

March 1815.

The political situation.

It was on the 20th of March that Napoleon arrived at Fontainebleau, after Louis XVIII had left the Tuileries in the night of the 19th of March. The country was not to be without a government for long as it was already on the 20th and 21st of March that Napoleon formed his cabinet. ¹

Since Napoleon's departure from France in 1814 and the return of Louis XVIII the political climate in France had changed. The congress of Vienna had forced Louis to establish some kind of constitution before being restored himself. This resulted in his charter of 1814. Basically, it put an end to the central position of the king as it had been during the *ancien régime*. Now, many rights of French citizens were settled, though the king was still the only person empowered to appoint members of public administrations. Also, only the king could propose laws and send them to either of the two chambers, the *chambre des pairs* and the *chambre des représentants*.

By the time Napoleon returned to France, this development had resulted in an atmosphere of liberalism and constitutionalism. It meant that by that moment a lot of what had been Napoleon's fervent followers were not willing to commit themselves any longer to the Jacobin dictatorship as it had existed. Some prominent Jacobins, as Carnot and Fouché, had become liberals themselves. Under Louis, liberal ideas had gained momentum and by the time Napoleon came into power, the former fear that the king might slowly take back the acquired rights, was projected upon Napoleon as well. The idea of constitutionalism had crept into both patriots, Jacobins and Bonapartists.

Typical for the liberal spirit reigning and also as an example of what could be called wishful thinking, the state council – the *conseil d'état* - described Napoleon's situation late March as: "The emperor has engaged himself to guarantee the liberal principles, individual freedom, the freedom of press and the abolition of censorship, the passing of contributions and laws by the representatives of the nation and of all those in power." ² After the dissolution of the chambers, the *conseil d'état* was the highest moral authority in the country.

Under Louis, royalists had obviously grown stronger. The French had also witnessed that Napoleon had not been invincible. Yet, within the army his support was still considerable, though the higher cadres in some cases manoeuvred upon the balance of power: Napoleon or the king.

Other groups, other than the army which had suffered under the Bourbons were the farmers as parts of their lands had been distributed amongst the *émigrés*. At the same time, concessions in customs for British goods as well as higher taxes had also created anti-Bourbon sentiments. In order to regain full power, it was of course vital for Napoleon that Louis XVIII would leave the country as soon as possible. Initially, the king – accompanied by an escorte and a large number of diplomats - had gone to Lille. It had been the king's intention to establish his government and organise a resistance from there, but this attempt failed as the garrison proved to be hostile and Louis was forced to leave the country for the Netherlands on the 23rd of March. ³ It was there that he decided to await further events in Ostend. But as he heard on the 25th of March that his brother, the count of Artois, and his nephew, the duke of Berry - escorted by 300 gardes du corps led by general Marmont - had gone to Ghent, he went there (through Ypres, Ostend and Bruges) as well and made his entrée there on the 30th of March. Here he established himself in the house of count Jean Baptiste d'Hane Steenhuyse, governor of East-Flanders and chamberlain of king Willem. ⁴



The house of the count Jean Baptiste d'Hane Steenhuyse, rue des champs nr.63 in Ghent, where Louis XVIII established himself.

Napoleon regained his power further by issuing a decree on the 25th of March which arranged the execution of the laws as they were enforced by the revolutionary assemblées against the Bourbons. Two days later, Napoleon's position was formally strengthened as the *conseil d'état* destroyed the procedure of Napoleon's deposition of the year before.

Obviously, Napoleon had to deal with public administration as it was left behind by the Bourbons. Of the prefects and their assistants employed in the empire, about half was still in service but their support of Napoleon in 1815 was not to be expected just like that. Some civil servants, appointed by Louis, quit after the return of Napoleon, while others kept their positions. The new regime asked for a completely new apparatus of administration and this could of course not be realized easily. The whole apparatus was immense, slow and in some cases openly hostile. Of all the different civil servants, the mayors were the hardest as they were very often – as having often been *anciens seigneurs* – in favour of the Bourbons (except in the east of the country).

It resulted in a measure of Napoleon on the 20th of April to have all mayors and their colleges to step down to open a process of reorganisation of the municipal administrations. Yet, influenced by the prevailing liberal ideas, Napoleon issued a decree on the 30th of April to re-elect new municipal administrations only in those municipalities with populations larger as 5000 inhabitants. The elections took place in May, but the result was that about two-thirds of those who had to be replaced were in fact re-elected.

The military situation on the 20th of March.

Obviously, also the military situation was totally different as the one as Napoleon left it in May 1814. After his fall, the royal government had reorganised the ministries responsible for the army, as well as the army itself.

Under Napoleon, the army fell under the responsibility of two ministries, the “*département de la guerre*” and the “*département de l’administration de la guerre*” – but both had now been merged into one.

Additionally, it was through a series of decrees dated 12th of May 1814 that the army was reorganised. It meant that the infantry had been reduced from 156 regiments to 107, of which 90 were line regiments and 15 regiments of light infantry. Each regiment was composed of three battalions, and each battalion of six companies. Additionally, the imperial guard had been transformed as well. In this case, its infantry had been merged into two regiments named the “*corps royal des grenadiers et des chasseurs à pied de France*.” In the line infantry, the first 30 regiments maintained their original numbers, as did the first 15 regiments of light infantry, while all the remaining ones were renumbered. The cavalry had been reduced from 110 to 61 regiments, divided over 12 regiments of cuirassiers, 15 of dragoons, 15 of chasseurs à cheval, 7 of hussars and 6 of lancers. Four more regiments called “*corps royaux de grenadiers à cheval, dragons, cheveau légers lanciers et chasseurs de France*” had been formed from the former cavalry of the imperial guard. All regiments contained four squadrons. In the artillery, eight regiments of foot artillery had been formed, as well as four of horse artillery.

Further, three regiments of engineers, a battalion of pontoneers, four train squadrons, twelve companies of *ouvriers d’artillerie*, a company of *ouvriers* of engineers, a train company of engineers and two battalions of *équipages militaires* were established.

Within the artillery, general units like the general staff, the train, the *canonniers gardes-côtes*, the *canonniers sédentaires*, the *canonniers vétérans* and the artillery of the imperial guard had been either reduced, merged or amalgamated with others. The general staff of the army was also reduced from 471 to 400 men. The royal forces ready to take the field as Napoleon found them late March may have had a strength of about 185.000 men.⁵

It was also on the 21st of March that Napoleon took his first measures to consolidate the military situation in Paris and to make sure that the “*place fortes*” on the outer edges of France would not be rendered to the enemy.

As to get a complete overview of the military situation, Napoleon also ordered all forces which were on the move in the north and north-east of the country to halt where they were.

At the same time he also took measures to prevent any royalist forces from assembling in the north-west of France, where Louis XVII was heading.⁶

The observation corps.

