

He wrote: “Je recois des nouvelles [...] que le corps du comte Reille [...] a marché en grande partie, ou peut-être en entier, dans l’intérieur de la France, et que d’autres troupes venant du côté de Metz, et même de Strasbourg, ont pris la même direction. Il est certain qu’il y a une insurrection sérieuse dans la Vendée. [...] Sous ces circonstances il est très important que je sache aussitôt que possible quand vous pourrez commencer vos opérations; et de quelle nature elles seront, et vers quel tems nous pouvons attendre que vous serez arrivé à une hauteur quelconque, afin que je puisse commencer de ce côté-ci de manière à avoir l’appui de vos opérations. Le maréchal Blücher est préparé et très impatient de commencer; mais je lui ai fait dire aujourd’hui qu’il me paraissait que nous ne pouvions rien faire jusqu’à ce que nous fussions certain du jour auquel vous commenceriez, et en général de vos idées sur vos opérations.”⁵⁶

However, Wellington not only felt dependent upon Schwarzenberg, but also upon London, as Von Müffling’s note of the 27th of May shows. During the meeting at Brussels, at least two other subjects were dealt with: the Netherlands – Prussian dispute over Netherlands supplies to the Prussian army and the obtaining of supplies once inside France.⁵⁷

As much as Blücher and Wellington agreed upon the invasion of France, when it came down to cooperation, Von Muffling expressed some strong and at the same time highly puzzling feelings towards Gneisenau on the 28th of May:

“Überigens habe Ich in den wenigen Tagen dass Ich mich hier befinde, bereits die Überzeugung gewonnen, dass es zweckmässig sein dürfte, von unsrer Seite eine ganz genaue Vereinigung mit der englische Armée (ausser den Schlacht-Tagen) zu vermeiden.”⁵⁸

Within the context of communication and cooperation of both armies in Belgium, it cannot be taken from the documents available, but it can be assumed with some reasonable probability that the Prussian leadership informed Wellington during their meeting late May about the position of Point du Jour as a focus for offering battle or other operations in case Napoleon would attack through Charleroi, and also possibly about a similar one further east, beyond Gembloux, also in case he would do so through Namur.

On a wider scale, Blücher saw the chance that Napoleon might attack from Lorraine as highly improbable. In that case he would, accompanied by Wellington, immediately move into France. Yet, for all eventualities he instructed Von Kleist for different scenarios, in some of which his own army also could play a role.

By the time the Anglo-Hanoverian cavalry was inspected late May, by far the most of the field army as it was used during the Waterloo-campaign was formed.

It was in this period that the last large troop formations as Wellington envisaged them, the cavalry and the reserve, were completed. By the time of Wellington’s general orders, issued on the 11th of April, very few units of cavalry were present for Wellington to be able to form a decent corps of cavalry. When this corps was officially ‘raised’ is unclear, but by the time lord Uxbridge was formally appointed as its commander (on the 28th of April) several units had reached Belgium.

A general reserve corps for the army played no role in the general order dated 11th of April; it was only on the 21st of April that Wellington wrote to major general Torrens about it: “Before you send any more general officers let me see more troops. [...] I must, besides, mention that in the Peninsula I always kept three or four divisions under my own immediate command, which, in fact, was the working part of the army, thrown, as necessary, upon the flank or the other. It might be convenient to have something of the same kind now.”⁵⁹

The process of the formation and logistics of getting the units of the reserve to Belgium took about one month as most units of the reserve got there late May, while it was on the evening of the 14th of June that sir Thomas Picton, commander of the 5th British division, arrived in Brussels.⁶⁰

Summarizing, the moment Wellington arrived in the Netherlands the field army counted about 43.000 men and about one month later it had reached a strength of between 60.000 and 70.000 men. By the 21st of May it had grown to about 76.000 men and by the time the Waterloo-campaign started the duke had about 87.000 men.⁶¹

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¹ The 1st battalion 95th regiment (brigade Kempt) marched from Ostend on the 27th of April, to arrive at Brussels on the 12th of May. In: Powell, A. (ed) - The Barnard letters p.242-243 and G. Caldwell & Cooper, R. - Rifle Green at Waterloo p.31,33

The 1st battalion 32nd regiment (brigade Kempt) moved through Ostend and Ghent to reach Brussels on the 29th of May. Cf. Ross-Lewin, H. - With the thirty-second in the Peninsula and other campaigns p.246

