

Observations.

The attack of the imperial guard.

More than any other event at the battle of Waterloo, the description of the attack of the infantry of the imperial guard has seriously suffered from a lack of understanding of its basic tactical elements (and the combination thereof), such as the exact participants in the event, their formations and mutual strengths, as well as of its grand tactical context. This has led to a range of various highly erroneous interpretations from both sides. This is even more complicated by the fact that British eyewitnesses are into controversy about the share of their unit and / or have made their own interpretations of the *whole* event, instead of confining themselves to what they actually saw themselves.¹

Ensign Leeke (52nd regiment) wrote in 1866: “If ever truth lies at the bottom of a well, she does so immediately after a great battle, and it takes an amazingly long time before she can be lugged out. I am endeavouring to lug out some of the truth, respecting the defeat of the imperial guard at Waterloo, from the mass of conflicting statements under which it has remained encumbered, if not altogether buried, for so long a period.”²

As for the French, first of all, it is of crucial importance to stress that no more as *four* battalions of the imperial guard actually participated in the attack onto Wellington’s position.³ In their advance, the two columns of these battalions enlarged their interval, but instead of doing so at the foot of slope of the ridge and thus be ready for a parallel advance on the plateau, they did so on the plateau which caused them to approach the enemy in an irregular line of columns. After that, they attempted to deploy in too close proximity of the enemy so that this manoeuvre had not been properly completed by the time they came in touch with Wellington’s forces.⁴

So, the battalions hit the allied line in *column*.⁵ In order to properly understand the physical aspects of the actual confrontation, the size of the French columns should be measured in proportion to the units which they were confronted with.

It shows that the column of the 3rd chasseurs (50 metre front x 30 metre depth) clashed with the 3rd and 2nd battalion 1st Foot guards (about 900 men / total front of about 150 metres).⁶ The column of the 4th chasseurs (same size) had its course towards the extreme right flank of the former position of the 2nd battalion 1st Foot Guards. The moment this column was confronted with the 52nd (about 700 men / front of almost 100 metres), it formed its left flank to a such an extent that it somewhat extended its opponent’s front.⁷

It has been claimed that a column of the imperial guard would have attacked the combined line of the 30th and 73rd battalion (Colin Halkett’s brigade), retreated and that it was subsequently driven back by Detmers’ brigade. In the tactical context of the attack this is not very plausible though. Taking the initial formation of the guard and its development as a starting point, it is not logical to suppose that a battalion would have split itself off so far to the right in relation to the other three battalions. Additionally, it would have gained time in its course in order to arrive almost simultaneously with its neighbouring column to the left at the enemy position. This is highly improbable, certainly in the state of the ground at that moment. Other than that, by far the majority of the eyewitnesses of the two British battalions involved do not explicitly speak of the imperial guard. And, more importantly, they give the impression that the column did *not* emerge from their right but from their (left) front.⁸

As has been shown, the premature advance of four battalions of chasseurs of the imperial guard was meant to support the cavalry and artillery on and in front of the ridge of Mont Saint Jean and to prevent them from retreating and – with that – from Wellington advancing. Yet, the

moment it reached it, it had already virtually been evacuated.⁹ So, in terms of support, apart from the remains of Pégot's brigade, no integral infantry and cavalry formations were available to the imperial battalions. Further to their left and right numerous swarms of skirmishers were still engaged with the enemy and some cavalry was still present to their right as well, but these were all too remote to have any direct significance.

