

It was towards 3 p.m. that Wellington returned from Bussy to Quatre Bras.¹

At the same time he saw his 5th British division approaching over the Brussels road – in fact, Picton halted the front of his division a few hundred meters north of Quatre Bras.²

It was here that stragglers caught up, artillery was drawn up and that Picton prepared his units to intervene in the action.³

Wellington met lieutenant-general Picton⁽⁴⁾ and now ordered him to deploy his division along the Namur-road, between Quatre Bras and Piraumont.⁵⁻⁶

Then the division advanced, having their left in front. Captain Campbell (42nd regiment) says : "When the 42nd first halted on the road from Brussels, it was close to some houses on the left. We moved forward and soon after turned off to the left and formed line."⁷ Lieutenant Winchester (92nd regiment) says: "Our division in consequence and without halting, was ordered immediately to deploy to their left."⁸ And lieutenant Forbes (79nd regiment) writes: "The column (left in front) halted in the road and piled arms in the then order of march for about a quarter of an hour...The 8th and 9th British brigades then broke off to their left..."⁹

Sergeant Anton (42nd regiment) indicates: "We descended to the plain by an echelon movement toward our right, halted on the road (from which we had lately diverged to the left) , formed in line, fronting a bank on the right side, whilst the other regiments took up their position to right and left, as directed by our general."¹⁰

Finally, captain Macdonald (1st regiment) writes: "At or about three o'clock p.m. on the 16th, upon Picton's division arriving at the top of the hill just above Quatre Bras, where it halted for a short time, the 3rd battalion Royal Scots was moved away from Pack's brigade to the left of the high road, and formed in column at quarter distance; moved down a slope to the cross roads [=Namur road] , and there formed in line under the immediate direction of Sir Thomas Picton and Sir James Kempt."¹¹

From all this it can be concluded that the division broke up to the left north of Quatre Bras and from this intermediate position north of the Namur-road which followed, advanced in open columns of companies to the Namur-road where it took up its position.¹²

In approaching Quatre Bras, the 28th regiment must have been kept on the Brussels-road as it was meant to advance over this road; it must have done so, led by lieutenant colonel Gomm aiming to occupy the farm of Gémioncourt. However, soon it became clear that this farm had already been taken by the French and as a result, Gomm faced about and led his men over the road to their position in the line of the division.¹³

As soon as the units had reached their positions, the men were instructed to lie down.¹⁴ At the time the 5th British division was deploying, the French artillery was already spreading its fire under its battalions.¹⁵

All battalions came initially in position on the Namur-road itself – of which the banks on either side were considerably elevated-, with their light troops in front of it.¹⁶ These were the 42nd, 44th, 1st, 28th, 32nd and 79th regiment. The 92nd was on the road in front of the farm of Quatre Bras, having its rear leaning on the building itself and its gardens and having its right on the crossroads. In this position the 92nd was on the extreme right of the division.¹⁷ The 79th regiment was on the left flank, north of the Etang Materne.¹⁸

To the right of the 79th was the 32nd.¹⁹ Then the 28th and the 1st regiment followed.²⁰ Next to the 1st regiment was the 44th and to its right was the 42nd.²¹ To its right was the 92nd regiment. The 1st battalion of the 95th regiment halted near the crossroads of Quatre Bras for a moment, as initially it was meant to advance over the Brussels road to occupy the farm of Gémioncourt.

Yet, in the meantime, units of Foy had taken the farm.²²

Now, Sir Barnard, commander of the 1st/95th , galloped forward to Wellington's staff, followed by lieutenant Kincaid; he was in readiness to convey any orders to the battalion. The moment they approached the group, Lord Fitzroy Somerset separated himself from the duke of

Wellington and ordered Barnard to take Piraumont and, if this would prove to be impossible, to occupy the Bois de Censes and to keep open the communication with the Prussian army.²³

The battalion moved there and by the time sir A. Barnard was approaching the area in front of Piraumont he found out that it was already a stronghold of the French.²⁴

Accordingly Sir Barnard occupied the Bois de Censes and secured the Namur-road by sending out skirmishers.

Barnard did so by occupying the southern edge of the Bois de Censes with the reserve companies of captains Glasse (no.9) and Lee (no.8), from there they could give a sharp fire on the French, who were on the other side of the Namur-road.

Meanwhile, the Namur-road was secured by skirmishers of captain Johnston's company (no.5) so that captain Chawner's company (no.1) and no.2 company, led by lieutenant Fitzmaurice (²⁵), were able to occupy the south-western houses of Sart-à-Mavelines which were immediately north of the Namur-road. At the same time, company no.10 (led by 1st lieutenant Layton for captain Beckwith) must have been lining an embankment and ditch, but exactly where is not known.²⁶

After his brigade had taken up position, major general Kempt had his battalion commanders send out their light companies forward as skirmishers; to those of the 79th regiment, the 8th company and the marksmen were added.²⁷ I presume major general Pack must have given the same instruction.

The front between the Etang Materne and Quatre Bras was formed thus: 95th-79th-32nd-28th-1st-44th-42nd-92nd.

To the immediate left of Quatre Bras and in rear of the Brunswickers (see below) came the battalions of the brigade of major general Best (four battalions, about 2500 men). There, in a field which was broken up by hedges, the troops were drawn up in line, having the battalion of Lüneburg to the right and the battalion of Münden to the left.²⁸

Of the artillery of the division of Picton, the battery of captain Rogers (six guns) was to the left of the 79th regiment, on the road.²⁹

The other battery of Picton's division, Braun's, wasn't present.³⁰

Picton had the battery of Von Rettberg (six guns) attached to his division, though it formerly belonged to the 4th division (Colville). It had marched in the rear of the column and took up a position to the left of the farm of Quatre Bras, close in rear of the Namur-road.³¹

Wellington himself was, with his staff, on foot close to the 92nd regiment.³²

Not far from Picton's division and Best's brigade, some Brunswick units followed over the Brussels road. They were six battalions (about 4000 men) and five squadrons (about 900 horsemen).

