

The Prussian intervention. The corps of Von Bülow.

Introduction.

By 4 p.m. Prussian infantry had been massed in the Bois de Paris, on a wide front, the brigade of Von Losthin directly to the right of the road, and the one of Von Hiller directly to the left of it. At least Von Hiller tried to provoke the French cavalry by pulling back his fusiliers from the edge of the wood. The French cavalry did advance till about 100 paces from the wood but then halted and didn't send out patrols.¹

Though the entire 4th corps hadn't arrived yet on the other side of the valley of the Lasne, Blücher still decided to attack right away as the situation of Wellington's army seemed to be quite alarming.²

By doing so, he reckoned with the arrival of the complete 4th corps, the 2nd and the 1st corps.³ The moment the first Prussians started to emerge from the wood it was 4.30 p.m.⁴

Blücher had two options for the offensive: one to the west, towards Ficherfont and the other more southwest towards Plancenoit, thereby threatening the French communication line. Eventually, it became a combination of both and, while having La Belle Alliance as a target, in which the right brigade (Von Losthin) was supposed to make later a gradual shift again towards the left.⁵

As Von Bülow formulated, the corps had to start its action as he describes it thus:

“Die 15. Brigade Losthin nimmt die Tete und entwickelt sich westlich vom Walde in Bataillonsmassen als rechter Flügel, die Tirailleurs vorgezogen. Es folgt die Brigade Batterie und die Reserve Artillerie, die bis zur nächsten Anhöhe vorfahren, in der Front gedeckt durch das 2. Schlesische Husaren Regiment und die Brigade Kavallerie der 15. Brigade. Die 16. Brigade Hiller folgt, zieht sich links heraus und bildet den linken Flügel. Die Reserve Kavallerie Prinz Wilhelm formiert sich hinter der 16. Brigade. Die 13. Brigade V. Hacke wird Reserve.”⁶

In general, the Prussian frontline developed on the heights between Cheval de Bois and Aywiers, perpendicular to the French right flank and having La Belle Alliance as its central target.⁷ On its left side were the low grounds of the Lasne while on its right was the wooded area around Ficherfont. The fields towards Plancenoit undulated, while right in front of them they made a deep bend down towards the village. Seen from the Prussian position this made the village, covered by the low ground in which it was situated, invisible except for its spire. It meant that the men actually attacking the village initially did not see anything of what they could expect; this was only possible at a reasonable short distance.

The arrival of the 15th brigade.

The first battalions of 15th brigade of Von Losthin which got out of the Bois de Paris to the right of road which leads from Lasne to Plancenoit were, covered by their skirmishers, the 2nd (= fuselier) battalion of the 18th regiment and the fuselier battalion of the 3rd regiment of Silesian Landwehr infantry, to the right and left. They were led by major Von Krahn.⁸

In rear of them came a strong line of skirmishers which preceded the first line which consisted from right to left of the 1st battalion of the 18th regiment, the 3rd battalion of the same regiment, the 1st battalion of the 3rd regiment of Silesian Landwehr infantry and the 2nd battalion of the same regiment. In rear of both musketeer battalions of the 18th regiment were the 2nd and the 1st battalion of the 4th regiment of Silesian Landwehr infantry, to the right and left.⁹

For the protection of the left flank of the 16th brigade, which was due to arrive, the 3rd battalion

was sent out towards the extreme left flank towards Aywiers and Maransart. As soon as the 16th brigade had fully arrived, the battalion got back to the brigade and took up a position in the second line, probably about 75 meters in rear of the 2nd battalion of the 3rd regiment Silesian regiment of Landwehr infantry.¹⁰

The left flank of the 15th brigade must have extended towards the road which leads from Lasne to Plancenot.

It was to the left that its foot battery nr.14 had taken up a position, facing south and thereby having Fichermont to its right front. Opposite, the French cavalry was developing and therefore no serious threat.¹¹

Still further to its left was the horse battery nr.11 and which was in its turn on its left covered by the four squadrons of the 3rd regiment of Silesian Landwehr cavalry.¹² In the Bois de Paris, this horse battery nr.11 - belonging to the reserve artillery - had been taken further to the front, as well as the 2nd regiment of Neumark landwehr cavalry. Having trotted through the wood and initially being covered by the high corn, horse battery nr.11 had advanced unnoticed for the enemy and took up a position on the height near the road Lasne-Plancenot. There it opened a successful canister fire on the French cavalry which was very near.¹³

The 2nd regiment of Neumark Landwehr cavalry was instructed to leave the wood, turn right towards Beau-Chêne for some distance and then to turn left in order to cover the 15th brigade. Having done that, it took up a position in squadrons with intervals near the wood northeast of Smohain.¹⁴

The arrival of the 16th brigade.

While Von Losthin led his units to the right and forward, the 2nd regiment of Silesian hussars, led by colonel Von Eicke, went straight ahead near the road towards the French position in order to cover the units of the 16th brigade which were now starting to leave the wood as well.¹⁵ It must have been towards 5 p.m.

In doing so the hussars, supported by the 1st and 2nd squadron of the 3rd regiment of Silesian Landwehr cavalry, drove back a line of French skirmishers as well as a French regiment of chasseurs à cheval which now pulled back thereby drawing the Prussians to their supports. Now, these came up and charged the hussars and Landwehr in their flank and threw them back as far as the Prussian infantry. In this backward movement, the Prussian horsemen drew the horse battery nr.11 along further to the rear, including possibly the extreme left flank of the Prussian skirmishing line of the 15th brigade. The battery now took up a position some 300 paces further to the rear, where to its left just at that time, the footbattery no.2 of the 16th brigade arrived.

Not long after all four squadrons of the 3rd regiment of Silesian Landwehr cavalry advanced, as well as horse battery no.11 and the hussars. By that time, however, the French had deployed a strong artillery which now opened a brisk fire on the Prussian cavalry which again yielded; horse battery no.11, now back in its original position, suffered under the French artillery fire. Having advanced for about 500 paces, however, the battery was able to silence the French guns.¹⁶

Another time after this the Prussian cavalry must have advanced, but all she attained was that the French cavalry pulled back behind the artillery and the infantry of Lobau.

The result of these actions was that now the fighting here had become one of infantry and artillery, having the French cavalry in rear of the infantry or covering individual batteries or protecting the flanks of the infantry.¹⁷

Von Losthin had waited before entering the fields as the 16th brigade had collected in the wood, so that he had a cover in his back and flank.

Meanwhile, the brigade of Von Hiller got out of the wood in columns of battalions in the brigade formation as far as space permitted, to the left of the road and the brigade got in line with the one of Von Losthin. Von Hiller had his brigade move forward with speed, while at the same time he sent forward his skirmishers with their supports. At that time, the fighting here was limited to gunfire only and the units suffered from it, but Von Hiller succeeded in getting his units on a height and to occupy this height with his battery nr.2. Gradually, the skirmishers came into action thereby gaining space to their left front, towards Plancenoit.¹⁸

In his front Von Hiller had the musketer battalions of the 15th regiment which were soon to their left joined by those of the 1st regiment of Silesian Landwehr, coming up from behind. In the second line was the 2nd regiment of Silesian landwehr infantry.

From that moment on, Von Hiller was able to see the village of Plancenoit and now he decided to extend his left wing towards the low ground of the Lasne, until his skirmishers occupied the first houses of the village and entrenched themselves. They held these houses all the time later during the fighting (see below).

Ordered by Von Gneisenau, Von Hiller sent, during the development of his brigade, two of his battalions (the 3rd battalion of the 15th regiment of infantry and the 3rd battalion of the 1st regiment of Silesian Landwehr infantry), led by major Von Keller, to his left flank.