It is of a profound significance to point to the tactical context of the attack in order to understand it in its full extent. In his original set-up, Napoleon most probably envisaged to engage his 3rd and 4th regiments of grenadiers and chasseurs against Wellington, while having the 2nd regiments of chasseurs and grenadiers further to the rear.¹⁰

The situation on the battlefield, however, eventually forced him to engage it in a different, much more scattered, way. First of all, four battalions were accelerated to the front to support the forces which had started evacuating the ridge of Wellington's army, but they could not prevent them from doing so for the most part as by the time they reached it, it was virtually abandoned. This tactical circumstance is the more significant as it stands out, while at the same time it has been neglected in historiography of this episode of the battle. A large part of these forces had fallen back to positions between Gounont and La Belle Alliance. Here, they eventually served to receive the remnants of the forces which had been attacking Wellington in general.¹¹

And while two battalions were sent to Placenoit to restore the situation there, one was supposed to contain the forces in front of Gomont. The remainder was eventually fixed by Napoleon at its stations due to the simultaneous collapse of the French right wing (as a result of Zieten's irruption) and the defeat of the chasseurs opposite Wellington's centre. In posting these units of the imperial guard at large intervals, the emperor hoped he would still be able to rally the remnants of his army behind a line which stretched from the high ground east of Gomont, along La Belle Alliance, to Placenoit. In this position, Napoleon reckoned he would be able to keep his position until the next day, as by then he expected Grouchy would have shown up and to fall upon Blücher's rear and to open a chance of a general success in this way after all.¹²

In fact, with Napoleon's very attempt to maintain his forces opposite Wellington by speeding up four of his imperial battalions, it was their very attack and defeat, apart from the irruption of Zieten, which prompted Wellington to advance.

For Wellington, the attack did not come as a surprise so his forces had had plenty of time to take the necessary precautions.¹³ In the defence of his position of Mont Saint Jean, Wellington had prohibited his infantry units to come out from the main position unexposed, if at all. The risks of such actions had become too clear in attempts from the main position to relieve the farm of La Haye Sainte. In that sense, the initiative of sir John Colborne to bring out his unit in a flank action almost perpendicular to the main position was a most daring one. On the other hand, Colborne was obviously most aware of the potential of such an action and without a doubt he ascertained himself previous to the manoeuvre that his flank would not be exposed in any way.

As general Clinton wrote to Hill the day after: "the handsome repulse of the enemy's last attack afforded the opportunity to become ourselves the attacking body, so judiciously taken advantage of by major general Adam's brigade under Hill's immediate direction."¹⁴ Right after the very initial stage of Adam's pursuit, Detmers' and Banner's units made their contribution against infantry of the line and of the imperial guard which streamed back to the low ground of La Haye Sainte, not long after to be completed by allied cavalry.

General observations about the actions in and around Gomont.

By the time the imperial guard attacked Wellington's main position, virtually the whole of Gomont had been retaken by the allied forces. After the French collapse which occurred not long after, its total clearance of the French was merely a matter of time. As becomes clear from the description of the fighting around Gomont, the allied forces engaged there were a mix of British, Hanoverian, Brunswick and Nassau forces. The total number engaged amounted to about 5800, but obviously these were never at Gomont at the same time because of their subsequent involvement and casualties they suffered there.¹⁵

The Nassau battalion kept its positions in the garden, orchard and buildings all day. Actual details about its share in the garden and orchard are missing, but from the men in and around the southern courtyard of the buildings it is known that they had a share in repulsing a French irruption there. Other than that, they were obviously in firing positions in and around the buildings all day.

The Hanoverians who were initially placed in the wood, maintained a position in Gomont after being driven from the wood, but where remains unknown.¹⁶ Also the share of the Brunswick battalions suffers from a lack of real detail. This is clearly different with the British, but this also stems from a larger proportion of eyewitness accounts. Their contribution in recapturing the wood, clearing the grounds around the complex and in maintaining the orchard are most conspicuous. Yet, in the way they handled the defence from the insides of the buildings there was no difference in the way the Nassauers did so: keeping up a regular or a well-timed fire by switching muskets with men who were further to the rear, and also by the switching of men in the firing-line in cases of fatigue, loss or else).