As with Picton's units, most of them filed out to the left near La Baraque so as to approach the Namur-road from the north (and not from the north-west).³³

They must have reached their positions near Quatre Bras somewhere towards 3.45 p.m.³⁴

Initially, the major part of the Brunswickers was assigned a position in line in rear of Picton's division, near Quatre Bras.³⁵

The 2nd battalion of light infantry was given the task to support the 1st battalion of the 95th regiment to the left; it must have marched there over the Namur-road.³⁶

Two companies of carabiniers of the Advance-guard battalion were sent to the Bois de Bossu.³⁷

Finally, a few platoons of hussars were sent in reconnaissance to the west of the wood.³⁸

Shortly after the Brunswickers had formed in rear of the Namur-road, probably not long after 4 p.m., Wellington asked the duke of Brunswick to bring his troops to the front over the Brussels-road to find out about the enemy's intentions there. As a result the Duke led most of his battalions in closed columns over this road forward to a position about halfway La Bergerie and

the small rivulet which streams north of Gémioncourt across the highroad, about 500 meters south of Quatre Bras. Here he halted the Leib-battalion and the 1st battalion of the line on both sides of the high-road, the Leib battalion in a closed column to the left and the other battalion to the right, while he led both remaining companies of the advance-guard battalion into the field towards the Bois de Bossu; to their right was a line of skirmishers which linked up to the other two companies of the advance-guard battalion which were in the wood. In rear of this line of infantry, on a height, came the hussars and the uhlans in line (to the left and right) . The 2nd and 3rd battalions of the line had halted immediately north of Quatre Bras in order to form a reserve on and very close to the Brussels road; for this they had both taken up a position “en crémaillère” (a line in right angles). Their task was in case of a French offensive, to receive the other Brunswick units and to hold the crossroads as long as they could.³⁹

The charge of Van Merlen’s brigade.

The moment van Merlen’s brigade arrived at Quatre Bras, the British units of the 5th division must have taken up their positions or were moving there. This means that Van Merlen must have reached the crossroads between 3.30 and 4 p.m.⁴⁰

The moment the brigade of Van Merlen arrived near Quatre Bras, it was accompanied by a section of two guns of half the horse artillery battery Gey and led by 2nd lieutenant W.H.J. van Wassenaar van St.Pancras. Captain Gey himself was present as well.⁴¹

The total number of Anglo-Netherlands-German troops present (excluding the losses) now amounted to about 22.300 men (19.340 men infantry, 2000 men cavalry, 950 men artillery plus 30 guns).

The 6th regiment of hussars (640 men) took up a position in line east of the Brussels road and south of the Namur one.⁴²

About the position of the 5th regiment of light dragoons I have no information, but in view of the events later (see below), I presume they may have been in rear of the hussars.⁴³

The two guns of horse artillery probably were not far off in front of Quatre Bras, not far left from the Brussels road.⁴⁴

As the men had been marching for a long time and through the heat, Van Merlen had his men take a rest and feed their horses from their nose-bags.⁴⁵ They hadn’t finished doing so when colonel Boreel saw the units of Picton move up. Then he ordered his men to mount and move “pelotons à gauche, tête de colonne demi à droite”, in order to take up a position in rear of this infantry.⁴⁶

Right at that moment the presumption is that the order must have been issued by the prince of Orange to charge. The reason to do was that the Netherlands infantry was retiring, while Piré was advancing in front of Quatre Bras. At the same time, Picton could use some air to develop his division.

While at least a part of the regiment of hussars had changed position to its right [⁴⁷], the left hand platoons wheeled out to form line and advanced. Despite the fact that the regiment hadn’t completed its formation (line), Boreel launched the charge with a broken front “en fourageur”, a very dangerous formation.⁴⁸ Despite the enthusiasm of the men, the charge was doomed to fail. While advancing, it seems as if the men tried to reform per squadron, which caused disorder in the most rearward subdivisions.⁴⁹

Stevenart’s battery (now consisting of five guns) must have followed the Netherlands cavalry further to the rear. Initially, its new commander, lieutenant van der Wall, led his guns to a position to the left of the Brussels road and till about 200 to 300 meters in front of the farm of

Quatre Bras, when he got the order to move even further south, in order to be covered to its left by the Netherlands hussars and to have a better view over a height further to his right. Here, the guns suffered from French artillery fire until the French cavalry charged Van Merlen (see below).⁵⁰

It was north of Gémioncourt that the hussars met the lancers and chasseurs à cheval of Piré, in which division the 6th regiment of chasseurs à cheval must have been in front.⁵¹

The charge must have given the chance for most part of the 27th battalion of chasseurs, which was encircled by the French, to get away to the rear (see above).