As we have seen, the foot battery nr.2 had taken up a favourable position somewhere near the 2nd regiment of Silesian hussars and the 3rd regiment of Silesian Landwehr cavalry, near the road which leads from Lasne to Plancenoit.¹⁹

Not long after the development of the Prussian artillery, an artillery duel ensued.²⁰ The development of the Prussian artillery had been possible by the effective fire of the 1st or 2nd battalion of the 15th regiment.

As soon as this battalion had spent all its ammunition, it was relieved by the 3rd battalion of the 2nd regiment of Silesian Landwehr led by captain Von Dubschütz.²¹

The French position.

Opposite Von Hiller and Von Losthin were the 2200 horsemen and 12 guns of the divisions of Domon and Subervie, in position between Fichermont and the Bois de Ranson. The division of Jacquinet was also involved here in the actions against the Prussians; in all probability it was attached to the division of Domon.²² Around Fichermont were one or two battalions of Durutte, which Durutte would have sent there the moment the Prussians started to arrive.²³

Napoleon detached Lobau to his right flank much later as is often thought. In most cases, it is assumed that the 6th corps was sent to the right shortly after the cavalry divisions of Domon and Subervie, that is around 1.30 p.m. However, this is not the case. From several accounts it becomes clear that it was actually much later that Lobau marched off with his army corps. This must have been around 4.30 p.m., the moment the first Prussian units started to arrive on the battlefield.²⁴

Lobau was instructed “de traverser la chaussée de Charleroi, par un changement de direction à droite par division, et de se porter pour soutenir la cavalerie légère du côté de Saint Lambert; de choisir une bonne position intermédiaire, où il put, avec dix mille hommes, en arrêter trente mille, si cela devenait nécessaire; d’attaquer vivement les Prussiens, aussitôt qu’il entendrait les premiers coups de canon des troupes que le maréchal Grouchy avait détachées derrière eux.”²⁵

General Lobau had his chief of staff, Durrieu, reconnoitre the position first.²⁶ Having passed in rear of the light cavalry of the guard, the corps must have taken the road which leads from Plancenoit to the Bois de Paris. Lobau had his corps formed then in close columns.²⁷

Lobau posted his 7500 men and 24 guns [²⁸] on the height in rear of the track which lies between the chateau of Fichermont and the Bois de Ranson, in rear of the cavalry, and by doing so he took a position which was in a square angle with the 1st corps.²⁹ The divisions were posted one behind the other.³⁰ The regiments must initially have been in squares, but about their formation after that no details are available.³¹

While Lobau moved, Domon and Subervie delayed the Prussian advance until Lobau had arrived right in rear of them with a strong skirmishing line in front of his troops.

Shortly after that, however, both cavalry divisions must have taken up their positions in rear of the infantry and thereby forming an integrated position of all arms to seal the French right flank.³²

The arrival of the Prussian reserve cavalry.

Now, towards 5.30 p.m., the remaining regiments of the reserve cavalry of the 4th corps started to arrive on the battlefield. They did so to the left of the road, in two columns, in rear of the brigade of Von Hiller. The regiments involved were the 1st regiment of WestPrussian uhlans (brigade of Von Schwerin), the 8th regiment of hussars (brigade of Von Watzdorff), the 1st regiment of Neumark Landwehr cavalry, plus the 1st regiment of Pommeranian Landwehr cavalry (brigade of Von Sydow).³³ By advancing in this way the regiments supported the 16th brigade and secured their left flank by extending this flank further south towards the Lasne as the infantry did. The regiment here was the 1st regiment of Pommeranian Landwehr.³⁴

However, very shortly after, the 1st regiment of West-Prussian uhlans was sent to the right wing of the corps opposite Fichermont by order of Von Bülow himself through captain Von Below and while going there the regiment (having left the wood and entering the fields for about hundred meters) crossed the firing line of a French battery and it was then that count Von Schwerin (who then was near the regiment and its commander, lieutenant colonel Beier) fell by an exploding shell; a splinter entering his head almost instantly killed him.³⁵

Initially, the horse battery nr.12 (six guns) had followed the 8th regiment hussars towards Plancenoit, but after that it took up a position on a wide, protruding height north of Plancenoit, to the right of 12p. foot battery nr.13. From here it had a substantial share in the fighting for Plancenoit.³⁶ It was probably on to the left of that 12p. battery that horse battery nr.1 took position.³⁷

The fighting in this stage of the battle here was limited to skirmishing actions on both sides. In this, the French cavalry only covered the French skirmishers, while at the same time it threatened the Prussian line of skirmishers; it did not push through any charges upon them.

As soon as the Prussian skirmishers got a firm hold on the ground, they were followed by artillery first and then by columns of infantry-battalions and these, in their turn, by cavalry.

As the Prussian forces developed slowly, both Lobau and the divisions of Domon and Subervie did not present any firm resistance.³⁸

15th brigade: front and early actions.

As mentioned before, both battalions which were in front of the brigade, the 2nd battalion of the

18th regiment (to the right) and the 3rd battalion of the 3rd regiment of Silesian Landwehr infantry (to the left), led by major Von Koschkull, turned to the right to attack the complex of Fichermont.³⁹ The skirmishers platoons of these bataillons deployed in front, under captain Von Osten and 1st lieutenant Von Wedelstädt.

While the 2nd battalion of the 18th regiment took a direction upon the slopes to the right of the chateau towards Smohain, the 3rd battalion of the 3rd regiment of Silesian Landwehr infantry must have taken a line just passing the complex to its left.

The instruction for the 2nd battalion of the 18th regiment was to advance in the low ground to the right and then to attack the village with its skirmishers, while the battalion itself would take a covered position on the slope of the low ground. As the skirmishers approached the village it soon became clear that it was partly occupied by the Nassau troops and now they all cleared it from the French. The battalion itself, meanwhile, had now descended into the low ground as well, following the skirmishers who kept in contact with the enemy.⁴⁰

The foot battery nr.14 had been one of the first batteries to arrive on the field. Having taken up a position south east of Fichermont, it was explicitly ordered to stay there though the front battalions of infantry had gone towards the front on the right. It was left there to cover a possible retreat; opposite it had a strong force of French artillery and cavalry.⁴¹

Horse battery nr.11 had got under French artillery fire and now advanced about 250 meters from which position it silenced a French battery and forced it to fall back.⁴²

As the French had deployed a strong artillery, the need for artillery in Von Losthin's line was seriously felt. Twelve pounder battery nr.3 (reserve artillery of the 4th corps) was now pulled in the front and got a position between the 3rd battalion of the 18th regiment and the 1st battalion of the 3rd Silesian regiment of infantry.⁴³

Having a position at about 1600 paces from the enemy, it fired grenades on the French cavalry and round shot on the French infantry and artillery. The French artillery fired grenades as well, but most of these burst in the air and did no harm. For that reason the battery was able to advance another 400 paces to fire roundshot on the French squares and artillery.⁴⁴

With this battery here, Von Losthin, having detached some troops towards Fichermont and Smohain, now had a front which essentially consisted of two wings. The right one consisted of the 1st and the 3rd battalion of the 18th regiment, as well as the 1st and 2nd battalion of the 4th regiment Silesian Landwehr infantry and was led by colonel Von Massow.

The left wing, led by major Von Krahn, was composed of the 1st and 2nd battalion of the 3rd regiment of Silesian Landwehr (in front) and of the 3rd battalion of the 4th regiment Silesian landwehr infantry in the second line at 150 paces.⁴⁵

The 2nd regiment of Neumark Landwehr cavalry must have been covering the right wing. However, the regiment had hardly advanced as a heavy French bombardment hit the regiment; yet, the regiment advanced with intervals into a position in rear of the infantry.⁴⁶

The arrival of the 13th brigade.