Private W.Pritchard (79th regiment) claims though that his battalion reached Brussels on the 28th of May. Cf. his letter dated of the same date. In: former www.1815.ltd.uk Original in National Archives of Scotland nr.GD 139/369/27

The 3rd battalion of the 1st regiment of foot (brigade Pack) arrived in Ostend early May and moved from there, through Ghent, to Brussels. Cf. Wetherall, J. - An historical account of His Majesty's First etc. p.197

The 1st battalion 92nd regiment (brigade Pack) got in Ostend on the 8th of May and marched to Ghent where it arrived on the 11th of May. It left this place on the 28th of May for Brussels. Cf. Sergeant Robertson (92nd). In: With Napoleon and Waterloo p.151-152

The 1st battalion of the 42nd regiment (brigade Pack) entered Ostend on the 24th of May and reached, through Ghent, Brussels on the 28th of May. Cf. ensign Gerard (42nd) In: BWRA – 16 and NWMS-1932.60 (letter dated 13th June 1815). Also see lieutenant Malcolm (42nd). In: BWRA-220

On May the 20th, lord FitzRoy Somerset asked major general Torrens to send out either general Cole or Picton. In: HL, WP, 1.464

As Cole had just got married, Picton was asked by the war office to join the army in the Netherlands, and this is what Picton was prepared to comply with, as long as he would not have any other general superior to him, other than the duke himself. After Wellington had assured this position, Picton expressed his intention to join the assembling forces immediately.

On the 11th of June, Picton left London, accompanied by his aide de camp, captain Tyler. They reached Ostend on the 13th of June and Brussels on the evening of the 15th of June. Here, Picton was immediately assigned the command of the 5th division. Cf. Robinson, H.B. - Memoirs of lieutenant general sir Thomas Picton p.359-364

Cf. Eaton, Ch.A. - Narrative of a residence in Belgium during the campaign of 1815 etc. p.49

² Cf. Von Müffling about the arrival of the Brunswick troops. In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von - Vorgeschichte etc. p.351

The Brunswickers would have been inspected at Vilvoorde by Wellington, the duke of Brunswick, lord Uxbridge and their staff on the 22nd of May. Cf. Sir Augustus Frazer. In: Sabine, E. (ed) - Letters of colonel Sir Augustus Frazer p.514

Cf. Colonel Von Vincke in a letter to his father. In: former www.1815.ltd.uk Original in: NSA nr.249 AN 190

Cf. Diary of private Bosse (2nd company of the 3rd Brunswick battalion of the line). In: former www.1815.ltd.uk Original in: NSA, nr.249 AN 190

Spehr, L.F. – Friedrich Wilhelm, Herzog von Braunschweig-Lüneburg-Oels p.211

The Brunswick units had started their march on the 17th of April and reached their destinations near Brussels on the 13th of May. Colonel Von Herzberg had been sent ahead to prepare their cantonments. The duke of Brunswick himself had left Braunschweig on the 6th

of May and reached his headquarters at Laecken on the 11th of May. Cf. Spehr, L.F. – Friedrich Wilhelm, Herzog von Braunschweig-Lüneburg-Oels p.211

Initially, from the 11th of April onwards, Best's brigade was incorporated in the division led by Alten, but this was changed into the reserve on the 25th of April. Later still, on the 21st of May, the brigade was assigned to the 6th division.

Its battalions Münden and Osterode moved during the first week of May through Roesselaere, Deynse, Audenarde, Sotteghem and Assche to Brussels, where they had their positions until the 15th of June. Cf. Lieutenant colonel Von Berckefeldt - Geschichte des Königlich Hannoverschen Landwehr-Bataillons Münden p.211-212

³ Oracle, dated 4th of June. In: www.1789-1815.com/juin1815.htm

⁴ KHA, A.40.C.W10
HL, WP 1.466

⁵ WD, Vol.XII p.436

⁶ NA, 2.13.14.01 nr.6 – 161

The fact that Trip was at Braine l'Alleud before is confirmed by the report of Constant Rebecque to the war office, dated 2nd June 1815. In: NA, 2.13.14.01 nr.6 – 153

⁷ WD, VolXII p.422

The fact that Wellington invited Blücher is confirmed by Von Nostitz in his diary, p.15

⁸ The day before, on the 28th of May, the prince of Orange had inspected the 3rd division of Alten at Casteau. Cf. Constant Rebecque in his journal. In: NA, 2.21.008.01 nr.25