But other than that it becomes clear that the charge of the hussars failed completely afterwards; they lost 5 officers (⁵²) and 44 men (of which 13 killed and 31 wounded).⁵³

The French cavalry now pursued the hussars towards Quatre Bras and both got on Stevenart's battery which had just got forward again: as both forces had still been mingled, it didn't have the chance to fire and now its crew was sabred down and overrun by the French.⁵⁴

1st lieutenant Ruysch van Coevorden, 2nd lieutenant Van de Wall and 2nd lieutenant Van Galen got seriously injured. Van der Wall also got prisoner for a few moments. Major Von Opstall, commander of the artillery of the 2nd Netherlands division, got wounded too and now the command fell to captain Bijleveld.⁵⁵

For some time, the complete battery (five guns) must have been in French hands; however they didn't drag the guns to the rear as they lacked the means to do so; nor were they spiked.⁵⁶

The French cavalry, while pursuing the Netherlands hussars, now approached the 92nd regiment of Picton's division which was in line to the immediate left of Quatre Bras. Due to its formation it waited on Wellington's orders until the very last moment to fire in order to have the most effect as apparently the battalion must have lacked the time to form a square. Now, the volley hit the French hard, but also the hussars suffered some casualties. All in all, the result was that Piré faced about in some disorder and took up its former position again further north.⁵⁷

It must have been shortly after that the other regiment of Van Merlen's brigade, the 5th regiment of light dragoons, charged. The light dragoons must have been able to maintain their action against Piré for some time. Part of the regiment – in the open fields - would have played a role in rescuing some retreating infantry, while the main part of the regiment – nearer to the main road - would have charged the French several times. These actions must have had some kind of success, but eventually the light dragoons were not able to keep up their formation and were forced to fall back as well.⁵⁸

As a result, it was driven back by Piré's men. They, in their turn, were driven back in the same way by the fire of the 92nd regiment.⁵⁹ It was during this action that the light dragoons and the French chasseurs à cheval were probably so close upon each other, and this in combination with the fact that their uniforms resembled the French, that the men of the 92nd thought they were French too and that they fired at them as well.⁶⁰

It was probably in this period of the action that Wellington barely escaped being prisoner himself, but thanks to his favorite charger called Copenhagen (which he rode both at Quatre Bras and Waterloo) he managed to escape by leaping a bank and ditch.⁶¹ In this connection he would not have leaped over the bayonets, as is often being asserted, but he would have cried out "Make way men, make way!" and a passage was opened.⁶²

After that, both the hussars and the light dragoons took up a position in rear of the farm of Quatre Bras, from where they didn't move again.⁶³

In the midst of the confusion the battery of Bijleveld must somehow have got back further to Quatre Bras relatively unscathed: it probably accompanied the infantry of the 5th battalion of national militia for a while, but must have lost one howitzer (of lieutenant Dibbetz) on the way, somewhere between Gémioncourt and Quatre Bras as its caisson exploded (thereby hurting Dibbetz).

When it got to the crossroads, it must have taken up a position further north and didn't see any further action that day.⁶⁴

The section under 2nd lieutenant Koopman, which had by now taken up a position a bit more to the front (as Picton had developed) about 250 meters east of the Brussels road, initially must have fired some canister with his two right guns (which he had moved slightly to the rear) on the French cavalry which pursued Van Merlen, but then went back to the rear of the Namur-road, where Koopman didn't find a proper position. Koopman had done so, while other units in front had gone back too.

He then led his guns towards Quatre Bras, where he met major De la Sarraz who ordered Koopman to place his guns opposite the Bois de Bossu, between the Namur- and the Brussels road, facing west, towards Nivelles.⁶⁵

After the French had taken Gémioncourt and advanced from there, Gey's artillery had gone to the rear towards Quatre Bras, but now after the retreat of Van Merlen, it was overrun and scattered by the French cavalry as well. Not long after the French had gone, however, most of the section was collected and led to the other (west) side of the Brussels road, a few hundred paces in front of Quatre Bras. Here it must have kept a position until in the evening, but apparently not seeing much action at all, when it was moved back north of Quatre Bras.⁶⁶

Rettberg's guns, however, in rear of the Namur-road and to the immediate left of Quatre Bras also (like Koopman) must have fired on the right flank of the French cavalry which pursued Van Merlen.⁶⁷

The moment Van Merlen's men returned from their charge, the Brunswickers, in rear of Picton, must have formed squares; their hussars were about to charge the pursuing French cavalry, but before the hussars could take action, the French horsemen went about for the fire of the 92nd.⁶⁸ By now it must have been running towards 4.15 p.m.

As the French cavalry of Piré had pulled back and had collected under a strong French infantry fire, a party of the section captain Gey's horse battery was now sent forward to collect the guns of Stevenart.

The reason was that major De la Sarraz had ordered captain Osten to instruct Gey to do so. Now, Gey collected some volunteers of his section; some hussars and Scottish soldiers must have joined in as well. They succeeded in retrieving two 6-pounders; two other guns of the foot-battery were still in French hands (one which had been left behind near the Bois de Bossu, and the other one in front of Quatre Bras), but were found back later; also the howitzer of Bijleveld's horse battery came back in Netherlands hands.⁶⁹

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1. Wellington had left Brye around 2 p.m. and it took him almost one hour to reach the crossroads.

In one version, Fitzroy Somerset claims the Duke reached Quatre Bras "very shortly before it was engaged with the enemy", but here he overlooks the share of the 2nd Netherlands division in the first part of the fighting. In: BL, Add.ms.34.707 p.484-485

In another account he mentions 2.30 p.m. Cf. Account in NAM, nr.6507-1

Müffling confirms it was 3 p.m. In: Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.9

Wellington himself says it was between 2 and 3 p.m. In: his letter to W.Croker, dated 28th January 1845. In: The Croker Papers, Vol.III 1885 (2nd edition) p.175

Pflugk Harttung, J.von In: GSA, HA VI,nr.III.1.p.37

Siborne writes it was 2.30 p.m. In: History of the war etc. Vol.I p.102

2. Captain Crowe (32nd regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.320-321

Sergeant Costello (1st/95th regiment). In: The adventures of a soldier etc. p.284

3. The stragglers of the 1st battalion of the 95th regiment had already joined their battalion at Genappe. Cf. 1st lieutenant J.Pensman Gairdner in his diary. In: NAM, nr.6902-5

4. During the campaign, Picton wore a blue frock-coat. Its collar was covered by a large silk scarf. Further, he wore dark trousers, boots and a round hat. Sometimes it is asserted that he was obliged to wear all this as his luggage wouldn't have arrived, but this is not the reason: he simply preferred to be dressed like this. Cf. Gronow, R.H. , The reminiscences and recollections of captain Gronow p.65

⁵ I assume the division of Picton actually took up its positions between about 3.15 and about 3.45 p.m.