In this stage of the battle, the Prussians got reinforcements. Now it was between 5.30 and 6 p.m.⁴⁷ Around 5.30 the 13th brigade of Von Hacke reached the battlefield and developed to the right of the road, in rear of the 15th brigade of Von Losthin.⁴⁸

In front Von Hacke had the 3rd battalion of the 2nd regiment of Neumark Landwehr infantry (left) and the 3rd battalion of the 1st Silesian regiment of infantry nr.10 (right); in comparing their positions to the other battalions which followed they were in reversed order (left – right in stead of right – left).⁴⁹

In his first line, on the right Von Hacke had the 2nd regiment of Neumark Landwehr infantry,

having its 1st battalion on the right and the 2nd battalion on the left. The 1st regiment Silesian infantry no.10 was to the left, having its 1st battalion to the right and the 2nd battalion to the left. In second line was the 3rd Neumark Landwehr regiment of infantry while the foot battery nr.21 and the brigade cavalry were to the left.⁵⁰

The first thing Von Hacke did was to send his two front battalions, the 3rd battalion of the 1st regiment of Silesian infantry nr.10 and the 1st battalion of the 2nd regiment of Neumark Landwehr infantry, both led by major Von Braunschweig, towards Smohain.⁵¹

Both battalions, the fusilier battalion leading, advanced towards the village, having their skirmishers in front, but by the time they reached it it had already been occupied by the 15th brigade and the Nassau troops (see below).⁵²

The remaining part of his brigade was meant to be a reserve, but gradually the most of it was drawn into the action, into which Hacke's units got mixed with those of Von Losthin (see below).

Both squadrons attached to the brigade (the 1st and 3rd of the 2nd regiment of Silesian Landwehr cavalry) must have been somewhere in the frontline of the left wing of the brigade, covering the infantry. Shortly after the fighting got stronger, the horsemen must have gone back to the rear for about 100 paces in order to avoid too much losses. Later, however, they advanced again and covered the skirmishers up to the end of the battle.⁵³

The arrival of the reserve artillery

Being taken far to the advance guard, horse battery nr.11 arrived on the battlefield long before the other units of the reserve-artillery.

Though successful in the very first stage of the action, the battery was gradually more and more hindered by French artillery fire and now took up another position. However, in stead of moving back, it moved about 500 paces to the front. Here it got into a more favourable position and the French artillery fire died down, until the battery was threatened on its right wing by two French columns, but these were driven back by a strong canister fire.

Again, the battery was annoyed by French gunfire on its right but soon this fire was diverted by another Prussian battery further to the right, probably the foot battery nr.11 or the foot battery nr.14. In this way, the battery was able to wheel to the right and bombard the French columns.⁵⁴

Major Von Ziegler initially kept the foot battery nr.11 in reserve (where is unknown), but after a lapse of time it was committed towards Fichermont, against the French who were on the heights south of this complex. Due to the broken state of the ground the battery was not able to advance here in a line, and therefore split up in three groups which were posted on the heights: one of four guns and two of each two guns. From here they bombarded the enemy with roundshot and grenades until about 8 p.m. The battery's position must have been somewhere to the right of the horse battery nr.11⁵⁵

The 12p. battery nr.5 must have been marching with the 13th brigade and the moment it left the Bois de Paris it was instructed by major Ziegler to take a position left of the road which leads to Placenoit, and to fire on the heights north of Placenoit. It did so on a distance of about 500 meter from the enemy. However, the battery had to leave its howitzers behind due a lack of ammunition for these guns. Somehow, it must have also changed its position as a bit later foot battery nr.13 must have taken its former position (see below).⁵⁶

The position of 12p. battery nr.13 isn't clear: it is being asserted that it stood left of 12p. battery nr.5, but here stood the foot battery nr.13⁵⁷ It was probably further to the left, i.e left of horse battery nr.12, having a position north-east of Placenoit as well, at a distance of 1000-1200

paces from the enemy.⁵⁸

With the arrival of the brigades of Losthin, Hiller, the reserve-artillery and the reserv-cavalry the Prussian forces now counted 11.950 men infantry (18 battalions), 3350 men cavalry (26 squadrons) and 1400 men artillery with 70 guns (9 batteries).⁵⁹

The arrival of the 14th brigade.

Towards 6 p.m. the brigade of Von Ryssel, the rearguard of the 4th corps, arrived on the battlefield.⁶⁰ The brigade, while coming from the left part of the wood itself and not from the road which leads through it, developed itself some distance in rear of the one of Von Hiller, leaning to the left on the Lasne and to the right on Von Hacke, thereby forming a wide front.⁶¹

This didn't apply to the cavalry which was attached to the brigade (the 2nd and 4th squadron of the 2nd regiment of Silesian Landwehr). Both these squadrons must have got separated from the brigade while leaving the wood and then captain Lautier, its commander, joined the reserve cavalry of the 4th corps as soon as it moved from the left part to the centre of the line. Some time later, Lautier again tried to join his brigade by reporting to the regiment commander, colonel Von Eike. Von Eike sent him with his men to a position in rear of the right wing of the 4th corps, but where is not known. Here both squadrons linked up to some infantry and supported it by moving along with it.⁶²

Its battery, foot battery nr.13, took up the former position of the 12p. battery nr.5, and this must have been somewhere north-east of Plancenoit. In this position it supported the action in Plancenoit.⁶³

With the arrival of both brigades, the Prussian forces now counted about 14.000 men with 16 extra guns (18 battalions, 4 squadrons and 2 batteries).

Lobau falls back to a position north of Plancenoit.

Initially, Lobau had his position in rear of the sand track which connects the chateau of Fichermont with the Bois de Ranson.

As the Prussian brigades slowly developed under cover of their cavalry and artillery and skirmishers, Lobau yielded slowly. In particular when it became clear to Loabu that Von Bülow put his weight on Plancenoit, Lobau decided to fall back upon Plancenoit as he was afraid to be cut off. By now it wa 5.30 p.m.

Lobau had his corps pull back to a position immediately north of Plancenoit, resting with its right flank upon the village and its left flank upon the units of Durutte, which were in front of Fichermont and Papelotte. At that time, Plancenoit itself was still not occupied by the French.⁶⁴ However, it had not slipped Napoleon's attention that his right flank was impaired. As a result he sent for the Young Guard to occupy Plancenoit right away; this force comprised 4000 men and 16 guns.

There are no details available about their march, their formation or how they were located in and around the village.⁶⁵ It must have been between 5.30 and 6 p.m.⁶⁶

After the Young Guard had left its position to the right of the Brussels-road, near La Belle Alliance, the Middle and Old Guard advanced, so that part of these units got in the former position of the Young Guard. Here, these troops were formed in squares, en echelon (cf.plan).⁶⁷

It was also towards 6 p.m. that Blücher was informed by general Thielmann that he was under attack at Wavre.⁶⁸ Blücher realised that the decisive battle was at Mont Saint Jean and therefore

ge ordered Thielmann to hold his position as long as he could.⁶⁹ It was then that Blücher decided to attack Plancenoit, now he had been reinforced by the 14th brigade.

The first attack on Plancenoit.

Under a heavy bombardment⁽⁷⁰⁾, of which balls also reached the Brussels road and the general staff around Napoleon which was at that time near the house of Decoster⁽⁷¹⁻⁷²⁾, the attack was prepared. It was now almost 6.30 p.m.⁷³

General Von Hiller formed three columns of attack, each consisting of two battalions.

From his first line, Von Hiller formed the right hand column which consisted of the 1st and 2nd battalion of the 15th regiment of infantry led by major Von Wittich. The centre column was led by major Von Fischer and he led the 1st and 2nd battalion of the 1st regiment of Silesian Landwehrinfantry, preceded by four platoons of skirmishers. From his second line, Von Hiller formed his left hand column, which consisted of the 1st and 2nd battalion of the 2nd regiment of Silesian Landwehr, and which was led by lieutenant colonel Von Blandowsky.