Some days later, on the 1st of June, the 1st British division (Cooke) was inspected by the prince of Orange on a large plain about 10 kilometres distant from Mons. The troops marched to and from this place on the 31st of May and the 2nd of June in pouring rain. Cf. Letter of ensign Wedgwood, dated 7th of June 1815. In: former www.1815.ltd.uk Original in Regimental HQ Scots Guards

Cf. Allgemeine Zeitung, dated 8th June 1815. In: Sporschil, J. – Geschichte der Zertrümmerung des Napoleonischen Heeres durch die Schlacht von La Belle Alliance p.15

⁹ Mann, M. - And they rode on p.7

Mercer, C. - History of the Waterloo campaign Vol.I p.212-220

Sir Augustus Frazer In: Sabine, E. (ed) - Letters of colonel Sir Augustus Frazer p.521-524

Lieutenant J.E.Daniel. In: Journal of an officer in the commissariat department etc. p.364-365

Account of surgeon J.Gordon Smith, 12th regiment of light dragoons. In: The English army in France etc. p.94-96

Lieutenant Packe (13th regiment of light dragoons) Cf. his letter dated 1st of June to his father. In: former www.1815.ltd.uk Original in Leicester and Rutland record office. DE 1346/419-427 (DG18).

Cf. Letter of ensign Wedgwood, dated 7th of June 1815. In: former www.1815.ltd.uk Original in Regimental HQ Scots Guards

Captain Mercer, surgeon Gordon Smith, sir Augustus Frazer and lieutenant Daniel describe the inspection and the events around it vividly and in great detail.

Constant Rebecque was present at the inspection and informs us that Wellington was accompanied by the duke of Berry, the prince of Orange, lord Hill and Von Müffling, while Blücher was accompanied by Gneisenau, Von Grollman and major general Von Holtzendorff. The brigades present were those of Somerset, Ponsonby, Grant, Vivian and Vandeleur, plus 36 guns of horse artillery. In: NA, 2.21.008.01 nr.25

¹⁰ Galesloot, L. - Le duc de Wellington etc. p.149-150

Wellington to the duke of Brunswick, 1st of June 1815. In: WD, Vol.XII p.433

Wellington to king Willem, 1st of June 1815. In: WD, Vol.XII p.434

Von Müffling to Gneisenau, 2nd June 1815. In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von Vorgeschichte etc. p.316

Cf. the Oracle, dated 1st of June. In: www.1789-1815.com/juin1815.htm

Allgemeine Zeitung, dated 9th June 1815. In: Sporschil, J. – Geschichte der Zertrümmerung des Napoleonischen Heeres durch die Schlacht von La Belle Alliance p.15

For the dinner, cf: Mercer, C. History of the Waterloo campaign Vol.I p.218-220

¹¹ Ward, major - A week at Waterloo p.10-11

Though it was on the 4th of May that Lowe wrote that De Lancey might be expected at Brussels “in a day or so”, but that it was not known “how soon he might be rendered au fait.” It was not until till the end of May that he took over Lowe’s tasks. Cf. Lowe to Bunbury, 4th May 1815. In: BL, Add.ms.20.114 90-91

On the 12th of May, Lowe still wrote to lord Bunbury: “I trust you will have received my last of the 9th in which I acquainted you that the duke of Wellington had consented to my giving the charge of the Q.M.General’s department in this country to sir W.Delancey, so soon as he should have come to an understanding on all points concerning it and that I should be in readiness to receive your instructions for my further destination whenever they ought arrive, referring at the same time to your supposed desire I should proceed to England in the first instance, for the advantage of personal communication, previous to undertaking the important duties with which lord Btahurst and you were doing me the honor to confide to me.

I am now quite ready for departue – at last, I could be enabled to give over the duties of the department in the course of this day and tomorrow and be prepared to move the day following, about which twice I may be expecting to receive your reply to my letter of the 9th. [...] I should direct me to start direct for Italy, I shall proceed, but if the option is left to me, shall avail myself fit to go to England first for exclusive of my desire to have one opportunity of personal communication on so many points regarding the affairs of the Mediterranean [...]” In: BL, Add.ms.37.052 f.142-145

De Lancey was in Brussels at least by the 25th of May as at that day Wellington wrote about him to lord Uxbridge. In: WD Vol.XII p.426

On the 17th of May, lieutenant colonel Nicolay of the Royal Staff Corps stated that Lowe was to leave his position “in a day or two”. Cf. his letter to general Brown. In: NAM, 8903-48