In the defence of the buildings, both courtyards suffered an irruption by the French. The first was the one around 1.45 p.m., led by colonel Cubières. In terms of British heroism in defence during the battle - or even the campaign - of Waterloo, the struggle of that moment at the north gate has somehow got mythical proportions in a sense that Gomont was the key of the position and that therefore the success of the battle of Waterloo almost turned upon the closing of this gate.¹⁷ In what way, however, the success turned remains in most cases unexplained.

Gomont as such was not the key to Wellington's position as it was for the duke a mystery in what way Napoleon would attack him. It covered his right flank and it was beyond this point that he had left the grounds unoccupied as they did not allow him to place his forces off-sight for the enemy. In that sense, it was possible that the enemy could wheel through the low grounds around Gomont in an attempt to cut him off from a line of retreat through Braine l'Alleud and Alsemberg.

If Wellington had any anxiety about his right flank, it was this one. Yet, since the morning hours, Wellington had seen Reille's forces moving up in their positions and they did not seem to indicate a serious threat beyond Gomont. As the battle had progressed in the first two hours, it had become clear to the duke as well that the French did not have the intention to manoeuvre along the complex upon his right flank and line of retreat there as well. In fact, the duke had seen that the French effort against the front of Gomont had significantly increased in time. It had necessitated him to commit 11 companies in about one hour time. As the offensive was in full swing, the duke was called away to the left confiding Gomont to Byng's care "with directions to keep the house to the last moment, relieving the troops as they required it."¹⁸ As colonel Woodford was sent to Gomont towards 2 p.m. his orders from the duke were equal "positive to stand to the last."¹⁹ Around the same time, colonel Hamilton (aide de camp of major general Barnes) came to lieutenant colonel Home at Gomont with

orders from Wellington “to remain in the house to the last and if forced from the house, then to occupy the ground immediately in the neighbourhood.” Hamilton also added “ the Duke desires me to tell you, that he attaches the greatest importance to the defence of the post, on which he tells you the results of this days operations possibly depends.”²⁰

These last words were spoken before the duke moved to his left to witness the first grand offensive. As he did so, this made it clear that the French were apparently aiming for his centre and as Wellington came back to his former position by 3 p.m. he could see for himself that the situation at Gomont hadn’t changed in terms of any possible threat here upon his line of retreat.

So, if Wellington had had any concern for the loss of Gomont at all in relation to his right flank and beyond, by 3 p.m. it was certainly no case of life and death, if it had been at all. What counted for Wellington as a baseline was to keep the post on its inner defence line as part of his general front line in order to resist Napoleon in the way he attacked him: from the front.

Obviously, the courage displayed at the north gate has its own merits within the need for the garrison to keep the buildings, but seen in this wider context there is no reason to assign any mythical dimensions to it, let alone the fact that there is no doubt that many men have shown similar cases of audacity in other similar close encounters during the campaign.

During the French irruption in the southern courtyard, British Guards aided their Nassau allies in its repulse back through the west-door where the French had come from. This was the sole case in which they actually cooperated there. The other British forces were situated in the garden and in and around the northern courtyard. After 2 p.m. most of the buildings there were - or were getting - in flames and collapsing as a result, which made it impossible to keep them occupied at all. Given the closed aspect of their outer walls as well, opportunities for defence were very limited anyway. Also given the fact that the French no longer reached that far at all, this resulted in a defence which was generally of a passive character, while the garrison here was quite considerable in strength.²¹

Given the physical aspect of the struggle in and around Gomont, cavalry played basically no role in the actions whatsoever. One could have expected that units of Piré would have charged in conjunction with their fellow infantry, but after the battle of Quatre Bras these were physically incapable of doing so. In fact, the remains of the regiments were merely for skirmishing so as to disengage Jérôme’s men from actions they were involved in to the French left of the complex.²²