The right hand column had to approach Plancenoit from the right through a hollow road which ended near the church, while the centre had to penetrate into the village head on along an alley while the left hand column had to penetrate from the left hand side after having crossed a tiny side-stream of the Lasne.⁷⁴

Still further to the left, at least the 3rd battalion of the 15th regiment, led by major Von Keller, was advancing in the Bois de Hubermont.

Further to the rear the brigade of Von Ryssel followed as a reserve, in which advance the 1st battalion of the 11th regiment of infantry, as well as the 1st battalion of the 1st Pommeranian regiment of Landwehrinfantry were sent forward on the request of colonel Von Hiller. This had to do with the fact that the brigade of Von Losthin operated further to the right and Von Hiller was afraid of being too weak for the attack.

Colonel Von Hiller had issued a general and urgent order to take the village by bayonet only and to fire at the other side of it; the use of fire-arms was only permitted for artillery and skirmishers. As a precaution, Von Hiller also placed captain Von Osten, the commander of his cavalry, in the low ground of the Prussian position with the instruction to receive and collect all the men who went back.⁷⁵

Before the actual attack however, Von Hiller took a few scattered houses which lined the hollow road further to the south east of the village (and which not seem to have been occupied by the French) with the skirmishers of the 2nd regiment of Silesian Landwehr infantry.⁷⁶ These skirmishers must have been supported by the 1st, 5th and 6th platoons of the 3rd battalion of the 15th regiment which was at that time to the left of the brigade.⁷⁷

Not long after, however, this battalion was detached, with the 3rd battalion of the 1st Silesian Landwehr regiment in its wake, to enter the Bois de Virère, cross the Lasne stream and guard the left flank of the army by observing the left bank of the Lasne and to try to set up a communication with major Von Falckenhausen, who was patrolling the same bank with his detachment of the 3rd regiment of Silesian Landwehr cavalry. Further, it had to act according to circumstances.

In order to do this, Von Keller moved into the Bois de Virère with his battalion in column, having his skirmishers in front. However, the fuseliers of the battalion of the 1st regiment of Silesian Landwehr do not seem to have followed properly. From this wood he was able to move, unseen by the enemy, towards the Bois de Chantelet. During the first part of his advance, colonel Von Hiller Von Keller guided his men, in which the cavalry was in front.⁷⁸

The 3rd battalion of the 15th regiment must have been preceded by its two Schützen-platoons of

the 9th and 10th company, led by lieutenant Wittcke, as well as by three platoons (the 1st, 5th and 6th) as skirmishers.⁷⁹ A platoon of the 3rd regiment of Silesian Landwehr cavalry was attached to the detachment to facilitate the transmission of information.⁸⁰

The infantry started its attack on Plancenot, skirmishers in front, at about 1000 paces from the village in a storm pace through a hail of artillery and musketry-fire.⁸¹ Despite this, the infantry reached the outskirts of the village with relatively low losses. The right hand column bumped into the hollow road here on the right side of the village, while both other columns The column to the right bumped into the hollow road which runs along the village here, while both other columns took two guns, some ammunition-waggons, two staff-officers and several hundreds of prisoners at the edge of the village.⁸²

As soon as Von Hiller, who had joined the attack himself, saw the churchyard he took it and occupied it with a battalion and with his other forces he attempted to take the remainder of the village. During this action, the 1st battalion of the 1st regiment of Silesian infantry almost must have reached the exits on the west side of the village.⁸³

Here, they got under a strong musketry fire at close range and they were also attacked by strong bodies of French reinforcements of the Imperial Guard (see below). Apart from that, they got musketry fire on their left rear flank and their position got untenable. As a result, the battalion withdrew.⁸⁴

Von Hiller now again tried to take the churchyard, but the walls were too high to fire over them and too solid to cut loopholes through them. Now, the Prussians opened the church itself, took out the benches in order to create platforms in rear of the churchyard wall and to bar the entrances; also they must have tried to break down the top of the wall – and all this under a sharp French fire which came from the adjoining houses.

By now, Von Hiller was informed by major Von Fischer that he could no longer hold his position; as a result, Von Hiller ordered the battalion churchyard to hold its ground until the signal for the retreat would be given; Von Hiller then went forward, accompanied by major Von Fischer. Shortly after that, his horse was hit and the units further to the left also started to yield. To make things worse, a French column approached "tambour battant" to the entrance of the churchyard and drove the Prussians off. These French reinforcements were probably those of the Imperial Guard (see below). The Prussians now evacuated the place by an opening in its east wall and the French now took and entrenched it further. The guns which the Prussians had taken were thrown over, as they didn't have the means to spike them or to bring them back to their own lines.

Further to the right, the 15th regiment almost reached the churchyard, but somewhat later had to yield for the French pressure, then offering a fierce resistance and thereby losing many men. Somehow, the skirmishers of the 15th regiment of infantry must have kept their positions in a few houses at the extreme left flank of the Prussian front, in the southern part of Plancenot.⁸⁵

In the same sector here, the French skirmishers emerged from the village thereby pursuing the 15th regiment up to their reserves and the artillery, about 600 meters from the village. However, it was major Von Wittich who succeeded in getting the support of the 4th squadron of the 2nd regiment of Silesian hussars led by captain Von Wolff (further to the right) which now advanced and drove the enemy back to the village.⁸⁶

To the left, Von Hiller had pulled the musketeer battalions of his 2nd regiment of Silesian Landwehr – led by Von Blandowski- to the left in order to turn the village and attack it from there. The 1st battalion was to the right, having two companies going down into a low ground while having the two other companies about 600 paces further to the left in rear of a height; the 2nd battalion was even further to the left. After their advance, both battalions had to detach their skirmishers and then march up with lowered bayonets towards the village. Though the move

initially succeeded, the 2nd battalion held to its left and was seen by the French , who now reinforced Plancenoit here. After that, the Prussian units would have lingered in their advance and the units must have got too far separated thereby getting involved into extended fighting in the broken area here south of Plancenoit; finally they pulled back. As a result, the movement failed altogether.⁸⁷

Colonel Von Hiller would have succeeded in carrying out a succesful evacuation in reasonable good order.⁸⁸

The French column was the 1st battalion of the 2nd regiment of chasseurs of the Old Guard, led by general Pelet (about 500 men).⁸⁹

Shortly before the battalion marched off to its right from its position in rear of La Belle Alliance, general Pelet had sent a detachment of 50 men led by 1st lieutenant Lepage to the most western houses of Plancenoit in order to receive the Young Guard which streamed back from the village. Then, Pelet also sent out a detachment led by 1st lieutenant Gourahel to give direct support to the Young Guard. Not long after that, Pelet vvas ordered by general Morand: "Allez avec votre 1er bataillon à Plancenoit, où la Jeune Garde est toute renversée. Soutenez la, soutenez ce point (..) Tenez vos troupes réunies et en main; si vous abordez l'ennemi, que ce soit avec une seule division et à la baionette." It was now about 7 p.m.⁹⁰ As Pelet approached the village with his battalion in a closed column per platoons, he recalled the detachment of lieutenant Gourahel, and he ordered lieutenant Lepage to occupy the houses on the extreme east side of the village.

Now, Pelet tried to collect the Young Guard, which was in disorder, in rear of his men while he advanced towards the centre of the village.