Lowe was called to Genoa to command the British / Italian troops designated to cooperate with the Austro-Sardinian armies. As Wellington seems to have been succesful in concealing from Lowe his objections, while Lowe was aware of the aware of the fact that he could not meet the duke’s standards, both men would have parted on amicable terms. Cf. Gregory, D. - Napoleon’s jailer p.106

Bathurst’s instruction for Lowe to leave for Genoa dates from 29th of May and can be presumed to have reached Brussels on the 1st of June. In: BL, Add.ms.20.114 f.100

According to the Monthly returns Lowe was QMG on 25th of April, and is shown as QMG on 25th of May but with a pencil note “Removed from staff 2 June.” De Lancey is shown as DQMG on 25th of May and as QMG on 25th of June. In the same book the “Staff appointments” section shows De Lancey’s official posting-in date as 9th of May 1815. In: HL, WP 9/7/1. Cf. Footnote nr.11 in: Miller, D. – Lady De Lancey’s etc. p.65

Lowe left Brussels on the 5th of June, as he wrote that day to lord Bunbury from Brussels; he wrote from Stuttgart to Wellington on the 10th of June. In: BL, Add.mss.37.052 f.148-149 and 20.192 p.263

¹² Von Müffling to Gneisenau, 2nd June 1815. In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von Vorgeschichte etc. p.316

¹³ Pflugk Harttung, J.von – Vorgeschichte etc. p.309
The annex he refers to is the Pro memoria dated 27th of May.

¹⁴ Cf. M.Stuart – Jaarboeken van het koninkrijk etc. p.116-121

¹⁵ WSD, Vol.X, p.729-733

¹⁶ WSD, Vol.X p.369

¹⁷ WSD, Vol.X p.391-392

¹⁸ Von Müffling’s report – dated 2nd June - of Brockhausen’s discussion. In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von – Vorgeschichte etc. p.316

¹⁹ Pflugk Harttung, J.von - Verrat p.370 From: KA, VI.D.119.II p.55

²⁰ WSD, Vol.X p.393

²¹ WSD, Vol.X p.408

²² Von Müffling to Von Gneisenau. In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von - Die Vorgeschichte etc. p.313
The original came from the archive of Von Gneisenau in the chateau of Sommerschenburg, nr.A40

²³ WSD, Vol.X p.412-413

²⁴ WSD, Vol.X p.413

²⁵ Cf. l’Oracle, of the 3rd of June. Cf. www.1789-1815.com

²⁶ NA, nr.2.13.14.01 nr.8

²⁷ NA, nr.2.13.14.01 nr.8

²⁸ Pflugk Harttung, J.von – Vorgeschichte etc. p.352-353 From: KA, VI.D.119.II p.55

²⁹ WD, Vol.XII p.433

³⁰ WD, Vol.XII p.438

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- ³¹ WD, Vol.XII p.437
- ³² WSD, Vol.X p.440-441
- ³³ Malet, A. - Louis XVIII et les Cent-jours à Gand Vol.II p.152-153
- ³⁴ Pflugk Harttung, J.von - Vorgeschichte etc. p.317-319
- ³⁵ Pflugk Harttung, J.von - Vorgeschichte etc. p.315
- ³⁶ Pflugk Harttung, J.von - Vorgeschichte etc. p.319-321
- ³⁷ WSD, Vol.X p.369
- ³⁸ WSD, Vol.X p.370-371, 379
- ³⁹ Cf. Sir Charles Stuart to Lord Castlereagh, 4th of June 1815. In: Malet, A. Louis XVIII et les Cent-jours à Gand Vol.II p.157-158
- ⁴⁰ MWB, 1846 p.22
- ⁴¹ Lettow Vorbeck, O.von - Napoleon's Untergang p.513
- ⁴² Von Müffling to Von Gneisenau. In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von Die Vorgeschichte etc. p.313
The original came from the archive of Von Gneisenau in the chateau of Sommerschenburg.
- ⁴³ GSA, VPH-HA, VI, nr.I nr.9 p.1-2 (from KA, VI.D.119.II p.83)
- ⁴⁴ WSD, Vol.X p.413
- ⁴⁵ Lettow Vorbeck, O.von - Napoleon's Untergang Vol.III p.513
- ⁴⁶ The Prussian king had proposed to unite both the Prussian 2nd corps with the German Bundestruppen, all under the command of general Von Kleist. In practice, Blücher proposed this command in another way. Cf. Ollech, Von – Geschichte etc. p.61
- ⁴⁷ Ollech, Von – Geschichte etc. p.61-62
- ⁴⁸ Blücher would have planned a great review of a major part of the army on the 3rd of June at Pontillas (near Huy), but it is unclear whether it ever took place. Cf. l'Oracle, of 2nd of June. Cf. www.1789-1815.com
- ⁴⁹ Blücher's Briefe p.277
- ⁵⁰ WSD, Vol.X p.413
- ⁵¹ WSD, Vol.X p.415
- ⁵² Blücher's Briefe p.278
Saager, A. (ed.) – Blücher's Briefe an seine Frau p.107