Having enemy forces close at hand in the Netherlands and presuming many more would advance towards the frontiers of France, it was five days later, on the 26th of March, that Napoleon felt the moment was there to form observation-corps along the borders of the country. These corps were not only destined to observe the enemy, but also to obstruct him in case of an invasion and to resist any of his attacks.

The 1st corps, composed of the former 16th military division and led by general d’Erlon, was to assemble at Lille.⁷

The 2nd corps was to assemble at Valenciennes and Maubeuge; this corps was under the command of general Reille.⁸

The 3rd corps, under the temporary command of Lebrun, the duke De Plaisance, was to be formed by troops at Châlons and those of the 2nd *division militaire*. This corps was to assemble at Mézières.

The 4th corps, to be commanded by general Gérard, was to be composed of the units forming the 3rd and 4th *division militaire*. This corps was to assemble at Thionville.

General Suchet was to be the commander of the 5th corps, which was to be formed from units which were scattered over the *places fortes* in the Alsace. This corps was to assemble near Strasbourg. The 6th corps was to cover the Alps, being based near Chambéry, while the 7th, led by general Clausel, was to observe the Pyrenees. Finally, there was to be a reserve, formed by the 8th corps and led by general Lobau, located around Paris. At the same time, a committee under general baron Dejean was established to find areas suited for these corps to be located.⁹

The decree of the 28th of March.

On the 9th of March Louis XVIII had issued a decree which prescribed the “militaires en congé de toute catégorie de se rendre les uns à leurs corps, les autres dans les chefs-lieux des départements pour y être organisés en bataillons de réserve.”¹⁰ However, as Napoleon did not want these reserve battalions to be created, Napoleon expressed his wish to Davout on the 26th of March to undo this decree by one of his own resulting “à tous les sous-officiers et soldats en semestre, en congé limité ou illimité, qui ne sont pas dans le cas d’obtenir des congés absolus, de rejoindre sur-le-champ les dépôts des corps auxquels ils appartiennent: ils serviraient d’abord à compléter les 3^e bataillons et succesivement à en former les 4es.”¹¹

This element formed part of a whole series of decisions which Napoleon put in a decree dated 28th of March, but which was only published on the 9th of April. Its most important elements were:

- a call upon all those veterans of the former imperial armies which – for whatever reason - had left the army to rejoin their units
- a request to all subaltern officers and soldiers of the former Old and Young Guard - now on leave - to rejoin their ranks in Paris
- the creation in Paris of six regiments of tirailleurs and the same of voltigeurs of the Young Guard
- the completion of each regiment of infantry, consisting of two battalions, by a third battalion.
- the completion of each regiment of cavalry, consisting of three squadrons, by a fourth squadron. All these men were to recruited from the decree involved. Any excess in men would then be used to form 4th battalions and 5th squadrons. Of the infantry, only the first two battalions would be on service, the others were supposed to remain in their depots.¹²

For the time being, the regiments which formed part of the corps, were composed of two battalions. The cadres of the 3rd battalions as well as the depots would be concentrated first in the region in and around Paris, as well as in the *places fortes* in the inner parts of the country. As soon as reserves would become available, these were to form the 3rd, 4th and 5th battalions, and to join the army. The national guard (see below) would in that case replace the troops of the line in the *places fortes*. The light cavalry was divided over the corps, as one division per corps. The remaining light and heavy cavalry was organised into eight divisions of reserve cavalry, each having a battery of horse artillery.¹³ Additionally, the old numbers of the regiments as they had carried them since 1794 were restored.¹⁴

The situation of the cavalry in March led Napoleon on the 29th of March to express his worries to Davout as to its strength and equipment. While several units did not have enough horses, Napoleon divided the 3000 men of the former *Maison du roi* over several regiments of cavalry. Overall, Napoleon wanted to have four regiments of cavalry of the imperial guard

(3200 men), 14 regiments heavy cavalry (7000 men), 15 regiments of dragoons (7500 men), 6 regiments of lancers (3600 men), 15 regiments of chasseurs à cheval (9000 men) and 7 regiments of hussars (4200 men). In all, 34.500 men (3200 of the imperial guard, 14.500 heavy cavalry and 16.800 light cavalry).¹⁵

On the 30th of March Napoleon issued further instructions to Davout about the composition and organisation of the different army corps. In this, Napoleon attached great value to the infantry regiments being composed of three battalions, of which two would have a strength of about 500 and the third of about 400 men.

The 1st corps was meant to assemble around Lille and to “couvrir les débouchés de la frontière, depuis le lieu où finissent les cantonnements du général Reille jusqu’à l’extrémité de la gauche.” The 3rd corps was supposed to collect at Mézières and to “garnir la frontière, depuis la droite du général Reille jusqu’au 4^e corps.” The headquarters of the 4th corps was to be at Metz and the corps was to extend “sur toute la frontière, depuis le 3^e corps jusqu’à Alsace. The 5th corps, now under general Rapp [¹⁶], was to unite at Strasbourg. Davout was also supposed to form three reserve divisions of cuirassiers, at Douai, Metz and in the Alsace. A fourth division, composed of cuirassiers and dragoons, was to be formed near Metz. At the same time, Davout was instructed to inform Carnot to maintain and establish national guards in the *places fortes*, so as to make the forces there available for the field army.¹⁷ In addition, he was also assigned the task of relieving those officers at any places of any importance with a dubious reputation by those who hadn’t.¹⁸

The *garde nationale*.

As the territory of France was threatened, the laws and decrees of 1791, 1792, 1805 and 1813 gave Napoleon the possibility to make a call upon the *garde nationale* – the national guard - to increase the army.

On the 27th of March, Napoleon instructed Carnot, his minister of the interior, to find out about the situation of the national guard and to change its leadership where needed. It was the emperor’s intention to organise the national guard in all parts of the country, and in Dauphiné, Franche-Comté, Alsace, Lorraine, Vosges, Champagne, Picardie and in the north of the country in particular. Part of the national guard was to be used for the protection of the territory of France, but at the same time – at least in its leadership – it suffered in general from a lack of loyalty and this also applied to the civilian bodies governing it and that’s why Napoleon gave a high priority in changing it where it was felt necessary.¹⁹

A decree was published on the 13th of April and this prescribed “that all civilians capable for service in the national guard would be registered to be formed into battalions.”²⁰

Napoleon reckoned he would be able to form a large number of mobilised battalions, and which were composed of men between 20 and 40 years of age, totalling more than about 2 million men. Through other decrees he ordered the mobilisation of 326 battalions, of 720 men each and which had to be sent to the *places fortes* at the frontiers of France, as well as to the *camps retranchés*.