Pelet succeeded in driving off the Prussians, by involving his men in companies; however, most of them got extended into swarms of skirmishers, which was against the orders of general Morand.⁹¹ The Prussian units which now evacuated the village were assembled under cover of the 14th brigade in the low ground east of Plancenoit.⁹²

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1. Colonel Von Hiller. Denkwürdigkeiten etc.p.242

² Gneisenau in a letter to ms. Von Clausewitz and the countess Dohna, dated 24th June 1815. In: Delbrück, H. Das Leben etc. Vol.IV p.536

According to colonel Von Loebell, commander ad interim of the 15th brigade, Bulow seemed to hesitate to attack until he had more troops available but the moment Blücher arrived, he was ordered to attack immediately. See the account of colonel Von Loebell, commander ad interim of the 15th brigade. In: MWB 1904 nr.29 p.739

3.Report of Von Bülow. In: Bas, F.de La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.526

Report of Von Gneisenau. In: Bas, F.de La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.484

Ensign Batty (1st Foot Guards) spoke with several officers of the Prussian vanguard who told him they had to wait for some time before being able to enter the battlefield. In: BL, Add.ms.34.706 p.211-213

4.Report of Von Losthin. In: GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.V.4A.1.p.10

Report of Von Bülow. In: Bas, F.de La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.526

Report of Von Gneisenau. In: Bas,F.de La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.486

Prince Thurn und Taxis, Bavarian plenipotentiary at the Prussian headquarters. Memoirs In: Aus drei Feldzügen etc. p.333

Von Nostitz confirms it was between 4 and 5 p.m. that Blücher decided to attack. Cf. Nostitz, Von Das Tagebuch etc. p.40

Gourgaud, C. La campagne de 1815 p.79

Von Clausewitz, Von – Campagne de 1815 p.124

C von W. Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.33

Von Müffling – Esquisse de la bataille de Waterloo p.87

Drouet d'Érlon. Le maréchal Drouet, comte d'Erlon etc. p.97

Colonel Von Hiller In: Denkwürdigkeiten etc. p.243

De Mauduit, H. Les derniers jours etc. Vol.II p.377

Marchand. In: Mémoires p.163

Pflugk Harttung, J.von - Von Wavre bis Belle Alliance p.633

Damitz, Von – Geschichte etc. p.290

Others mention 5 p.m. Cf.

Sir Robert Gardiner in his journal. In: NLS, MS3615 p.70

Assistant QMG colonel Hervey. Cf. Hervey in a letter to Mr.Carroll (1815) in: Leeds, F. A contemporary letter on the battle of Waterloo. Nineteenth Century 1893 p.434

Baron Vincent. In: The battle of Waterloo also of Ligny and Quatre Bras etc. by a near observer Vol.I p.214

Lieutenant Ingilby (battery Gardiner). In: BL, Add.ms. 34.703 p.266-271

In his diary he says it was between 4 and 5 p.m. In: RAI, nr.MD 797

Captain Taylor (10th regiment of hussars). In: BL, Add.ms.34.703 p.94-95

Hussar J.Marshall (10th regiment of hussars). In his letter dated 1th July 1815. In: USJ Part I 1831 p.314

Captain Dyneley (battery Gardiner) In his letter dated 23rd august 1815 to J.Douglas. In: RAI,

nr.MD 1051

Sir Gomm, W.M. In his diary. In: Letters and journals etc. p.360

General Guyot thinks it was 5.30 p.m. In: Carnets de campagne p.295

Captain Gardiner claims it was 6 p.m. Diary in RAI, nr.MD 1178

According to Von Müffling, the Prussians opened gunfire at 5 p.m. Cf. Von Müffling in a report annexed to a letter of count Rechberg to fieldmarshal Wrede. In: Bayerisches Kriegsarchiv München. Published by: Pflugk Harttung, J.von - Archivalische Beiträge etc. Jahrbücher für die Deutsche Armee und Marine 1906 p.518

Von Müffling also says it was at 4 p.m. that the Prussian gunfire started. In: Recollections p.247

⁵ GSA,VPH –HA,VI nr.V.4 E.2.p.1-2

⁶ GSA,VPH-HA,VI,nr.V,4E.1.p.1

Cf. Ollech, Von – Geschichte etc. p.242

⁷ GSA, VPH-HA,VI nr.V.4A.1.p.6

⁸ GSA,VPH-HA,VI nr.V.4 E.2.p.3 and 4A.1.p.28

⁹ GSA,VPH-HA,VI nr.V.4A.1.p.13, 4 E.1.p.13-14 and 4 E.2.p.10

¹⁰ GSA,VPH-HA,VI nr.V.4 E.1.p.3-8, 4 E.1.p.56, 4A.1.p.32 and 4F.1.p.31

¹¹ GSA,VPH-HA,VI nr.V.4A.1.p.11, 4D.p.10

¹² Originally, the 1st and 2nd squadron were attached to the 15th brigade and the other 3rd and 4th to the 16th brigade – now they were all joined into one regiment, led by captain Von Altenstein. Of the first two squadrons, major Von Falckenhausen had been detached with about 100 men. Cf. GSA,VPH-HA,VI nr.V.4 E.1.p.18 and 4C.p.2

¹³ GSA,VPH-HA,VI nr.V.4 E.1.p.12 and 4D.p.13

¹⁴ GSA,VPH-HA,VI nr.V.4 E.1.p.19 and 4 E.1.p.42

¹⁵ GSA,VPH-HA,VI nr.V.4 E.1.p.15-16, 19

¹⁶ GSA, VPH-HA,VI nr.4D.p.13

Lippe-Weissenfeld, E.graf zur Geschichte des Königlichen Preussischen 6.Husaren Regiments p.241

¹⁷ Cf. Wedell, R.von - Geschichte des Königlich Preussischen 18.Infanterie Regiments von 1813 bis 1847. P.166

Report of Von Bülow. In: Bas, F. de – La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.528

GSA,VPH-HA,VI nr.V.4 E.1.p.20-30, 4A.1.p.12-13, 4C.p.2 and 4F.1.p.33

Von Hiller claims the charge was led by prince Wihlem of Prussia, though he doesn't mention the name of the regiment involved. But as he situates the charge before his brigade got out of the

wood it may have been the hussars. Cf. Denkwürdigkeiten etc.p.242.
According to Houssaye, the initiative for the offensive lay with the French cavalry. In:
815.Waterloo p.379

18. Von Bülow. In: Bas, F.de La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.528-529

Colonel Von Hiller. In: Denkwürdigkeiten etc.p.244

¹⁹ GSA, VPH-HA,VI nr.4D.p.15

20.Report of Von Bülow. In: Bas, F,de - La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.530

Major Von Ziegler (reserve artillery), report in Kriegsarchiv, Berlin, as referred to by De Bas.
In: La campagne de 1815 Vol.II p.223

Colonel Von Hiller. In: Denkwürdigkeiten etc. p.244

Ollech, Von - Geschichte etc. p.242

Damitz, Von – Geschichte etc. p.290

C von W – Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.33

21.Colonel Von Hiller. In: Denkwürdigkeiten etc. p.246

²² Cf. Dupuy, chef d'escadron. In: Souvenirs militaires etc. p.287-294
He confirms this at least for his regiment.

Also see: Durutte, général - Mouvements [sic] de la 4^e division du 1er corps d'armée, le 15 juin jusqu'au 18 au soir. In: La sentinelle de l'armée 4 (1838), nr.134 p.78

²³ Durutte, général - Mouvements [sic] de la 4^e division du 1er corps d'armée, le 15 juin jusqu'au 18 au soir. In: La sentinelle de l'armée 4 (1838), nr.134 p.78

²⁴ Gourgaud explicitly states it was 4.30 p.m. In: La campagne etc. p.79

Von Hiller says Lobau moved at the time he arrived on the battlefield with his brigade, that is after 4.30 p.m. Cf. Hiller, Von Denkwürdigkeiten p.246

Gneisenau also confirms that the French reserves moved the moment the Prussian units left the wood. In a letter to Hardenberg, dated 22nd June 1815. In: Delbrück, H. Das Leben etc. Vol.IV p.531

Durutte makes clear Lobau got in his right rear *after* the attack of the 1st corps, after 3 p.m.