⁵³ Hussey claims the “visitors” (the Prussians) seem to have concentrated, amongst others, on an inspection of Wellington’s forces. Yet, in my belief, this inspection was an extra, as offered by Wellington so as to impress his Prussian ally on the quality of at least this arm. One could wonder if the Prussians knew at all in advance whether Wellington was about to show (part of) his cavalry. In: *Preparing to invade France etc.* p.16

⁵⁴ Cf. Blücher wrote to his nephew, Conrad-Daniel von Blücher-Altona, on the 9th of June: “Der Krieg soll einmal sein, also ihm so bald wie möglich anfangen ist das klugste: gut wird die Sache gehn [sic], davon bin ich sicher, aber es wird wieder Menschen kosten. Vor einiger Zeit war Ich bei meinem Nachbar Wellington in Brüssel: auch dieser ist mit mich einverstanden, dass wir keinen Tag verlieren müssen.” In: *Blücher’s Briefe* p.279

Von Conrady on the one hand states that both Blücher and Gneisenau left for Brussels to talk with Wellington about the invasion of France, while on the other hand he suggest as if they did so as to get some kind of promise of support of the duke due to the fact there would be a threat upon the Prussian army. According to Von Conrady the result was nil as the duke didn’t believe in such threat. In: *Leben und Wirken etc.* p.291

⁵⁵ Cf. Wellington to his brother Henry, 2nd of June 1815.

⁵⁶ WD, Vol.XII p.437

His communication to Blücher Wellington refers to here is unavailable.

⁵⁷ For the first subject, see the preceding chapter. As the second subject falls beyond the scope of this study it is not entered upon here. For more details, see: Hussey, J. – *Preparing to invade France etc.* p.18

⁵⁸ Pflugk Harttung, J.von - *Vorgeschichte etc.* p.309

⁵⁹ WD, Vol.XII p.317

⁶⁰ He was then accompanied by his three aide de camps, captain Tyler, Chamberlain and Price, as well as by sir Alexander Dickson of the artillery and lieutenant Henegan, commander of the field train department. Cf. Henegan, R.D., *Seven years’ campaigning in the Peninsula and the Netherlands: from 1808 to 1815* p.281

Gronow claims Picton went to Brussel on the 15th June, that he had breakfast there and that he met Wellington not long afterwards. Picton would have had his lodgings at the Hôtel d’Angleterre in the Rue de la Madeleine. In: *Reminiscences* p.66

Of the 6th division it was at least the 27th regiment which arrived at Ostend on the 24th of May. Cf. Stephens, major general. The 27th (Inniskillings) regiment of foot at the battle of Waterloo p.26

⁶¹ See Wellington’s letters to his brother and lord Clancarty of the dates involved. Cf. also baron Binder to prince Metternich, 9th of May 1815, citing the duke as having 70.000 men. In: *Gedenkstukken Vol.VII* p.345

By the 12th of May, Lowe made the following estimate: “[..]Our force including troops of all descriptions may be estimated at not far short of 95.000 men. I shall have a very full statement to send or to deliver to you in the meantime for you may take this as a pretty accurate calculation.

British and German Legion infantry, cavalry and artillery 34.000, Hanoverian force 24.000 Brunswick arriving 7500 – 65.500. Dutch and Belgian troops of whom no returns have as yet been received calculated at about 30.000 – 95.500.

Of these there are 11.0000 British and Hanoverians in garrisons and perhaps the same number of Dutch and Belgians having a disposable force of about 75.000 men which, united with the Prussians would be more than a match for any thing which Bonaparte could bring against us; but if there was a corps nucleus of British infantry it would render matters infinitely more secure. The quality of all the German troops appears exceedingly good and general Decken told me in confidence, he could get 10.000 men more out of Hanover if Gt.Britain would pay them.” In: BL, Add.ms.37.052 f.142-145