By far the most part fighting came down to the infantry, which required a specific way of getting engaged because of the broken ground and the presence of the wood. For the French it basically consisted of committing skirmishers first, supported by *soutiens* formed by platoons in line. These, in turn, were followed further to the rear by columns of single companies. Before entering the wood and the complex, they were released from reserves formed by columns of battalions in the open. Having spent their ammunition or energy, or having sustained losses, the French were relieved as was required from the *soutiens* and these in turn from the reserves. As a baseline, as more and more regiments were drawn into the actions, actual commitment started from the battalion level, and from there on down to the individual skirmisher. So, in this way, while parts of the battalion were actively engaged in partial actions, others were awaiting their instructions outside the complex. In the overall development of the actions during the day, more and more men were engaged as skirmishers as more and more men were consumed and units got splintered in the process.²³ The allied

forces were engaged as companies right from the beginning, but these were used as more coherent units because of the defensive character of their actions.

Independent of the French fear for the protruding position of Gomont in relation to the left flank of the grand offensive against Wellington, an attack on a wood in general carries the risk of digging oneself in the act. In this case, Gomont was no exception and it also triggered another risk: the one of fragmentation of forces. In the end, by engaging Soye's and Tissot's brigades as well, one and half division were used to protect the flank of the other one and a half division of the 2nd corps. ²⁴

The French fear alluded to was apparently that dominant that the neutralisation of Gomont was seen as a condition for the first grand offensive. In the difficulty of obtaining this, the function of Gomont as a breakwater against the French worked well for Wellington, but at the same time it should not be overlooked that had the first grand offensive worked, Reille would have pushed through his advance as right at that time Gomont had virtually been neutralized as it was meant to be. Some two hours later, the complex was masked by a massive number of skirmishers on its right which basically served as a protection for an offensive further to the right but at that moment the French offensive was far different from the original set-up.

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¹ For this controversy see the separate note.

Typical examples of such witnesses are lieutenant Gawler (52nd), ensign Leeke (52nd), ensign Macready (30th) and ensign Batty (3rd battalion 1st Foot Guards).

It is not always clear what kind of sources they used and in cases they do, these sometimes refer to events which preceded the attack. In some cases they used foreign publications (such as the publication of Craan and the “Victoires, conquêtes etc.”) which do not give their sources in turn, what only adds up to the confusion.

Cf. Ensign Batty. In: BL, Add.ms.34.705 p.227-234, 339-340 - In fact, ensign Batty himself was not present during the episode dealt with there.

And in: An historical sketch of the campaign of 1815 p.107-109

Lieutenant Gawler. In: BL, Add.ms.34.704 p.88-97 and 34.706 p.354-360

Leeke, W. – The history of lord Seaton’s regiment

Ensign Macready. Cf. several publications in the USM

² Ensign Leeke (52nd regiment) In: The history of Lord Seaton’s regiment Vol.II p.430

³ General Petit’s version in this respect is tempting to follow, but incorrect. He mentions all battalions of both the 3rd and 4th regiments of chasseurs and grenadiers leaving for and taking part in the actual attack. He may have seen them leave, but – from his position - probably did not see that the grenadiers did not push through their advance. Additionally, he erroneously claims that the 4th chasseurs was merged into one battalion after its losses at Ligny. This regiment, however, suffered virtually no losses there. His version is taken over by De Mauduit (though he speaks of columns) and Houssaye.

De Mauduit, in his turn, is led into further error by copying most part of the version of the attack as published in the Victoires et conquêtes etc. Apart from the battalions involved, this version is highly incorrect by stating that they initially ran over allied forces and, after deploying, were driven back by allied fire as coming from a second line *in* and near the hollow road on the allied ridge.

Cf. Mauduit, H.de – Les derniers jours Vol.I p.417-425

Houssaye, H. – 1815.Waterloo p.404-405

Victoires et conquêtes etc. p.220-221

From the account of chef de bataillon Guillemin (1st battalion 3rd regiment of grenadiers) it becomes clear that his battalion was *not* involved in the attack, but that it was kept to the rear. In: d'Avout, A. - L'infanterie de la garde à Waterloo In: Le Carnet de la Sabretache. 1905 p.33-54 en 107-128

This is confirmed by the version of general Poret de Morvan, his immediate superior. He states

his battalion was waiting, *l'arme au bras*, at the foot of the plateau not far from the 2nd battalion of the 1st regiment of chasseurs with the explicit instruction *not* to advance. It was here that it was flooded by allied forces as they advanced. In: Boterf, H. le – Le brave général Cambronne p.166-167

Also in: Brunschvicg, L. – Cambronne p.113-114

⁴ Cf. Major Pelet. In: L'infanterie de la garde à Waterloo p.45
He speaks of the four battalions as four masses.