3.30 p.m. is given by:

Lieutenant colonel W.M.Gomm in his diary. In: Letters and journals etc. p.353

Some believe it was 2 p.m. Cf.

Lieutenant colonel Calvert. In: BL, Add.ms.34.705 p.169-170

Captain J.Leach (1st/95th). In: Rough sketches etc. p.374

Ensign Mudie (1st battalion). In: Operations of the 5th or etc. In: USJ, 1841 II p.174

Captain Ross-Lewin. In: With the thirty second p.254

An anonymous subaltern officer of the 92nd regiment, in: United Service Journal II 1841 p.172

Private D.Vallence (79th regiment). In: The Waterloo Journal Vol.21, nr.2 p.15

Other eye-witnesses believe it was somewhere between 2 and 3 p.m. Cf.

Lieutenant Winchester (92nd regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.242-247

Wellington himself claims it was at 2.30 p.m. In his report dated 19th June 1815. In: Dispatches etc. Vol.XII p.479

Yet again, others believe it was 3 p.m. Cf.

Lieutenant Heise (battery Von Rettberg). In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.375-376 and 34.705 p.190-191

Lieutenant McKenzie (42nd regiment). In: BWRA, nr.414

Constant Rebecque. In his account. In: NA, 2.21.008.01 nr.25

Captain Van Zuylen van Nijvelt. Account dated 22nd March 1841. In: NA , nr.2.21.180 and in: VLS. II.3.nr.11a and 12

Lieutenant colonel MacDonald (1st Royals). In: BL, Add.ms.34.707 p.3-6

Lieutenant Mackenzie (42nd regiment). In his memoirs. In: NAM, nr.7904/15
Lieutenant Hope (92nd). In: Letters from Portugal etc. p.225
Notizen etc. In: VPH-LBA, nr.4
Lieutenant Kerr Ross (92nd regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.252-256

Wellington himself is definitely too early by writing it was 2.30 p.m. in his official despatch.
In: Bas, F.de la campagne de 1815. Vol.III p.438

6.Picton was escorted by the "honorary" aide de camp, lieutenant Gronow. Cf. Gronow, R.H. ,
The reminiscences and recollections of captain Gronow p.65

7.Captain Campbell. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.451-454 He is not sure whether the houses on
his left were the hamlet of La Baraque.

8.In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 242-247
Sergeant Roberston (92nd regiment).In: The journal of sergeant D.Robertson p.145

9.In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.314 and 34.703 p.1-2

10.In: Fitchett, W.H. Wellington's men p.290-291

11.In: BL, Add.ms.34.707 p.3-6

12.Also see: lieutenant Riddock (44th regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.293-297
Lieutenant Malcolm (42nd regiment). In: BWRA, nr.220

13.Lieutenant colonel W.M.Gomm. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.200-206 and 34.706 p.179-184
And in: Letters and journals etc. p.353

14.Sergeant Anton (42nd regiment). In: Brett James, A. The hundred days p.58
1st lieutenant J.Pensman Gairdner (95th regiment). In his diary. In: NAM, nr.6902-5
Lieutenant Winchester(92nd) . In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.242-247

¹⁵ Sergeant Robertson (92nd regiment). In: The journal of sergeant D.Robertson p.145
Lieutenant Winchester(92nd) . In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.242-247

16.Sir W.Gomm. In: BL, Add.ms.34.705 p.144-145 and 34.706 p.179-184
Captain Macdonald. In: BL, Add.ms. 34.707 p.3-6
General Von Müffling. In: The memoirs of etc. p.237
Sergeant Dewar (79th regiment). In a letter to his brother written on the 5th of august 1815.
In: NWMS, M1960.2
Lieutenant Forbes(79th). In: BL, Add.ms.34.703 p.1-2
The light company of the 79th – in front- was reinforced with the marksmen of the 79th.
Almost as soon as it had arrived, the 32nd sent out detachments of sections to reinforce the
light company in front, which was led by captain Crowe. Cf. Captain Crowe. In: BL,
Add.ms.34.706.87

17.Sergeant Robertson. In: The journal of sergeant D.Robertson p.143
Lieutenant Winchester. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.248-249 and 34.706 p.242-247

Winchester states his battalion was the last one to take up its position. He also adds there were no units in rear of his battalion. In: BL, Add.ms.34.707 p.7-10

Sir W.Gomm. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.200-206

Lieutenant Kerr Ross (92nd regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.252-256

Lieutenant Hope. In: Letters from Portugal etc. p.225

18.Lieutenant Forbes. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.314 and 34.703 p.1-2

Macveigh, J. The historical records of the 79th highlanders p.37

19.Major Calvert. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.256-258

20.Captain Ross-Lewin (32nd regiment). In: Ross-Lewin, H. With the thirty second etc. p.258

The sequence is taken from Kempt's brigade. In Pack's the sequence must have been changed for some reason; apparently, the 92nd and the 1st may have been switched.

21.Sergeant McEween. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706.129

Captain Campbell (42nd regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.706.128

His account again makes clear the brigade was in a different formation.