Of the 234.720 men called for in the national guard through the decrees dating between the 10th of April and the 15th of May, 150.000 were assembled on the 15th of June in the *places fortes* or were on their way there.²¹

The *places fortes*.

In case of a defensive war the establishment of *places fortes* was at least as important as the reorganisation of the army.²² The general state of these *places fortes* was unsatisfactory due to neglect during the last two years. In order to make them ready for defence, reconstruction

work of their defensive systems started. These also included fieldworks covering them, especially those places which were in the open country and those which were of special strategical importance.

From the 27th of March onwards, Napoleon gave orders for construction and repair work to be carried out and these started between the 15th and the 25th of April. This delay was caused by the reports which first had to come in about the state of the places involved, the instructions to be issued to the engineers committees, the available cash and the establishment of local workshops.

In the meantime, the three *comités de défense* as set up towards the middle of April, were working on a general draft where any fortifications were necessary in the north and east of the country. Priorities were in the first line in the north of the country, the Vosges, the Jura, the Argonne and the forests in the east and north-east of the country.

Obviously, the *places fortes* also had to be armed and provisioned with supplies. Where guns and gunpowder were deemed insufficient, these were supplied by the arsenals from Metz, Douai, Lille, Grenoble, Toulouse or by those coming from the navy.

Late March, Napoleon's orientation in the *places fortes* was primarily directed to the coast-line and to the north, by wishing protective measures in places like Brest, Cherbourg, Rochefort, Soissons, La Fère, Château-Thierry etc.²³ Also, ten days after his return, Napoleon asked his minister of finance, Gaudin, to consolidate one and a half million francs for the provisioning of the *places fortes* in the Alsace and in the north of the country.²⁴ Having declared 50 of them in the north and east in a state of siege, the decree of the 1st of May arranged them to be supplied for a period of six months for a total of 238.000 men. Also, their inhabitants were supposed to arrange their own supplies for this period of time. Later, this period of time was brought down to three months. Further, a decree of the 15th of May arranged for the provisions for the line troops and those of the national guard not only in the armées du Nord, de la Moselle, du Rhin and des Alpes, as well as of the observations corps of the Jura, Var, the Pyrenees, but also for units in for instance the departments of Aisne, Ardennes, Meuse, Moselle, Meurthe, Vosges, Bas Rhin, Haut-Rhin, Jura, Doubs, Mont Blanc, Isère, Hautes Alpes, Basses Alpes, ar, Pyrenees and Pas de Calais.

Later, particularly in May, the focus of Napoleon's priorities – apart from the north - also shifted to Paris (see below) and *places fortes* at and between the rivers Somme, Oise, Aisne and Marne, such as Abbeville, Amiens, Ham, Péronne, Laon, Reims, Châlons-sur-Marne and Saint Quentin.²⁵

By mid June, the strategically important defiles of the Vosges and the passages of the Argonne were provided with redoubts, barricades etc. Also, inundations were ready to be set up in the north, and in more than 80 *places fortes* work was finished or in a state of completion. By the same time, all *places fortes* in the first line had provisions for four or six months, while those in the second and third line had them for shorter periods of time.²⁶ Most places were sufficiently equipped with guns and gunpowder.

The very core of the system of the *places fortes* was obviously formed by the cities of Paris and Lyon, France second city.²⁷ It was just a few days after his return to Paris, on the 25th of March, that Napoleon intended to start with the defensive work in Paris already two days later. Somehow, however, orders for the fortifications of Paris only followed on the 1st of May.²⁸ This was a loss of precious time as Napoleon wanted a very large and integrated system of fortifications, as designed by generals Haxo and Rogiat. Work started towards the middle of May and initially 1500 labourers were involved, but this number grew to about 4000 (and this did not include members of the guard, troops of the line, the national guard and the tirailleurs fédérés).²⁹ One month later, the entrenchments on the right bank of the Seine were partially finished as it was suspected that the first attacks would take place there. Work on the left bank had hardly started. At that moment the city was defended by some 450 guns.³⁰

At Lyon, where some 4000 labourers were involved, construction work and repair was started late; even though the old ramparts were still in existence before, work had not been finished by the 10th of June. The total number of guns then was about 300.³¹

On the 27th of March, marshal Ney was instructed to inspect the military situation in the *places fortes* in the north, on the line Lille – Landau. This, for instance, he had to do on subjects like the cadres of the units, the force of the national guard, the armament and the provisioning. He also had to gain intelligence about the allied forces in front of the northern frontier.³²

Captain Dumoulin was to find out about the situation at Chartres, Orléans, Blois, Tours, Angers, Napoleonville, la Rochelle and Bordeaux. Napoleon explicitly asked Dumoulin for information about the duke of Angoulême and the strength of his forces. At the same time, the *officier d'ordonnance* Saint-Yon was sent to the departments in the north and in the east of the country.³³

April 1815.

Foreign diplomacy.

It had been on the 13th of March that the allied coalition had declared Napoleon an outlaw and this news reached him around the 20th of March, just as he entered Paris. Twelve days later, on the 25th of March, the great allied powers had agreed upon the renewal of the treaty of Chaumont.

On a diplomatic level, it was on the 4th of April that Napoleon wrote a letter to the sovereigns of Europe about his peaceable intentions, aimed at stability in France and Europe.³⁴ This initiative may have been a result of the news about the treaty of Chaumont, but whatever may have been the reason to do so, his words fell on deaf ears abroad.

There is no doubt that this intention of Napoleon was also meant to strengthen his position in France itself. Meanwhile, Napoleon had sent secret missions to states of which he knew that they had been his allies and it was his hope that they would return to him. These were Sweden, Denmark, several Swiss cantons, the German princes, and the king of Saxony.

He also expressed his goodwill towards courts like those of Bavaria, Würtemberg, Baden, towards the princes of Hesse-Darmstadt, Nassau and Saxony, Sweden, Denmark, the court of Naples, Tuscany and Rome, as well as to Portugal and Spain.³⁵

While Napoleon expressed his intentions, it was Fouché, his minister of police, who continued his ambiguous reputation when it came down to his loyalty to both Napoleon and the allies. The only thing what counted for him was to remain in power, either under Napoleon or the Bourbons. Fouché was not the man to dedicate himself to Louis XVII, nor to defect Napoleon – it was his game to use them opportunistically, and only to choose party as soon as the weapons would have spoken. Yet, as he didn't feel the empire to last, he made his orientations to the allies.

For instance, it was in the early days of April that Fouché asked Wellington for asylum in case he might be exiled by Napoleon, in case he might revert to despotism or in case the empire would fall.

Apart from the fact that Fouché filtered information about Napoleon's strengths to the allies and vice versa, he established from early April onwards a secret correspondence with Metternich.