⁵ Again, from the French side, it is tempting to follow general Petit's detailed account, in which the formation of the battalions is described as being in square. In the context of the purpose of the action this would however have been a most ineffective formation. Other than that, allied eye-witnesses virtually unanimously speak of one or more columns, and it would be most illogical to suppose that they changed their formation in the advance.

Cf. for these British testimonies for instance:

Brigade Colin Halkett:

Captain Cotter (69th regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.705 p.389-390

Major Harty (33rd regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.703 p.248

Major Howard (30th regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.703 p.317-319

Brigade Maitland:

Major general Maitland. In: BL, Add.ms.34.703 p.331-334

Ensign Batty (3rd battalion 1st Foot Guards). Cf. his letter dated 23rd June 1815. In collection Harrington.

Lieutenant Powell (2nd battalion 1st Foot Guards). In: BL, Add.ms.34.705 p.181-187

Lieutenant Lascelles (2nd battalion 1st Foot Guards). In: BL, Add.ms.34.705 p.79-80

Captain Ellis (Foot Guards). In: BL, Add.ms.34.705 p.155-157

Ensign Dirom (3rd battalion 1st Foot Guards). In: BL, Add.ms.34.704 p.274-277

Captain Nixon (2nd battalion 1st Foot Guards). In a letter dated 22nd June 1815. In: www.18.ltd.uk Original in: University of Nottingham. Drure Low Collection Dr.C.30/5

Brigade Adam:

Captain Budgen (2nd battalion 95th regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.704 p.56-62

Corporal Aldridge (2nd battalion 95th regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.704 p.98-100

Colonel May (RHA). In: BL, Add.ms.34.704 p.100-101

Lieutenant Gawler (52nd regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.704 p.88-97

Lieutenant Winterbottom (52nd regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.705 p.32-34

Artillery:

Lieutenant Sharpin (battery Bolton). In: BL, Add.ms.34.704 p.15-19

Captain Pringle (Bolton's battery). In: BL, Add.ms.34.703 p.339-340

Lieutenant Sandilands (battery Ramsay). In: BL, Add.ms.34.704 p.42-43

Lieutenant Maunsell (battery Bean). In: BL, Add.ms.34.703 p.272-273

Captain Rogers (battery Rogers). In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.227-234

Lieutenant Maule (battery Rogers). In: BL, Add.ms.34.704 p.120-122

Captain Sympher. In: NHA, Hann.41.D.XXI, nr.151 p.132-133

Captain Rudyard (battery Lloyd). In: BL, Add.ms.34.704 p.167-170
Captain Cleaves. In: NHA, Hann.41.XXI, nr.151 p.139-146

⁶ 2nd battalion 1st Foot guards:

Taking into account about 275 casualties at Quatre Bras and 150 so far at Waterloo, its strength was by 7 p.m. about 500 men.

3rd battalion 1st Foot guards:

Taking into account about 250 casualties at Quatre Bras and 335 so far at Waterloo, its strength was by 7 p.m. about 400 men.

Cf. Siborne, W. History of the war etc. Vol.II p.502

⁷ In some cases, French strengths as given by British participants are way beyond reality. If these were used, they would have resulted in columns of absurd sizes, especially in length.