²² Reille. In: Notice historique etc. In: Documents inédits etc. p.59

²³ Sir W.Gomm. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706.54

Lieutenant Kincaid. In: Adventures etc. p.315

Caldwell, G and R.Cooper. Rifle green etc. p.35

For more details on the communication between Wellington and Blücher during the afternoon of the 16th of June, see the separate note.

²⁴ Lieutenant Kincaid claims Piraumont was only then taken by the French in force; however, it had already been occupied by the French between 2 and 3 p.m., before the battalion even got on the field. Cf. Kincaid, lieutenant Adventures etc. p.315

Caldwell and Cooper also claim that, by the time the battalion approached the Bois de Censes, the French were rushing forward to try to take this wood. I have no indications for this attempt whatsoever. Cf. Caldwell and Cooper. Rifle Green at Waterloo p.37

²⁵ Cf.Caldwell and Cooper. Rifle Green at Waterloo p.35

Fitzmaurice would lead, in absence of captain Leach. Yet, I have an account of Leach, so where this statement comes from is not clear. Cf. Leach, captain Rough sketches etc.

²⁶ Lieutenant Kincaid (1st battalion, 95th regiment). In: Adventures in the Rifle Brigade, p.316

Lieutenant colonel Gomm. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.200-206 and 34.706 p.179-184

Captain J.Leach (1st battalion, 95th regiment). In: Rough sketches etc. p.375

Private E.Costello (company nr.2). In: The adventures of a soldier etc. p.285

Lieutenant G.Simmons (1st battalion, 95th regiment) mentions a detachment of four companies which was used to drive away the French from fields, hedges and ditches, but he doesn't specify which companies. Cf. Simmons, G. A British rifle man etc. p.363

Cf.Caldwell and Cooper. Rifle green at Waterloo p.37

Some mention the name of the hamlet of Thyle, of which the most western houses were occupied by the companies nrs.1 and 2. However, I believe these were the most southern ones of Sart-à-Mavelines, as Thyle is more to the east and too remote from the field of action. Cf.

27. Major Forbes (79th regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.314
Captain Crowe (32nd regiment). Crowe led the one of the 32nd. Cf captain Crowe. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.320-321

28. Major general Best. In: VPH-LBA, nrs.7 and 8
Ensign Oppermann (battalion Münden). In: Kannicht, J. Und alles wegen Napoleon p.203
Sir W.Gomm. He erroneously mentions Von Vincke, but means Best. In: BL, Add.ms.34.705 p.144-145
Note in: BL, Add.ms.34.707 p.33

29. Captain Rogers. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706.61 and 34.706.64

30. The state of the losses of this battery, dated 21st of June, doesn't mention any on the 16th as well. In: NHA, Hann.38D, nr.200
Captain Rogers believes a KGL battery was in the field, but he doesn't mention the name; this must have been the one of Von Rettberg. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.240-241
On the other hand, Sir J.May believes Braun's battery was present at Quatre Bras. Cf. his letter to captain Whinyates dated 5th april 1816. In: Woolwich, nr.MD 1438
Several historians mention the presence of Braun. Cf. Aerts, W. Etudes etc. p.455

31. Cf. Captain Von Rettberg. In: BL, Add.ms.34.704 p.229-234
Lieutenant Heise. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.375-376
Captain Von Rettberg. In: VPH-LBA, nr.16
Notizen etc. In: VPH-LBA, nr.4

32. Lieutenant Winchester (92nd regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.242-247
He says the Duke was to the immediate left of the battalion.
Sergeant Robertson (92nd regiment) says he was in the middle of the rear of the regiment. In: The journal of sergeant D.Robertson p.146
Private Kay (92nd) indicates the duke's position to the rear of his battalion. Cf. his plan, in: BL.Add.ms.34706 p.216-223

³³ Corporal Külbel of the Leib-battalion.. In: Die letzte Augenblicke etc. p.4 + plan

34. Von Wachholtz believes it was about 3 p.m. In: Geschichte des herzoglichen etc. p.24
Cf. Colonel Von Herzberg (of the general staff of the Brunswick corps). In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.23-55
According to corporal Külbel of the Leib-battalion, his unit was at 3.30 p.m. about half an hour away from Quatre Bras. In: Die letzte Augenblicke etc. p.4

35. Colonel Von Herzberg. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.23-55
Wachholtz, F.von Geschichte des herzoglich etc. p.25
Lieutenant Hope (92nd regiment) mentions the initial presence of some Brunswick cavalry to his rear. In: Letters from Portugal etc. p.225
Also see: captain Von Rettberg (Rettberg's battery). In: VPH-LBA, nr.16

36. Von Wachholtz. In: Geschichte des herzoglich etc. p.25

Colonel Von Herzberg. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.23-55

Simmons, Account. In: NAM, 6804-2

Lieutenant Pensman Gairdner (1st/95th). In: NAM, nr.6902-5

Lieutenant Kincaid. In: Adventures etc. p.316-317 He mentions the presence of a battalion of foreign light infantry, but also adds that they were very inexperienced and hardly recognised friend from foe and that they fired upon the British skirmishers.

37. Von Wachholtz in: Geschichte des herzoglich etc. p.25

Colonel Von Herzberg (of the general staff of the Brunswick corps). In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.23-55

38. Von Wachholtz. In: Geschichte des herzoglich etc. p.25

Colonel Von Herzberg (of the general staff of the Brunswick corps). In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.23-55

³⁹ Colonel Von Herzberg (of the general staff of the Brunswick corps). In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.23-55

Wachholtz, F.von Geschichte des herzoglich etc. p.26-27 and plan.