As Napoleon found out about it, he challenged Fouché through a secret mission to Basle of his own, but Fouché – as pragmatic as he was - didn't break. Though it became clear that the Austrians were bent upon the elimination of Napoleon, the idea proved to be too general for Napoleon to fear any conspiracy. Fouché came away with it, but Napoleon kept his mistrust.

At the same time, Napoleon felt he couldn't afford to fire him as a minister as this could be explained as an act of despotism, a sensible approach in the circumstances of the moment. ³⁶

Defensive measures.

On the 2nd of April, Napoleon summarized his military activities as solely of a defensive nature. And if it would prove necessary, Paris would in that case be the ultimate point around which this defence would be established. He wrote to Davout: "So it is appropriate, in case the enemy wants to attack us, that everything is arranged for assembling our ammunition and artillery in Paris, for moving all depots of the *places fortes* between Paris and the Loire, so that in that case not a single depot is contained in these places. Of all depots, of infantry, cavalry, artillery, uniforms and other necessities of the army it must be possible to unite them near Paris. I hope this won't be necessary, but orders have to be drafted before so that each depot moves at the right moment." ³⁷

Within this context of defence, Napoleon had a priority on the borders in the north, on the Rhine, on the Alps, the Vosges and the Jura. When it came down to the northern frontier in particular, it was on the 11th of April that he asked Davout about the number of *places fortes* and the strengths of the local national guard in these places, any inundations there. Further he was concerned about the defence at the river Meuse.

Davout had to give attention to all positions worth to be secured and he was also given the task of reporting back to Napoleon regarding those places where the national guards were needed. When it came down to the general defence of France, Napoleon took the initiative to set up three *comités de defense*. It was their task "to reconnoitre all the positions and to prescribe the establishment of all the field-fortifications needed" for the frontiers in the north, from Dunkerque to Alsace in the first line for the defence from Landau up to Huningue; in the second line for the defence of the Vosges and in the third line for the Jura and the frontiers of the Alps. These positions were to be occupied by grenadiers and chasseurs of the national guard. ³⁸

It was also therefore on the 10th of April that Napoleon summoned 100.000 national guards – grenadiers and chasseurs – to leave for the borders of France. Parts of them had proper weapons; others had not. ³⁹

Taking into account sieges of the *places fortes* on the borders of the north, the Rhine, the Alps and the Pyrenees, he ordered the provisioning of these places for a period of three months. ⁴⁰

On the northern frontier, Napoleon was particularly worried about the safety of Dunkerque. It was on the 9th and 10th of April that Napoleon warned both Vandamme and d'Erlon for a sudden irruption of allied and royalist forces upon the city. For that reason he asked both generals to intensify their cooperation, to be extra alert – also on those entering and leaving the city –, to remove all the émigrés in the area, to strengthen their positions and – last but not least - to establish a network of communication between Dunkerque, Calais, Gravelines, Montreuil, Boulogne and Bergues. ⁴¹

The first royalist rise.

Other than defensive measures, Napoleon had another serious matter on his mind during the first of half of April: the troubles with the royalists. At the notion that Napoleon had returned on French soil, the duke of Bourbon went to Nantes to take the command in the Vendée. His idea was to arm both the Vendée and Bretagne so as to activate a rise along the Loire up to the Garonne and there to join with the royalists at the Guyenne, Languedoc and the Provence. At the same time, the duke of Angoulême took up the government of the provinces on the left bank of the Loire, while his wife was at Bordeaux.

The duke of Bourbon got on a British ship on the 1st of April, while the duke of Angoulême sent Vitrolles, *ministre de l'état*, to Toulouse to establish there his seat of government. At the same time the duke of Angoulême marched with some his forces towards Lyon, against Napoleon.

Meanwhile, Napoleon sent general Grouchy with two divisions against the duke d'Angoulême; general Gilly got the instruction to collect as many forces as possible at Nîmes, while general Morand had to direct himself upon Bordeaux, Toulouse and on the Provence.

The duke passed the Rhône at the bridge of Saint-Esprit, took the bridge of the Drôme and entered in Valence on the 3rd of April. As Napoleon's forces advanced towards Grenoble, the duchess of Angoulême was forced to quit Bordeaux on the 2nd of April at the arrival of general Clausel. Two days later, Vitrolles was arrested on the 4th of April by lieutenant general Laborde and sent prisoner to Paris.

Forces led by general Gilly and in rear of the duke d'Angoulême managed to drive away the royalist troops from the bridge of Saint Esprit, while the duke had forces of Grouchy in front of him. Lacking proper support from the population in the the Bourgogne, the Auvergne and the Dauphiné, the duke of Angoulême evacuated Valence, but in the act he was taken prisoner by general Gilly on the 10th of April. Napoleon set him free and put him on a Swedish boat in Cette on the 16th of April.

Meanwhile, any resistance initiated by the duchess of Angoulême had been quickly crushed by general Clausel, while general Laborde did so with that of Vitrolles in Toulouse. Some days later, marshal Masséna ended the civil war in the Provence by submitting the royalists at Marseille and Toulon. And in the Vendée, the duke of Bourbon renounced any further resistance due to the absence of proper support and military means.⁴² All was over by the 20th of April.

Increasing the mobile forces.

Had Napoleon made preparatory arrangements for the national guard to be called upon, it was about one week later, on the 3rd of April that he wrote the president of the "*section de la guerre au conseil d'état*", general count Andréossy, about the intentions he had with the national guard. As a result he requested from Andréossy a proposal for this group to be established further.

The organisation of the national guard was a based upon a *département*, counting an average population of about 300.000 inhabitants each. Taking this number as a standard value, it was in that case due to deliver about 30.000 men, divided over 42 battalions of 720 men each. Each *département*, depending on its size, was to deliver the number of men in proportion to this ratio.⁴³ Further, all national guards in the *places fortes* were supposed to be brought in active service, particularly those at Lille, Dunkerque, Calais, Boulogne and all *places fortes* in Flanders. Other national guards were supposed to enter them, which would result in two types of national guards in these places: the local ones and those (*grenadiers* and *chasseurs*) of the field.

In the preparation of the formation of the national guard, Andréossy was requested to draw a list of places, where and how to establish the national guard, to begin in the *départements* Nord, Alsace, Meuse and Ardennes. Of these, the first two had an immediate priority. The remainder of France would follow soon after.⁴⁴

Napoleon also saw foreign deserters as an extra source of forces for his own armies and it was on the 3rd of April that he asked Davout to form five regiments of foreign troops.⁴⁵ One week later, on the 10th of April, Napoleon wrote to Davout the instruction to invite those former soldiers living on the left bank of the Rhine and in the Netherlands to rejoin their former army. The same was to be done on the borders of the Alps for those veterans as living in

Piémont and Italy.⁴⁶ It resulted in two decrees (dated 11th and 15th of April) establishing six regiments of foreign troops. Their cadres were swiftly formed, but the bodies of the regiments weren't. This was also caused by the fact that former foreign veterans were given the chance to rejoin their former units instead of new regiments.⁴⁷

Having crushed the royalist rise by mid-April, Napoleon now focused upon enlarging his active army by replacing forces of the army - now in garrisons in *places fortes* - by national guards.