Cf. Durutte, général - Mouvements [sic] de la 4^e division du 1er corps d'armée, le 15 juin jusqu'au 18 au soir. In: La sentinelle de l'armée 4 (1838), nr.134 p.78

Prussian accounts state that Domon and Subervie gained time for the French infantry (Lobau) to advance towards the flank position and that initially only a lot of cavalry and a bit of infantry protected the French right flank. This bit of infantry must have been units of Durutte. Cf. GSA, VPH-HA,VI nr.V.4E.2.p.4 and 10, V.4E.1.p.30, V.4A.1.p.5

F.Marq, sergeant major in the 6th corps (probably of the 107th regiment of the line) claims it was 3 p.m. Cf. Description des campagnes de guerre (1817). Manuscript in the collection of

the prince Jean d'Orléans. Published in the Bulletin of the SBEN, nr.29 (1997), p.48
It is also captain Von Rettberg, commander of a battery of Hannoverian artillery, who could see from his position a considerable French force move out at 4 p.m. to oppose the Prussians, who were just arriving. In: BL, Add.ms.34.704 p.229-234

The very same fact is confirmed by Demiau. Cf. Demiau, H.M. Historique du 5^e régiment d'infanterie de ligne p.227

Colonel Combes-Brassard, assistant chief of staff of the 6th corps, also confirms the Prussians had already arrived the moment the corps wheeled to protect the right flank of the army. Cf. Colonel Combes-Brassard. In: Souvenirs et correspondance etc. p.20-23

In this account, Combes-Brassard claims he was the chief of staff of Lobau, but he wasn't, even though the real chief of staff, Durrieu, had got wounded in the initial stage of the actions of the 6th corps.

Combes-Brassard claims his account dates from 22nd June 1815, but in the same one he relates about events of the 25th of June. Cf. Houssaye, H. La garde meurt et ne se rend pas etc. p.14

The time of around 1.30 p.m. comes from the memoirs of Napoleon in which is suggested that Lobau left shortly after the cavalry. Cf. Mémoires pour servir etc. p.140

Houssaye, H. 1815. Waterloo p.346

²⁵ Cf. Mémoires pour servir etc. p.140-141

26. Cf. Aerts, W. Waterloo. Opérations etc. p.232

Gourgaud, C. Campagne de dix huit cent quinze etc. p.80

According to colonel Janin the 6th corps advanced in order to support the attack of the 1st corps first, and later, to oppose the Prussians, which were 10.000 in number. Apart from the fact that this number is highly exaggerated, I have found no further indications that the advance of the 6th corps was related to the one of the 1st.

Janin, M.E.J. Campagne de Waterloo

27. Cf. F. Marq. In: Description des campagnes de guerre (1817). Manuscript in the collection of the prince Jean d'Orléans. Published in the Bulletin of the SBEN, nr.29 (1997), p.48

Gourgaud mentions a march in three columns but isn't very specific further. Cf. Gourgaud, C. Campagne de dix huit cent quinze etc. p.80

²⁸ Two batteries were absent: one was with the division Teste with Grouchy's detachment and the other one, a 12 pounder, was in the grand battery near La Belle Alliance.

29. Houssaye, H. 1815. Waterloo p.379

Demiau, H.M. Historique du 5^e régiment d'infanterie de ligne p.227

Gourgaud, C. Campagne de dix huit cent quinze etc. p.80

According to Gourgaud, the corps was in a position "à portée de fusil" and parallel to the Brussels road. This would mean the corps was between the wood which lies south of Fichermont and the other one, south of this one in a straight line, over a distance of about 600 meters.

The distance between the first and second position was nearly 2500 meter. The corps must therefore have been marching for almost one hour.

Janin says the position was " en potence derrière la droite du premier corps ", which is very

clear. Cf. Janin, M.E.J. Campagne de Waterloo etc.

Durutte confirms a position in the second line in rear of his division, though he doesn't say it was "en potence". Cf. Durutte. In: Sentinelle de l'armée. 8th March 1836 p.78

Combes Brossard, sous-chef of the 6th corps, left notes in which he claims the corps had taken up a position at 3.30 p.m. in rear of the right wing and in describing this position he gives the impression as if the corps faced northward; on the other hand, however, he states the corps fought against the Prussians but he doesn't give any specific indication of a change of front at all. On the other hand, he asserts the Prussians threatened the rear and the flanks of the corps, which could not both have been possible in case the corps fronted northward. Cf. Combes Brossard, Notice sur Waterloo 1899 p.20

30. Cf. Houssaye, H. 1815. Waterloo p.379

Adkin, however, believes they were next to each other, the 19th south and the 20th north of the road, with Domon in front of the 19th division and Subervie in front of the 20th division. Cf. Adkin, M. The Waterloo companion p.381

³¹ According to sergeant-major F. Marq (of which regiment we do not know) the voltigeurs of his regiment were ordered to advance as skirmishers; they did so in front of the cavalry the moment the enemy approached they fell back. Cf. Marq, F. Description des campagnes de guerre (1817) In: Bulletin of the SBEN, nr.29 (1997), p.49

According to Von Pflugk Harttung, the corps stood in three columns on a wide front, but there is no proof for that. Cf. GSA, HA-VI, nr.V.3.p.20

³² GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.V.4A.1.p.5

³³ This would mean that all of Von Sydow's regiments (except the 1st regiment of Silesian Landwehr cavalry) must have gone ahead in the column of the 4th corps, to join the other brigades of the reserve cavalry.

34. Report of prince Wilhelm of Prussia from the former Kriegsarchiv, Berlin. In: GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.V.4F.1.p.32, 4C.p.19, 4C.p.6 and 25

35. Lieutenant colonel Beier and others in: Vor hundert Jahren etc. p.634-636, 639-646.

Damitz, Von - Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.299

Ollech, Von Der Feldzug etc. p.243

GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.V.4C.p.17

Later that day, Von Schwerin was retrieved from the field and interred under an oak-tree in rear of the wood, where the grave can still be found.

In remembrance of colonel Von Schwerin, a monument was erected in 1818 at 800 meters west of the church of Lasne at the right hand side of the road (coming from Lasne) just where it entered the Bois de Paris. In former times it could be reached by a footpath, but now it can be accessed through the "rue du Vieux Monument".

The monument is composed of a column of blue limestone upon a octangular base and is surrounded by a high hedge. The inscription reads: "Wilhelm Graf Van Schwerin Koenigl.Preus.Obrist und Ritter gefallen dem Siege am 18.Juni 1815 in der Fremde für die Heimath."

In 1963, the monument and the adjacent grounds were handed over to the municipality of

Lasne-Chapelle Saint Lambert. Until that time, the church of this community had been the owner, after the family had given the ownership to the church.

Legend has it that Von Schwerin was interred in a small wood and that his body was excavated 2 to 3 years later and was re-interred under the monument.

Cf. Uffindell, A. On the fields of glory p.210

Each year, until her death, Von Schwerin's widow donated an amount of 100 guilders to the priest of Lasne for the poor and for the maintainance of the monument. She also donated the church three gilded oil-cans, and which can still be found there. They bear the inscription: "Gewidmet der Kirche zur Lasne von Sophie (R.Gr.) Schwerin."

Cf. Correspondence of the author and Mr.Stiernet, the mayor of Lasne Chapelle Saint in 1984.