Lieutenant colonel Colborne (52nd regiment) claims he acted against 6000 or 7000 men. Cf. his letter to lieutenant Yonge. In: Moore Smith, J. - The life of John Colborne, field marshal Lord Seaton p.413

Lieutenant Gawler (52nd regiment) speaks of 3000 men in the column which was charged by his battalion. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.389-399

In another version of the events, Gawler gives 10.000 men in total (8 battalions of grenadiers, 6400 men, 8 battalions of chasseurs, 6400 men and 2800 casualties on the 16th of June). In: The crisis etc. p.301

The same absurd claim of 10.000 men is set by ensign Leeke (52nd regiment). In: The history of Lord Seaton's regiment etc. Vol.I p.43

6000 men is given by captain Powell (Foot Guards). In: BL, Add.ms.34.705 p.181-187

Colonel Gomm speaks about a force of 4000 men. In: Letters and journals etc. p.369

Major Pelet claims there were four masses, hitting the allied line, but this is impossible to reconcile with the British accounts. In: d'Avout, A. - L'infanterie de la garde à Waterloo. In: Le Carnet de la Sabretache. 1905. p.45

⁸ Cf. Captain Howard (30th regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.703 p.317-319

Lieutenant colonel Elphinstone (33rd regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.703 p.278-281

Major Dawson Kelly (73rd regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.703 p.345-347, 34.706 p.112-115 and 34.705 p.336-337

As a sole witness, ensign Macready (30th regiment) consistently claims his battalion was confronted with a column of the imperial guard, also by claiming the men wore bearskins. Yet, of both the 3rd and 4th regiments of grenadiers and chasseurs very few wore bearskin caps. In fact, they were all dressed in an odd assortment of every conceivable style and pattern in which as head-dress, by far most wore a motley collection of shakos, hats and forage-caps.

Cf. BL, Add.ms.34.708 p.253-255

His letter dated 7th July 1815. In: NAM, nr.8203/10

His journal dated 1816. In: USM, 1845 Vol.I p.396

Pericoli, U. - 1815. The armies at Waterloo plate 40

Haythornthwaite, Ph.J. - Uniforms of Waterloo in colour 16-18 June 1815 p.139-140

The strength of the column is very hard to assess. It might have been one composed of two

battalions, while the other two were acting as skirmishers to the left of La Haye Sainte.

The claim of members of Chassé's division as having pushed back the imperial guard is not as unambiguous as it seems, as *both* infantry of the imperial guard and of the line fell back towards the low ground of La Haye Sainte in which process they probably intermingled.

⁹ Cf. Baron Bellina's report to Davout, dated 23rd June 1815. In: SHAT, C15, nr.5

¹⁰ This way of engaging the imperial guard suited the usual way of doing so in Napoleonic battles, i.e. in coherent combinations grenadiers or chasseurs, starting with the higher numbers first. Cf. Mauduit, H. de – Les derniers jours Vol.I p.448-449

Cambronne received through an aide de camp the order to advance towards the plateau of Mont Saint Jean; as a result he instructed baron Poret de Morvan (commander of the 3rd regiment of grenadiers), who was also still in reserve as well, to form his battalions in colonne serrée par divisions. He himself went ahead to see the best site to attack, when he found out that everything fell back in front of the enemy. Cf. Cambronne to Mr.Dalidet. In: Brunschvicg, L. – Cambronne p.113-114

11.Cf. Delort. Notice sur les batailles etc. In: La Revue Hebdomadaire nr.213 p.358-383
Cf. Drouot in his speech for the Chambre des pairs, 24th June 1815. In: Additional particulars etc. Vol.II p.113

Colborne makes it clear that he was not under immediate threat of enemy cavalry in his flanking movement and his advance.