Corporal Külbel of the Leib-battalion gives a different impression of the advance: he claims his battalion first stood about 20-30 meters in front of Quatre Bras, immediately left of the Brussels road to cover some British guns, which stood on this road. Here, the battalion stood from about 4 p.m. until about 5 p.m. when it was relieved by a British battalion.

After that, the Leib-battalion moved to its left to the position sketched, at about 500 meters in front of the crossroads and to the south-east of the Bergerie. It did so in line, but this formation was soon changed into square by the duke of Brunswick himself. In this position (south east of the Bergerie) the battalion was placed in a closed column, of which the first platoon, led by ensign Klevert, was thrown out as skirmishers.

In: Die letzten Augenblicke etc. p.4-5

So far, I have been unable to track down the identity of the British battery and battalion, as at that stage of the action there were neither of these units there.

40. The prince of Orange states it was 4 p.m. In his letter dated 17th June 1815. In: Bas, F.de La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.432

For the presence of British unit: brevet major Van Balveren (6th regiment of hussars) Cf. VLS nr.II.5.2 Cf. captain Royen (6th regiment of hussars). In: VLS nr.II.5.nr.6 Gomm confirms the presence of Belgian cavalry in front of the 5th division. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.179-184

Adjutant subaltern officer Van Doren of the 5th regiment of light dragoons confirms that, when Van Merlen started his action, Picton was still manoeuvring. In: Strategisch verhaal etc. p.48

Lieutenant colonel De Mercx claims it was 3 p.m. and at the same time wants to give the impression that Picton arrived much later, which it didn't. Cf. his letter dated 17th January 1855 to Renard. In: Marchot, R. Notice biographique etc. p.76

41. 2nd lieutenant Van Wassenaar van St.Pancras. In: VLS nr.II.4.nr.5a

Report of colonel Hoyneck van Papendrecht. In: Bas, F.de La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.423
The other section of the half-battery, two guns led by lieutenant Reijntjes, had been detached. Cf.
2nd lieutenant Van Wassenaar van St.Pancras. In: VLS nr.II.4.nr.5a

42.1st lieutenant Deebet (6th regiment of hussars). In: VLS nr.II.5.nr.5

Captain Royen (6th regiment of hussars). In: VLS nr.II.5.nr.6

Lieutenant Kerr Ross (92nd) confirms the Netherlands cavalry came from the right in the field in front of the 92nd. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.252-256

⁴³ Lieutenant colonel De Mercx himself doesn't tell us anything about his position.

Dellevoet places the light dragoons in rear of the hussars. In: The Dutch-Belgian cavalry etc. p.106

⁴⁴ Lieutenant Van Wassenaar van St.Pancras. In: VLS nr.II.4.5a

Anonymous member of the section Gey. In: Bredasche Courant. 5th July 1840

Dellevoet places the guns to the right of the road, basing himself on the account of lieutenant Van der Wall's account (Stevenarts battery), but this one is not that specific that one could draw such a conclusion. In: Dellevoet, A. The Dutch Belgian cavalry etc. p.107

45. Brevet major Van Balveren (6th regiment of hussars). In: VLS nr.II.5.2
Erroneously, captain A.G.van Bronkhorst (7th battalion of national militia) claims there was about one hour between the arrival and the charge of Van Merlens brigade. In his letter dated 9th July 1815. In: Ons leger (1983) nr.6 p.32-38

⁴⁶ 1st lieutenant Deebet (6th regiment hussars). In: VLS nr.II.5.nr.5

Lieutenant Van Wassenaar. VLS nr.II.no.4.5a

⁴⁷ While 1st lieutenant Deebet gives the impression that the regiment was moving to its new position and just in front of the crossroads when the order to charge came, captain Royen (6th regiment of hussars) states the regiment had already taken up its new position in rear of the farm of Quatre Bras, when the order to charge came and resumed its former position in line in front of the Namur road. In: VLS nr.II.5.nr.5 and nr.6

⁴⁸ Cf. account of brevet major Van Balveren and 1st lieutenant Deebet, both of the 6th hussars. In: VLS nr.II.5.2 and 5

Anonymous member of the section Gey. In: Bredasche Courant. 5th July 1840

Dellevoet describes the charge as "made in a very open line formation, more or less en echelon." In: The Dutch-Belgian cavalry etc.p.109

49.Aerts, W. Etudes etc. p.436 [source ?]

⁵⁰ Cf. Lieutenant Van der Wall (battery Stevenart). In: VLS nr.II.4.nr.2 and 3

Captain Osten. In: VLS nr.II.4.nr.4

Major Van Opstall. In: VLS nr.II.4.nr.1

51.Lieutenant Henckens (6th regiment of chasseurs à cheval). In: Mémoires etc. p.225

Brevet major Van Balveren (6th regiment of hussars). In: VLS nr.II.5.nr.2

Captain Royen (6th regiment of hussars). In: VLS nr.II.5.nr.6

Van Balveren mentions the presence of red lancers of the guard, but these must have been those of Piré. Cf. account of Van Balveren. In: VLS nr.II.5.2

Rens gives a complete erroneous description of the charge of the hussars: as if they charged at the extreme left flank of Picton's division, right along the Etang materne, against Piré. In: Huzaren van Boreel p.85

52. Lieutenant Wolff was mortally wounded, while major Jacobi and the lieutenants Zwanebeek, Pauw, Rendorp and Van Utenhoven got wounded. Cf. Aerts, W. Etudes p.436

⁵³ Brevet major Van Balveren (6th regiment of hussars). In: VLS nr.II.5.nr.2

Lieutenant colonel De Mercx informs us of the failure of the hussars, but at the same time states as if the hussars were charged by two regiments of French cavalry, and not the other way around. In his letter dated 17th January 1855 to Renard. In: Marchot, R. Notice biographique etc. p.76

Jan Norden, brigadier of the 6th regiment of hussars, remembers that the regiment had a body of French lancers to its right and chasseurs à cheval to its left. By moving its front to the right, the left wing of the regiment charged the lancers. A strong action ensued, after which both regiments were collected again. Cf. Norden, J. Het leven en de lotgevallen etc. p.391.