Logie, J. Waterloo, l'évitable défaite p.165

Fierens Gevaert, H. Waterloo légendaire. In: Revue de Paris. 15 september 1900 p.402-448

Aerts' version that Von Schwerin was killed during a skirmishing action east of the wood is incorrect. The site of the monument may have given rise to this assertion. Cf. Aerts, W. – Waterloo. Opérations etc.p.212

³⁶ It had two guns in the detachment of Von Ledebur. Cf. GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.4D.p.26

³⁷ GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.4D.p.30

38.Report of Von Bülow. In: Bas, F.de La campagne de1815 Vol..III p.530

Colonel Von Hiller. In: Denkwürdigkeiten etc. p.243-249

Lieutenant Von Gerlach of the Prussian general staff in his diary. In: Aus den Jahren Preussischer Not etc. p.152

39. Cf. Wedell, Von Geschichte des Königlich Preussischen 18.Infanterie Regiments p.164-165

Report of Von Bülow. In: Bas, F.de – La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.526

Von Bülow himself mentions major "Von Kowsky".

⁴⁰ The fact that the units of the 15th brigade participated in the retaking of a part of Smohain is confirmed by the Koschkull himself and by major Von Loebell (commander ad interim of the brigade) in his diary. In:

Lettow Vorbeck, O.von – Napoleon's Untergang Vol.III p.429

MWB 1904, nr.29 p.239

Also see: Wedell, Von - Geschichte des Königlich Preussischen 18.Infanterie Regiments p.165

GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.V.4 E.1.p.33 and 4A.1.p.21

Lieutenant Alberti (2nd battalion, 18th regiment). In: Alberti, W.Kriegsbriefe p.173-74

Alberti, being with the skirmishers out in front, was wounded twice. He calls Smohain "Geneve"

J.von Pflugk Harttung erroneously puts the battalions in and around Cheval de Bois. Cf. GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.V.4 E.1.p.33 and 4A.1.p.21

⁴¹ GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr. V.4 E.1.p.43,75 and 4A.1.p.11

⁴² GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr. V.4 E.1.p.43

⁴³ GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr. V.4 E.1.p.43

⁴⁴ GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr. V.4 E.1.p.44

⁴⁵ Cf. Wedell, Von Geschichte des Königlich Preussischen 18.Infanterie Regiments p.166-167

GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.4 E.1.p.45

Hofschröer, P. 1815. The Waterloo campaign. The German victory p.118

⁴⁶ GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr. V.4C.p.11

47. GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.4F.1.p.33

48.Report of Von Bülow. In: Bas, F.de La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.532

Report of Von Hacke. In: Bas, F.de La campagne de 1815 Vol.II p.224

Report of Von Losthin. In: Bas, F.de La campagne de 1815 Vol.II p.224

Ollech, Von – Geschichte etc. p.243

Damitz, Von – Geschichte etc. p.296

Lettow Vorbeck, O.von – Napoleon's Untergang Vol.III p.431

According to the regimental history of the 28th regiment it was 6 p.m. Cf. Die Geschichte des 28.Regiments. In: Special ABN, nr.65 p.25

The same hour is claimed by M. Schulze. In: Das 2.Neumärkische etc. p.175

The diary of the 13th brigade itself (Kriegsarchiv, Berlin nr.VI.E.38) says it was 5 p.m. In: Schulze, M. - Das 2.Neumärkische etc. p.176

Also see Pflugk Harttung, J.von In: Die Verzögerung der Schlacht bei Belle-Alliance p.325

⁴⁹ GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr. V.4B.p.1-2

⁵⁰ GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr. V.4B.1.p.1-2

51. Report of the 1st battalion in: Schulze, M. Das 2^e Neumarkse Landwehr Infanterie Regiment p.177-178

GSA, VPH, HA, VI nr. V.4F.1.p.33, 4B.,p.7-9

⁵² GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr. V.4 E.1.p.39,68

⁵³ GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr. V.4C.p.4

⁵⁴ GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr. V.4D.p.13-14

⁵⁵ GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr. V.4D.p.11-12

⁵⁶ GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.4D.p.22

⁵⁷ GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.4D.p.25,28

⁵⁸ GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.4D.p.28

⁵⁹ In these figures, the presence of the *complete* 3rd regiment of Landwehr cavalry and the absence of two guns of horse battery nr.12, and of the 2nd regiment Pommeranian Landwehr cavalry and the 1st regiment of Silesian Landwehr cavalry is taken into account.

60.Colonel Von Hiller. Denkwürdigkeiten etc.p.247

Ollech, Von – Geschichte etc. p.243

Schulze, M. - Das 2.Neumärkische etc. p.175

According to Von Pflugk Harttung it was after 5.30 p.m. Cf. Pflugk Harttung, J.von In: Die Verzögerung der Schlacht bei Belle-Alliance p.325

According to the diary of the brigade it was at 5.45 p.m. that the brigade emerged from the Bois de Paris. Cf. Pflugk Harttung, J.von - Von Wavre bis Belle Alliance p.629 (VI.E.38.26)

Von Ryssel arrived at Chapelle Saint Lambert around 3 p.m. but must have left some time later. This means it covered the distance between this village and the Bois de Paris in two and a half hours, that is in the same speed as the other units of the 4th corps.

Von Tippelskirch adds his brigade reached Chapelle Saint Lambert at 4 p.m., by the time the 14th brigade had left from there. Cf. report of major general Von Tippelskirch. In: Former KA. VI.E.15.12 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.VII.5.p.13

61.Reports of Von Bülow, Von Ryssel and Von Hiller. In: Former Kriegsarchiv. In: Bas, F.de La campagne de 1815 Vol. II p.224

GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.V.4B.p.23, V.4C.p.5

Cf.Damitz, Von – Geschichte etc. p.296

Ollech, Von – Geschichte etc. p.243

Eberts, G.W. von Hundertjährige Geschichte etc. p.200

⁶² GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.V.4C.p.5, 22

⁶³ GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.4D.p.23

64.Mémoires pour servir etc. p. 147

Gourgaud, C. – La campagne etc. p.80

Houssaye,H. 1815.Waterloo p.381

Damitz, Von – Geschichte etc. p.297

Ollech, Von – Geschichte etc. p.243

Mauduit, H.de – Les derniers jours etc. Vol.II p.382

Houssaye believes Lobau occupied Plancenoit with one of his brigades, but there is no real proof for this assertion. In: 1815. Waterloo p.381

65.Gourgaud, C. La campagne de 1815 p.80-81

Charras. Histoire de la campagne etc. Vol.I p.316-317

Von Damitz believes the Young Guard was accompanied by 24 guns. In: Geschichte etc. p.297

The distance the Young Guard had to cover was 700-800 meters.

Adjutant D.Fleuret, a member of the 55th regiment (division Quiot, 1st corps), claims his regiment was that weak after the assault on the Anglo-Netherlands-German position that the remains were used as skirmishers for the Young Guard during its actions at Plancenoit. Cf. Fleuret, D. - Description des passages de Dominique Fleuret p.151

66. Some claim it was 6 p.m. Cf. Damitz, Von – Geschichte etc. p.297

Mauduit, H.de – Les derniers jours etc. Vol.II p.385, 393

Gourgaud, C. – La campagne de 1815 etc. p.81

General Petit mentions a time of 2 p.m. In: Moore-Smith, G.C. - General Petit's account of the Waterloo campaign p.324

In another account he mentions a time of 4 p.m. In: d'Avout, vicomte. L'infanterie de la garde etc. p.108

Sir H.Vivian says, shortly before he left for the right centre (at 6.15 p.m.) that a large French reserve formed in rear "en potence" of the French right wing in order to receive the Prussian attack. This must have been the movement of the 6th corps and the Young Guard. In: BL, Add.ms.73.708 p.351-356

67. Cf. journal of general Pelet (towards 5 p.m.), chef de bataillon Guillemin (1st battalion 3rd regiment of grenadiers) (he mentions between 4.30 and 5 p.m.) and captain Prax (3rd regiment of chasseurs). In: d'Avout, vicomte. L'infanterie de la garde etc. p.38, 114, 120

De Mauduit assigns the Middle and Old Guard a position between Rossomme and La Belle Alliance from 3 p.m. onwards, but this should be the period between 5.30 and 7 p.m.