Cf. Colborne himself. In: BL, Add.ms.34.708 p.84-88

Lieutenant Gawler (52nd regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.704 p.88-97

¹² Cf. Major Pelet. In: L'infanterie de la garde à Waterloo p.40

He describes a situation in which the guard formed these four groups of battalions: two near Napoleon himself [1st and 2nd battalion 1st regiment of grenadiers], three at the Brussels road [2nd battalion of the 1st and 2nd regiment of chasseurs, 1st battalion of the 2nd regiment grenadiers], three [in reality there were two, 1st regiment of grenadiers and the 1st battalion 3rd regiment of grenadiers] in an intermediate position and four to the left [3rd and 4th regiments of chasseurs] in front, for the attack.

French bulletin of the battle. In: Bas, F.de – La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.553-554

Mémoires pour servir etc. p.159-163

Gourgaud – La campagne de 1815 p.88

Though Béraud, former captain of the 4th grenadiers, describes the attack itself in one mass (though it started in two), he confirms the fact that the Old Guard, in squares, attempted to delay the general French retreat. In: Histoire de Napoléon p.283-285

Baron Bellina also speaks of the imperial guard being placed in 8 squares to protect the retreat of the right wing of the army in his report for Soult, dated 23rd June. In: SHAT, nr.C15, nr.5

Lieutenant Gawler erroneously believes the battalions on the intermediate ridge were the rear-guard of those troops which had just attacked Wellington's front, and which had got to the rear in reasonable good order. In: The crisis etc. p.20

¹³ Cf. Uffindell, A. - On the fields of glory. The battlefields of the 1815 campaign p.214-215

¹⁴ Clinton to Hill, 19th of June 1815. In: WSD, Vol.X p.545

¹⁵ This figure is composed as follows:

100 Hanoverian sharpshooters

150 Feldjäger

1800 Brunswickers (3 battalions, about 600 men each)

600 battalion Salzgitter

350 2nd battalion line infantry KGL and 300 Schützen

900 1st battalion Nassau

1700 British forces: 18 companies (about 90 men each) of Byng's brigade (about 1600 men), plus two light companies of Maitland's brigade (about 140 men).

According to lieutenant colonel Home (2nd battalion 3rd Foot Guards) the whole force at Gomont never exceeded 1200 men. Cf. his account dated 1816. In: BL, Add.ms.19590 (Mudford papers).

¹⁶ The sharpshooters of the Grubenhagen battalion were at Gomont all day, but somehow had some trouble to keep their position. Cf. Note on the Hanoverian forces. In: BL, Add.ms.34.705 p.289-302

¹⁷ Cf. for instance ensign Cochrane (3rd Foot Guards) in his letter dated 17th January 1842. In: NLS, MS2282

¹⁸ Byng in a letter to the duke of York, 19th June 1815. In: www.1815.ltd.uk Original in: Regimental Headquarters Scots Guards.

¹⁹ Colonel Woodford, his account dated 4th August 1815. In: Catalogue, Maggs Bros nr.1104 (May 1990)

²⁰ Cf. his letter dated 9th December 1836. In: NLS, MSS 866

²¹ These were the two light companies, the two companies of lieutenant colonel Home, as well as those of Mackinnon, some 600 men in all (exclusive casualties).

²² Cf. Henckens, J.L. - Mémoires se rapportant à son service militaire au 6^e régiment de chasseurs à cheval p.232

²³ Cf. Riese, A. , Der Kampf in und um Dörfer und Wälder p.93-237

Cf. Chef de bataillon Puvis (93th regiment of the line). He confirms his regiment was at some point of time relieved by the 100th regiment of the line. In: Souvenirs etc. p.117

²⁴ To determine how many Frenchmen were involved at Gomont is virtually impossible, as casualties suffered at Quatre Bras are unavailable. Jérôme himself states he lost at Waterloo 2000 men and ended the battle with two battalions (about 1200 men). This comes to 3200 at the start of the battle, excluding previous losses. Taking into account that the division went into the campaign with about 6500 men, these figures are doubtful. Cf. his letter dated 15th

July 1815. In: Correspondance et mémoires du roi Jérôme etc. p.24

At the morning of the 18th of June, Jérôme's division might have counted some 6000 men and Tissot about a 1000, but this is a mere guess.