In my view, Norden's account in general is not very reliable.

54. Cf. Lieutenant Van der Wall. In: VLS nr.II.4.2

Major Van Opstall. In: VLS nr.II.4.nr.1

Report of general De Perponcher. In: Bas, F.de La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.282

According to colonel Osten (adjutant of Von Gunkel) the battery had followed the cavalry but didn't have the time to form; as the guns had ridden too close, they didn't have the chance to turn and then rode into each other, after which they were charged by the French. Cf. Colonel Osten. In: VLS nr.II.4.4

⁵⁵ Major Van Opstall. In: VLS nr.II.4.nr.1

Lieutenant Van der Wall (battery Stevenart). In: VLS nr.II.4.nr.2

2nd lieutenant Koopman (Bijleveld). In: VLS nr.II.4.nr.9

56. Lieutenant Henckens (6th regiment of chasseurs à cheval). In: Mémoires etc. p.228

Von Müffling. In: Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.12

Colonel van Zuylen van Nijvelt claims the French took with them two 6-pounders and one howitzer. In: Historisch verhaal etc. In: Bas, F.de La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.320

⁵⁷ Brevet major Van Balveren (6th regiment of hussars). In: VLS nr.II.5.nr.2

Captain Osten. In: VLS nr.II.4.nr.4

Lieutenant Kerr Ross (92nd regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.252-256

Kerr Ross clearly makes a distinction between two separate cavalry charges, both coming from his immediate right. He calls the French horsemen cuirassiers, but clearly Van Merlen's charge is meant, as he mentions "a corps of Belgian (mixed with some Brunswick cavalry if I don't [?] much forget)". Kerr Ross here recognizes that "some of the allied cavalry did fall at the time we gave the volley to the cuirassiers." This would have meant that also the hussars would have suffered from friendly fire.

Major general Best. He claims there were two squadrons of French cavalry (chasseurs). In: VPH-LBA, nr.8

Lieutenant Winchester (92nd). In: BL, Add.ms.706 p.242-247

Winchester doesn't mention Van Merlen at all, but at the same time also mentions two separate charges of Piré towards the 92nd regiment, which – in the timeframe - without a doubt were the ones which were related to the ones of Van Merlen.

Sir Wm.Gomm. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.179-184

Anonymous member of the section Gey. In: Bredasche Courant. 5th July 1840

⁵⁸ Doren, J.B.J. van. Strategisch verhaal etc. p.48-50

Van Doren was adjutant subaltern in the 5th regiment of light dragoons. He claims the hussars were committed first as two French battalions of infantry were approaching the centre. As we have seen, this is probably not correct.

Van Doren points out to the fact that some French horsemen invited the light dragoons to desert, having been former comrades.

The fact that the charge of the hussars had a follow up by the 5th regiment of light dragoons is confirmed by captain Royen of the hussars. However, he doesn't enter into any detail about this charge. In: VLS nr.II.5.nr.6

Lieutenant Van der Wall (battery Stevenart) claims the charge of the hussars and light dragoons proved succesfull. In: VLS nr.II.4.nr.2

Colonel De Mercx. In his letter dated 17th january 1855 to Renard. In: Marchot, R. Notice biographique etc. p.76 De Mercx suggests as if Picton and the Brunswickers arrived after the charge and that after their arrival, the field was secured and that this was the reason for his regiment to fall back.

De Mercx himself got wounded during the action.

A flank charge of another squadron of the 5th regiment of light dragoons would have saved the first squadron from the French; during this action several light dragoons fell in French hands, and who were relieved in their turn by their comrades. Cf. Registers of captains De Lenne, Mertens and O'Sullivan. In: Kanselarij der Nederlandse Orden, The Hague One of them was count De Looz, who was rescued from the French chasseurs à cheval by a dragoon called Rassonet. Cf. the register of this dragoon.

Rens erroneously claims that the dragoons charged west of the Brussels road and as far as a point between Gémioncourt and Grand Pierrepont, that they kept up the fight with the French chasseurs à cheval for about 15 minutes until the dragoons fell back for the advancing horsemen of Guiton ! In: Rens, A. Huzaren van Boreel p.88-89

In the archive of Van Löben Sels there are no eye-witness accounts of members of this regiment and the report of colonel Hoyneck van Papendrecht, chief of staff of the cavalry doesn't help us either. In: Bas, F.de La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.424

As a result, Van Löben Sels wasn't able to reconstruct its situation in the action of Quatre Bras, as he writes. In: Bijdragen etc. Vol.IV p.529

Siborne gives a complete incorrect picture of the charges of Van Merlen: he clearly discerns two charges, the first against Piré [possibly around 3.30 p.m.] and the second [towards 5 p.m.] against cuirassiers. In: History of the war etc. Vol.I p.105, 130

⁵⁹ Lieutenant Kerr Ross (92nd regiment). In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.252-256

Lieutenant Winchester (92nd). In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.242-247

⁶⁰ Doren, J.B.J. van - Strategisch verhaal etc. p.49-50

Lieutenant Kerr Ross briefly mentions the risk of hitting the own cavalry during their first retreat, but he doesn't refer to this fire in the second (the one of the light dragoons) at all. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.252-256

61. Lord Fitzroy Somerset. In: NAM, nr.6507-1

Wellington rode Copenhagen the whole campaign. The horse was bought in 1813 from general major Sir Charles Stuart. It was born in 1808 and was known as a stayer. It was a grandson of the famous Eclipse and had been a racehorse too before it came to the Duke. Its name had been derived from the deeds of his dam, Lady Catherine, on which general Grosvenor had ridden during the siege of Copenhagen. Copenhagen died on the 12th of february 1836 at Stratfield Saye. Cf. Het paardendagboek. Rebo produkties. z.p.