It was for instance on the 18th of April that the emperor ordered Davout to immediately order the generals commanding the military divisions to have the 3rd battalions leave for the active army; also those horsemen found fit and ready to leave were expected to leave their depots. It was Napoleon's general goal "to augment the mobile army as soon as possible."⁴⁸

In the same line, Napoleon pulled away forces from the coast-line to reinforce his frontiers. Also, having the Midi pacified, it was also there that other forces became available for the active army and the protection of the frontiers. Third battalions, as soon as they had reached a strength of 400 men, were directed upon their 1st and 2nd battalions. At this time, the situation at the frontier of Spain had settled down and therefore it was also there that forces became available for use elsewhere. Forces like men from the depots, *bons citoyens*, 3rd / 4th battalions, forces of the navy and national guards were maintained at theatres of lesser importance⁴⁹

In order to increase his forces further, Napoleon issued on the 22nd of April a decree for the organisation of volunteer corps, particularly in the departments at the borders of France. The basis of these units, both infantry and cavalry, was formed by the departments where they were formed. They were meant to fight and act in the rear of the enemy's lines, to intercept his communications, convois etc.⁵⁰

The same day, Napoleon sought for the support of the navy and then not so much in the defense of the seas and coasts, but in the mainland of France. His intention was "de lever 60 à 80.000 hommes sur mes côtes et d'y employer tous les officiers de marine et tous les officiers du génie maritime comme officiers, tous les ouvriers qui se présenteront et tous les anciens matelots comme soldats." Resulting, Napoleon requested Dérès for 4000-5000 labourers for the defence of the harbours, except for those who were supposed to support the army. Additionally, 10 to 12.000 men were needed from the navy to complete the artillery for the defence of the country at its frontiers. These were to be established according to a decree dated 21st of April into 80 companies of so-called "*canonniers gardes-côtes*" and 10 companies of "*canonniers sédentaire*." In reality, only 37 were formed, totalling 64 officers and 2733 men.⁵¹ Other than that, the navy was supposed to deliver 40 to 60 battalions of *équipages*, having cadres of naval officers. Half of them could be called for the auxiliary army.⁵²

The *Acte additionnel*.

In the atmosphere of political moderation and liberal ideas, Napoleon decided to have a commission edit the constitution and to have the proposal laid down before the people of France.⁵³

It had been on the 13th of March, at Lyon, that Napoleon had decreed the dissolution of the existing *chambre des pairs* and the *chambre des communes*, while at the same time he had ordered for the month of May the convocation of a national meeting, or *Champ de Mai*, for the purpose of adapting the constitution of the former empire.⁵⁴ Prepared by Benjamin Constant mid-April, it was on the 22nd of April that the new constitution was published.

Its official name was the “*Acte additionnel aux constitutions de l’empire.*” As it states, it was not so much a structural change of the former constitution, but merely a continuation of it in order to diminish the effect of the changes and concessions from the new liberal spirit. Therefore it took the form of an ordinary legislative act. The core of the Acte formed the statement that the *pouvoir législatif* was carried out by the emperor and two chambers, the *Chambre des Pairs* and the *Chambre des Représentats*. While the members of the first were appointed by the emperor, those of the second were elected by the people of France. The ministers were to be responsible to the parliament for their actions. Apart from general dispositions, the *Acte* arranged formalities regarding the *collégés électoraux* and the method of election, the ministerial responsibility, the juridical power and the rights of the citizens of France.⁵⁵

It was to be formalized in a meeting at the Champ de Mai on the 26th of May, but this was eventually postponed to the 1st of June. Formally, Napoleon’s role within this context of liberalism centred around the *Acte additionnel*, but it also showed in decrees which were applied in a less radical way as they were issued, for instance like those on the confiscations of national properties, *émigrés* who were allowed to stay, ex *gardes-du-corps* and officers of the *maison militaire* who were relieved of their oath, the absence of a persecution of the instigators of the rebellion in the Vendée, Napoleon’s tolerance towards the clergy etc.

Threats from the north.

On the 24th of April Napoleon asked Davout for a detailed table of the nine corps as of 15th of April, so as to have an overview of the forces. The emperor’s reasoning was; “I await this table so that I will be able to issue military orders and to start establishing a plan for war.”⁵⁶

The same day he (again) sent someone – this time it was baron Dejean - on a mission in the north of the country to acquaint himself with the military situation at Beauvais, Abbeville, Amiens, Montreuil, Boulogne, Calais, Dunkerque and along the frontier as far as Landau. Dejean was also supposed to gain intelligence about the enemy opposite this line.⁵⁷

By the 27th of April, Napoleon wrote to Davout: “My cousin, I wish to have the state of the divisions which compose the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 6th corps. It is with this army (except for the division at Belfort) that I will be acting. I will collect my guard, and I will end up having a mobile force of 80.000 men available. I suppose that you have given instructions that generals Reille and d’Erlon, in case of unforeseen events, pull back in rear of the Sambre and that you have ordered general Vandamme to move his forces on Rocroy and Mézières. As I told you before, it is also important that the 6th corps assembles at Laon as soon as possible.

The *armée du Nord* will be the main army; it is therefore towards this one that you will pay your attention. Be sure about the presence of cartridges and cannonballs at Soissons, Guise, Avesnes, Paris, Maubeuge, Condé, Valenciennes and Philippeville. Eventually, we have to anticipate at all fronts and not forget any precaution.

To me, a good administrator, a general paymaster, an artillery general, a commander of the park and a general of engineers seem indispensable for this army, of which the headquarters will probably be taken to Soissons.

Issue orders to all corps to withdraw their forces from the places and to let the national guard return there and that these troops are put into good cantonments, having in their rear the parks, ammunition etc. I believe that the Alsatians are in the places by now. Issue instructions to general Rapp to assemble his divisions. As it might be possible that our communications with Strasbourg are intercepted, it is mainly in this city that only the most necessary is left there so that, in case that circumstances ask for it, we can pull our artillery and depots back to Vitry, Soissons, La Fère and Paris. Send me a note about what has taken place in the other campaigns. Tell me what has been the result of the combined operations of the armies of the

Moselle and the Rhine, which positions both these armies were due to take in order to be able to combine their operations [...] Additionally, Napoleon also wrote in this letter about the defence of the Rhine, the corps of the Jura, the defence of Lyon and of Grenoble.⁵⁸

Orders for the concentration itself came the same day – the 27th of April - and comprised the following. For general Reille:

- to bring his headquarters to Avesnes
- to place his divisions in rear of the Sambre, except for one which was to be placed in front of Maubeuge⁵⁹
- to put Maubeuge itself in a state of defence
- to make sure about the presence of two bridges over the river Sambre and to establish field-works there
- to reconnoitre the frontier in this sector, i.e. the position of Maubeuge, the frontier and Philippeville⁶⁰
- to take back all boat-traffic on the Sambre so that any enemy crossing would be hampered
- to communicate with the forces to his left and right, i.e. the 1st and 3rd corps
- to keep all his instructions secret

For general d'Erlon:

- to transfer his headquarters to Valenciennes
- to collect his forces between this place and Condé, leaving one division at Lille until it would be relieved there by national guards.
- to evacuate Calais, Dunkerque and Boulogne as soon this could be possible
- to communicate and cooperate (and this point was stressed) with the 2nd corps to his right
- to take back all boat-traffic on the Sambre so that any enemy crossing would be hampered
- as soon as he thought that hostilities were imminent, d'Erlon was supposed to declare all the places in a state of siege
- to interrupt all communication at the border
- to keep all his instructions secret

In case of unexpected events, both generals Reille and d'Erlon were supposed to take up a position behind the Sambre. For general Vandamme:

- to collect his corps between Rocroy and Mézières.
- in case of hostilities, to advance to the right of the 2nd corps, so as to cover its right, in rear of the Sambre.
- to link his observations posts with those of Reille, which then had to reach as far as the area between Beaumont and Walcourt
- to take back all boat-traffic on the Meuse (between de frontier and Givet) upon Givet so that any enemy crossing would be hampered.
- to order the commander of the château of Bouillon to prepare for its defence

For general Lobau:

- to leave with the 19th division of infantry and the 6th division of reserve-cavalry (both led by general Piré) on the 29th of April to Laon, and – in case of hostilities as signaled by Reille – to proceed to Guise.

For general Gérard:

- to send two divisions of cavalry (with their artillery) to Mézières, to be assigned to the corps of Vandamme.

For general Rapp:

- to collect all what was necessary to enter into the field at first notice. He was supposed to have his whole corps completely available two to three days after the receipt of these instructions (which were written on the 29th of April)

All corps commanders were supposed to have no one leave France on the northern frontier, from Dunkerque up to Landau, unless people could show a passport signed by the minister of foreign affairs. Also, vice versa, people entering France were thoroughly checked. All individuals from the maison du Roi going to Brussels or coming back, were to be arrested.⁶¹

Additionally, Napoleon formulated other instructions to Davout on the 27th of April as well, such as:

-Avesnes to be the depot of munitions and supplies, for 100.000 men and 20.000 horses for a period of 10 days.

-other services as ambulances, six compagnies *d'équipages militaires*, as well as general Ruty (to command the artillery) were to leave for the sector, *places fortes* such as Avesnes, Guise, Soissons, Maubeuge, Landrecies, Valenciennes, Condé, Philippeville were to be supplied with the necessary ammunition⁶² Those quantities at Soissons, Avesnes and Guise – as meant for the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 6th corps, as well as for the Imperial Guard – had to be completed before the 5th of May.⁶³

-to further complete and organise the defence of Maubeuge.⁶⁴

-to make sure that both the 1st, 2nd and 3rd corps would receive the necessary artillery by the first days of May

-to make sure the équipages and the artillery of the 6th corps and of the reserve cavalry would leave on the 30th of April, with the divisions which were at Paris.⁶⁵

-instructions for a “service de guerre de la Maison” to leave the 30th of April for Compiègne and to get there the 1st of May⁶⁶

-by the 2nd of May, Davout had already given instructions to the commanders of the *places fortes* at the northern and eastern frontiers to declare them in state of siege.

Last but not least, Napoleon reiterated his intention “to have the national guard in the places, that all the forces there are available and in cantonments, having their parks in their rear etc.”⁶⁷

The impression of an imminent invasion upon the northern frontier apparently became more detailed late April, as it was on the 1st of May that Davout wrote to Reille about an intelligence stating that Wellington was about to make an irruption upon Avesnes. As a major confrontation was expected there, Reille was therefore ordered to reconnoitre the area between Avesnes and Maubeuge, having the Sambre on its left and the large woods of Beaumont and Chimay on its right, as this was the area to place his corps. Reille was also supposed to destroy or at least block all roads along which the enemy could fall upon one of his wings. By doing so, he would be able to take up a strong and covered position to withstand Wellington or – if needed - to fall back upon Vandamme. Davout also told Reille: “at the first sign of hostilities, you will have on the right bank of the Sambre the corps of count d'Erlon, the corps of general Vandamme, the corps of count Lobau who moves to Laon, and the emperor, who will leave with his complete guard.”⁶⁸

Though it had been on the 24th of April that Napoleon had sent baron Dejean on a mission in the north of the country, it was five days later that Napoleon ordered Davout to send marshal Mortier on a mission there, i.e. between Calais and Landau, to “[..] so as to acquaint himself with the whole situation and to take all measures dictated by the circumstances in order to complete the defence system of the places, to assure provisions, accelerate the work of the engineers and the artillery, and to arrange all necessary transfers of commanders of places, officers, adjudants and store-keepers. Briefly, he will be charged with everything which is needed to put our places in the best possible situation [..]”⁶⁹

Observations.

It was during the first ten days after his return in Paris that Napoleon regrouped the army into observations-corps in the north and north-east of France, the Alps, the Pyrenees and near Paris. Five of them (numbered from west to east) were placed along the northern and north-eastern frontier, in almost equal intervals, stretching from Lille to Strasbourg. Their purpose was to observe and defend the frontier. The positions they took were not determined by their commanders, however, but by the *comités de défense* which had the total complete picture of the country as their starting point. In this way Napoleon hoped to consolidate an initial defence system of which Paris was to be the core, with depots in the *places fortes* between the capital and the Loire river.

At the same time, the other major challenge for Napoleon was to extend and reorganise the army. During the first days of his reign, he made preparations for the structure of the military like the enlargement of the existing units of the field army, the mobilisation of the national guard, the armament of the forces and the remount of the cavalry and the artillery.

In the first few days of April, the organisation of the national guard was worked out in further detail, and this resulted in the call for this important part of the armed forces during the first half of April. It was Napoleon's hope that this call was not nationally and internationally to be understood as one of a possible offensive measure, as could be the case when calling for the conscription of the class of 1815.

As Napoleon set up his observation corps on the frontiers of the country, other corps were established to control royalist areas like there were in the Provence, the Vendée and the upper north-west corner of the country.