Copenhagen was cinnamon-colored with a touch of Arabic. Cf. Lithograph of Engelmann (from Adam) and the Navy and army illustrated VIII,132 augustus 1899 p.497

Cf. Aerts, W. Notice sur la tenue porté à Waterloo etc. p.8 In: LMB

⁶² Sir G.Scovell. In: Copy of memorandum etc. In: PRO, nr.WO37/12/84

⁶³ Brevet major Van Balveren (6th regiment of hussars). In: VLS nr.II.5.nr.2

1st lieutenant Deebetz (6th regiment of hussars). In: VLS nr.II.5.nr.5

Captain Royen (6th regiment of hussars). In: VLS nr.II.5.nr.6

Lieutenant Van Wassenaar van St.Pancras (battery Gey). In: VLS nr.II.4.nr.5a

Colonel De Mercx in his letter dated 17th january 1855 to Renard. In: Marchot, R. Notice biographique etc. p.76

Dellevoet claims part of the cavalry went back as far as Genappe. In: The Dutch-Belgian cavalry etc. p.114

Lord Fitzroy Somerset claims that "many of the Belgic cavalry went to Brussels and spread the alarm", but there is no further proof for that. In: NAM, nr.6507-1

⁶⁴ Major van Opstall. In: VLS, nr.II.4.nr.1

Lieutenant Van der Wall (battery Stevenart). In: VLS nr.II.4.nr.2

Captain Bijleveld himself erroneously claims he had a position in the first line all day. In: VLS nr.II.4.nr.7 and 8

⁶⁵ 2nd lieutenant Koopman. In: VLS nr.II.4.9 Koopman adds that he had nothing to do there, until he saw Brunswick artillery approaching from Genappe (by 7 p.m.); then he joined them and went back to Quatre Bras, where he met captain Bijleveld who asked him to join him again.

66.Lieutenant Van Wassenaar In: VLS nr.II.no.4.5a

Van Wassenaar's account is somewhat confusing, but I believe this was the most probable chain of events.

Van Wassenaar also indicates that since their charge, both regiments of Van Merlen's brigade got separated from the guns for the remainder of the day.

There is another, very confusing, account of an apparent (anonymous) member of the section who claims the section, though partly charged at, was able to hold its position under the French cavalry. He also believes the guns were in action until in the evening. In: Bredasche Courant.

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Van Löben Sels also faced problems locating Gey, and he believes the guns were first to the left, but to the right of the Brussels road during the charge of Van Merlen, and later to its left again until in the evening. In *Bijdragen etc.* Vol.IV p.525,531

There is further proof that Gey's guns had been charged, but not taken. Cf. list of artillery-officers who distinguished themselves in the campaign as drawn up by major De la Sarraz on the 27th of June 1815. In: KHA nr.A37 VII b9

⁶⁷ Report of captain Von Rettberg. In: VPH-LBA, nr.16
Notizen etc. In: VPH-LBA, nr.4

⁶⁸ Wachholtz, F. von *Geschichte des herzoglich etc.* p.26
Colonel Von Herzberg. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.23-55
Notiezen etc. In: VPH-LBA, nr.4

Ensign Cappel (Leib batalion) not only refers to the Belgian dragoons fleeing but also mentions his battalion's fire upon the French. In: www.1815.ltd.uk– Original in: NSA, nr.276 N15

According to ensign Lindwurm (2nd Brunswick line battalion), after his battalion had hardly deployed, a regiment of French cavalry advanced upon it. The battalion formed square, but the cavalry turned away and did not charge. Cf. his letter dated 23rd June 1815. In: www.1815.ltd.uk Original in: NSA, nr.249 AN 190

Ensign Oppermann (battalion Münden) claims the Brunswick squares actually successfully fired on the French cavalry. In letter dated 23rd June 1815 to his parents. In: Kannicht, J. *Un alles wegen Napoleon* p.23

Major general Best claims the Brunswick infantry fell back on his brigade to recover. In: VPH-LBA, nr.8

69. Lieutenant Henckens. In: *Mémoires etc.* p.228

Captain Osten. In: VLS nr.II.4.nr.4

Lieutenant Van Wassenaar van St.Pancras (battery Gey). In: VLS nr.II,4.nr.5a

2nd lieutenant Koopman. In: VLS nr.II.4.9

Von Müffling. In: *Geschichte des Feldzugs etc.* p.12

A record about captain Gey mentions the participation of 2nd lieutenant Clement, sergeant Wanders of the train and some gunners of the first company of horse artillery. In: *Kanselarij der Nederlandse Orden*, The Hague.

Other documents relating to captain Gey also mention the participation of some hussars and some Scottish soldiers. In: NA, nr.2.21.071

The fact that two 6-pounders and a howitzer had been retaken is confirmed by both the same sources.

2nd lieutenant Koopman claims the gun of Bijleveld was returned by Gey by 6 p.m. In: VLS, nr.II.4.9

Dellevoet is incorrect in his claim that the recovered guns came from Gey's unit of horse artillery. In: *The Dutch-Belgian cavalry etc.*p.113