Though the king's departure had not caused any civil war in the far north-west of the country, it did result in rebellion in the Vendée and in the south. But as soon as the rebellion ebbed away and his peaceful intentions were not picked up on an international level, Napoleon accelerated his measures for the enlargement of his military forces towards the middle of April.

It has been suggested by Napoleon that he would have considered an attack upon the Netherlands (to Brussels) on the 1st of April. The circumstances, from the allied side, favoured such an offensive: both allied armies there were weak, scattered and without proper leadership. Yet, Napoleon realised there were far more important things to do just then: to get a proper grip on the country, both politically and military.

First, as the duke of Angoulême marched upon Lyon, other forces moved from Marseille upon Grenoble and the first news of hostilities would have encouraged those who were unsatisfied about the situation. It was essential first that all royalists would have either left France or were subjected. Secondly, the country was also eager for peace, and an offensive would do Napoleon's position, as the aggressor, no good.

Further, for the military situation, a new structure was needed and at this stage Napoleon had his hands full in its establishment; to use its effects for a possible war was something of a later date. Lastly, to have a decent army of 50.000 men available in the north, the *places fortes* there would have to be emptied and this was no serious option as large parts of the north of France were not in favour of Napoleon; other than that, there were not enough national guards available to replace these troops there.⁷⁰

Napoleon had a strong occupation with his frontier in the north and north-east, as he feared an invasion would come from just there. As soon as he had his hands free after the subjection of the royalist surges, late April, he devoted his attention in this sector to establish a grand defensive strategy. It was based upon the presence of a *masse de manoeuvre* of 80.000 men strong and which operated from a central position as a precaution against an allied invasion. This mass was to be formed by the Armée du Nord, composed of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 6th corps, as well as of the Imperial Guard. The majority of this army would take up positions on

a line stretching from Valenciennes to a point between Rocroi and Mézières in a lateral direction and from this front-line to Laon and Compiègne in depth. In this way, it could more easily concentrate into a full and mobile army which could also act in conjunction with the Armée du Rhin and / or the Armée de la Moselle, depending upon the circumstances. In case of necessity, the armies could fall back upon Paris and the Loire river.⁷¹

Eventually, all military French activity on the frontier in the north opposite Wellington's sector and which was at the end of April of a defensive character, led Wellington, in his turn, to take defensive arrangements as he understood them as the preparations for a possible attack upon his own sector.

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¹ Minister of foreign affairs: Caulaincourt
Minister of the interior: general count Carnot
Minister of war: Davout
Minister of police: Fouché, duke of Otrante
Minister of justice: Cambacérés
Minister of finance: Gaudin
Minister of marine: Decrès
Minister of the imperial treasury: count Mollien
Secretary of state: duke of Bassano
Cf. Chuquet, A. Ordres etc. nr.6548, 6549

² Houssaye, H. – 1815. La première restauration etc. p.486-498

³ Houssaye, H. - 1815 p.380-383
Thiers, A. – Histoire etc. Vol.VI p.297

4. Haesaert, J.P. – Louis XVIII à Gand en 1815 p.523
Romberg, E. & A.Malet – Louis XVIII et les Cent Jours etc. Vo.I p.xxi
Cf. Mémoires du général comte Van der Meere p.35
M.Charléde Tyberchamps - Notice descriptive et historique etc. p.62
Scheltens - Souvenirs d'un grognard Belge. p.196
Fleischman, Th – Le roi de Gand p.42, 95-97

According lieutenant Von Berckefeldt (battalion Münden) the king and a large part of his entourage passed through Ypres between the 24th and the 27th of March. In: Geschichte des königlich Hannoversen etc.
Cf. Fleischman, Th – Le roi de Gand p.40

⁵ Sources are contradictory and confusing, as no distinction is always made between those being present and those being ready to take the field.

An official table dated 15th January 1815 gives a total of 177.564 men ready to take the field, but no accurate figures of the increase of forces since the middle of January are available. The “Exposé de la situation de l’empire” as written by Carnot dated 13th June 1815 mentions a strength of about 175.000 men. In: Archives parlementaires de 1787 à 1860 p.418

Houssaye believes this increase was 7000-8000 men, as those which returned to their units.

The 177.564 is derived from a total of 205.776 men, which includes those under arms (196.083), those in hospitals (8350) and those in recruitment and as being detached (1343). Houssaye decreases the 205.776 with 3546 men of the Swiss regiments and of the 1st and 2nd regiment of foreign troops, which brings him to 202.220. Adding the 7000-8000 leads him to a total of about 210.000 men being available, but this is not the number stated as being ready for the field.

Napoleon puts the total strength in March 1815 on 149.200, of which 93.900 were ready to take the field. Charras gives (on the 1st of April) 223.972 and 155.000 respectively, but gives no sources for the second figure.

St.Chamant uses the same table of the 15th of January in summing up the totals, but gives no accurate figures of increase after the middle of January.

Cf. Mémoires etc. p.320

Houssaye, H. - 1815 p.1-3

Charras, J.B.A. - Histoire de la campagne de 1815 Vol.I p.25
Saint-Chamant, H.C.de - Napoléon: ses dernières armées p.464-465

The total of 185.000 is based upon 178.000, plus the 7000 / 8000 as having joined the active army after the middle of January.

⁶ Correspondance etc. nr.21692

⁷ Cf. Davout to d'Erlon on the 28th of March, regarding his appointment and with the instruction to collect his corps at Lille. In: Mazade, Ch. De – Correspondance du maréchal Davout etc. Vol.IV nr.1514

⁸ Cf. Davout to Reille on the 28th of March, regarding his appointment and with the instruction to collect his corps at Valenciennes. In: Mazade, Ch. De – Correspondance du maréchal Davout etc. Vol.IV nr.1515

⁹ In: Correspondance nr.21723

¹⁰ Houssaye, H. - 1815. Waterloo p.3 (footnote)

¹¹ In: Chuquet, A. - Inédits Napoléoniens nr.1416

¹² Correspondance nr.21737

¹³ Correspondance nr.21731
Houssaye, H. – 1815. Waterloo p.32

¹⁴ Mémoires pour servir etc. p.20
Charras - Histoire de la campagne de 1815 Vol.I p.28

¹⁵ Correspondance nr.21741

¹⁶ Rapp succeeded Suchet as commander of the 5th corps on the 31st of March. Cf. Regnault, J. – La campagne de 1815 p.155

¹⁷ Correspondance nr.21747

¹⁸ Correspondance nr.21748

As a result of all this, Davout issued detailed instructions on the 31st of March to the commanders in the north, d'Erlon, Reille and Lebrun regarding their cooperation and the priority given to the places fortes in their districts. In: Mazade, Ch. De Correspondance etc. Vol.IV nr.1527

¹⁹ Correspondance etc. nr.21728

²⁰ Cf. Bulletin des lois, 13th April. In: Houssaye, H. – 1815. Waterloo p.8-12

On the 10th of April, Napoleon wrote to Davout: “I have called for almost 100.000 national guards, grenadiers and chasseurs, to occupy our frontiers.” In: Chuquet, A. – Inédits Napoleoniens nr.1462

²¹ Cf. Houssaye, H. – 1815. Waterloo p.10
Orders for the levy of the national guard date from the 15th, 19th and the 27th of April and the 10th of May. In: Regnault, J. – La campagne de 1815 p.39

²² For more details on the *places fortes*:
Houssaye, H. - 1815. Waterloo p.22-26
Mémoires pour servir etc. p.48-49
Charras, J.B. - Histoire de la campagne de 1815 p.41-44
Regnault, J. - La campagne de 1815 p.101-108
Saint-Chamant, H.C.de - Napoléon: ses dernières armées p.229

²³ Correspondance nr. 21710, 21726 and 21729

²⁴ Correspondance nr. 21752

²⁵ Cf. Correspondance nr. 21908, 21887
Chuquet, A. – Ordres etc. nr. 6770-6772

²⁶ In the north there were three lines of defence, at the Moselle there were two, while at the frontiers of Switzerland, the Alps and the Mediterranean there were single lines. Cf. Mémoires pour servir etc. p.36-37

²⁷ Cf. Gourgaud, C. – La campagne de 1815 p.11

²⁸ For the details in Napoleon's orders of May and June 1815 regarding the defence works in Paris, see:
Correspondance nr. 21862, 21856, 21888, 21973, 21995, 22024, 22026, 22041.
Chuquet, A. Ordres etc. nr.1512

²⁹ In Metz, 700 workers a day were employed, in Rocroi 500, in Toul 700, in Landrecies 400, in Dunkerque 1000, in Huningue 500, in Grenoble 400, in Cherbourg 500, in Bayonne 400, in Bordeaux 200, in Perpignan 150 and in the *camp retranché* of Maubeuge 1000.

³⁰ On the 24th of April, Napoleon had expressed his wish to have 300 guns in Paris. In: Correspondance nr.21841

³¹ For the details in Napoleon's orders of May and June 1815 for the defence works in Lyon, see:
Correspondance nr. 21863, 21865, 21848, 21888, 21892, 22009 and 22015
Chuquet, A. Ordres etc. nr.1512

³² Correspondance nr.21734

³³ Correspondance nr.21736

³⁴ Correspondance nr.21769

³⁵ Cf. Napoleon to Caulaincourt, 3rd April. In: Correspondance nr.21759

³⁶ Houssaye, H. – 1815. La première restauration p.584-597

³⁷ Correspondance nr.21754

Lecestre, L. - Lettres inédits etc. nr.1171 (dated 15th April)

³⁸ Correspondance nr.21787 and 21794. Also see 21828, dated 20th of April.

³⁹ Correspondance nr.21785

⁴⁰ Napoleon to Davout, 10th of April. In: Chuquet, A. - Ordres etc. nr.6625

⁴¹ Mazade, Ch. De – Correspondance etc. Vol.IV nr.1557

⁴² Mémoires pour servir etc. p.3-6

Mazade, Ch. De – Correspondance du maréchal Davout etc. Vol.IV p.381-389, 416, 425-426, 448

The military operations of Grouchy are entered upon in detail in: Grouchy, A.F.E. de - Mémoires du maréchal De Grouchy Vol.III p.220-367

The first royalist rise is dealt with in great detail in: Houssaye, H. 1815. La première restauration p.392-437

⁴³ About one month later, on the 12th of May, however, it appeared that the proportion did not always match and therefore had to be corrected. Cf. Napoleon to Carnot. In: Correspondance nr.21898

⁴⁴ Correspondance nr.21.767

⁴⁵ St.Chamant, C. de – Les dernies armées p.197

⁴⁶ Correspondance nr.21792

⁴⁷ Regnault, J. – La campagne de 1815 p.60

⁴⁸ Correspondance nr.21821

⁴⁹ Correspondance nr.21822

⁵⁰ Correspondance nr.21831

⁵¹ Regnault, J. – La campagne de 1815 p.58

⁵² Correspondance nr.21836

⁵³ Cf. Chapter called “Europe in 1815.”

⁵⁴ Correspondance nr.21686

⁵⁵ Correspondance nr.21839

⁵⁶ Correspondance nr.21841

⁵⁷ Correspondance nr. 21843

⁵⁸ Correspondance nr.21733

The letter has erroneously been dated in the correspondence on the 27th of March. This can be derived from several facts:

-on the 27th of March, the 6th corps did not exist under that name

-at that date, Vandamme was not in command of the 3rd corps

-it fits in line with Napoleon's request dated 24th of April about the situation of the nine corps

-letter nr.21845 (Correspondance) completes this letter

Cf. Regnault, J.B. – La campagne de 1815 etc. p.114-115

Saint-Chamant, H.C.de - Napoléon: ses dernières armées p.344

⁵⁹ Of the division of Jérôme Bonaparte, the 2nd regiment of the line left for Landrecies on the 26th of April. From there, it moved to Avesnes and its surroundings the next day. Part of the regiment was placed at Ramousies. Cf. Captain Robinaux. In: Journal de route du capitaine Robinaux 1803-1832 p.204

⁶⁰ On the 26th of April, general Richomme was ordered to reconnoitre Beaumont, Maubeuge, the Sambre, the area between this river and Philippeville, as well as Charlemont and Philippeville. In: Mazade, Ch. De – Correspondance etc. Vol.IV nr.1630

⁶¹ Lecestre, L. – Lettres inédites de Napoleon nr.1175 (dated 27th of April).

⁶² Correspondance nr.21845

⁶³ In: Mauduit, H.de – Les derniers jours etc. Vol.I p.340, 345

⁶⁴ Correspondance nr.21847

⁶⁵ Correspondance nr.21849

⁶⁶ Correspondance nr.21851

⁶⁷ Correspondance nrs. 21845, 21847, 21849, 21851

Chuquet, A. – Inédits etc. nr.1514, 1533

Mazade, Ch. De – Correspondance etc. Vol.IV nrs.1630, 1635-1639, 1649, 1863, 1657 and 1659

⁶⁸ Mazade, Ch. De – Correspondance etc. Vol.IV nr.1653

⁶⁹ Correspondance nr.21852

Chuquet, A. - Ordres etc. nr.6715

⁷⁰ Cf. Hinterlassene Werke etc. p.10-11

Houssaye, H. – 1815. Waterloo p.88

Von Clausewitz – La campagne de 1815 en France p.22

⁷¹ Cf. Regnault, J. - La campagne de 1815; mobilisation et concentration p.115, 117, 181