Here, he mentions grenadiers only and of them, the 3rd and 4th regiment could see the battle raging, while the 1st and the 2nd couldn't as they stood in a low ground between Rossomme and the house of Decoster.

De Mauduit also claims that the 3rd and the 4th regiment of grenadiers got a position on the ridge which was formerly occupied by the 1st corps, but these had stood further in front, in front

of La Belle Alliance.

The battalions of sappers and miners would have been near the road, but where is not indicated.
In: Les derniers jours Vol.II p.386-387

⁶⁸ Prince Thurn und Taxis, Bavarian plenipotentiary at the Prussian headquarters. In: Aus drei Feldzügen etc. p.334-335

69. Report of Gneisenau, dated 20th June 1815. In: Bas, F.de La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.486

Gneisenau's letter to Hardenberg, 22nd June 1815 In: Ein Leben in Briefen p.323

Damitz, Von – Geschichte etc. p.298

70. Von Ollech says there were nine batteries. In: Geschichte etc. p.243

Von Damitz mentions eight batteries. 6p footbatteries nr.2, nr.14, nr.13; 6p. horse batteries nr.11 and 12, 12p.footbatteries nr.13 and 5. In: Geschichte etc. p.297

Horse battery nr.12 (six guns) operated on the right front of Von Hiller's brigade, about 500 meters east of Plancenoit, in the immediate vicinity of the access of the village which was in the low ground. It was from here that the battery silenced a few French guns. Cf. Diary of major Von Pfeil. In: diary of Von Pfeil. In: Militärarchiv der DDR, PR.19/109 (B1.20-22R)

71. Mauduit, H.de - Les derniers jours etc. Vol.II p.390

Gourgaud, C. La campagne de 1815 p.80

Siborne, W. History of the war etc. Vol.II p.134

Captain Guillemin (3rd regiment of grenadiers). In: d'Avout, vicomte. L'infanterie de la garde etc. p.114

Pelet claims that the 1st battalion of the 2nd regiment of chasseurs suffered more casualties as the 2nd battalion of the same regiment. In: d'Avout, vicomte. L'infanterie de la garde etc. p.39

In this connection baron Petiet, staff-officer of the emperor, points out that the staff was split up in three or four separate groups earlier that day, but so, that they could easily transmit their information to either Soult or Napoleon. In: Souvenirs militaires etc. p.218

72. There is not a lot of information about the exact positions of the French artillery opposite the Prussian sector.

Lobau had 24 guns, while Domon and Subervie had 12.

Two batteries of the artillery of the guard would have been attached to the Young Guard, but their positions are unknown. However, two guns and one howitzer would have stood in front of the centre of Plancenoit. Cf. Hiller's report. In: Ollech, Von - Geschichte etc. p.248

Craan shows a battery immediately to the north of the village. In: Plan du champ de bataille de Waterloo dit de la Belle Alliance etc. Bruxelles, Harvaert en Pauwels, 1816

H.de Mauduit mentions the support of a battery of 12-pounders of the reserve of the artillery of the imperial guard. In: Les derniers jours etc. Vol.II p.461

Major Pelet mentions artillery of the guard which was placed west of Plancenoit and which silenced some Prussian guns until it was disabled itself. In: d'Avout, vicomte. L'infanterie de la garde etc. p.39

Major Von Pfeil (commander of the horse battery nr.12) places a French battery south of Plancenoit and which was about to fire upon Von Pfeil's left flank. He then took back this wing,

and maintained his position despite the French skirmishing and gunfire. In: diary of Von Pfeil. In: Militärarchiv der DDR, PR.19/109 (Bl.20-22R)

The plaquette for lieutenant Tattet of the artillery of the old guard in the church of Plancenoit isn't informative about the French artillery here.

Lieutenant Ingilby (battery Gardiner) saw guns being transferred from the right hand part of the French grand battery to a position opposite the Prussians. In: BL, Add.ms.34.703 p.266-271 (plan included).

General Durutte, from the very beginning of the battle, had artillery of the guard in the rear of his division, and these guns were later transferred to the frontline which was opposed to the Prussian army. In: Mouvements [sic] de la 4^e division du 1er corps d'armée, le 15 Juin jusqu'au 18 au soir. In: La sentinelle de l'armée 4 (1838), nr.134 p.78

73.Von Pflugk Harttung. In: GSA, VPH-HA,VI.nr.V.4A..2.p.5,22 and 4F.2.p.9

Damitz, Von – Geschichte etc. p.298

Mauduit, H.de – Les derniers jours etc. Vol.II p.398

According to major Von Pfeil it was still before 5.30 p.m. Cf. his diary. In: Militärarchiv der DDR, PR.19/109 (Bl.20-22R)

Lieutenant Ingilby (battery of Gardiner) claims the first major Prussian attack took place at 6 p.m. In: BL, Add.ms.34.703 p.266-271

According to Dörk it was after 6 p.m. Cf. Cf. Dörk, G.M. - Das Königlich Preussische etc p.130

⁷⁴ Cf.GSA, VPH-HA,VI nr.V.4A.2.p.6 and p.23; V.4F.2.p.9

75.Report of Von Bülow. In: Bas, F.de La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.530

Report of colonel Von Hiller. In: Ollech, Von - Geschichte etc. p.248-249

Colonel Von Hiller. In: Denkwürdigkeiten etc. p.247

Damitz, Von – Geschichte etc. p.298

Lettow Vorbeck, O.von – Napoleon's Untergang Vol.III p.431

⁷⁶ Cf.GSA, VPH-HA,VI nr.V.4A.2.p.5 and 22, 4F.2.p.9

The skirmishers of the 2nd battalion of the 3rd regiment of Silesian Landwehr (15th brigade) had joined the 16th brigade in the course of the battle, but it is unknown what they did for the fighting for Plancenoit.

⁷⁷ Cf. Dörk, G.M. Das Königlich Preussische etc p.133 Dörk clearly makes a distinction between these platoons aiding some skirmishers taking some scattered houses before the actual first assault on Plancenoit. He demonstrates that the main body of the fusilier battalion of the 15th regiment actually was detached further to the left (see below) just after that, so around the time the first assault started (6.30 p.m.).

78.GSA, VPH-HA,VI nr.V.4A.2.p.19, V.4F.2.p.40

Colonel Von Hiller. In: Denkwürdigkeiten etc.p.245

⁷⁹ Cf. Dörk, G.M. Das Königlich Preussische etc p.129,133

80.Colonel Von Hiller. In: Denkwürdigkeiten etc. p.245

Major Von Keller. In: Narrative of the particular circumstances etc. In: A description of the costly and curiuous etc. p.11

It is Von Nostitz who claims to have sent the battalion to the extreme left flank, in order to protect colonel Von Watzdorffs cavalry. Cf. Nostitz, Von - Das Tagebuch etc. p.41

⁸¹ GSA,VPH-HA,VI nr.V.4A.2.p.23 and 4F.2.p.10

⁸² Cf.GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.V.4A.2.p.6, 4A.2.p.14, 4F.2.p.10

⁸³ GSA, VPH-HA,VI nr.V.4A.2.p.13, 4F.2.p.10

⁸⁴ GSA,VPH-HA, VI nr.V.4F.2.p.10

It may have been at this time that the 2nd battalion of the 1st regiment of grenadiers, in position to the east of the Brussels road and north of the Decoster-house felt threatened to its right and therefore detached 100 men to its right to hold back the enemy. A confrontation with the Prussian skirmishers would have taken place, in which adjudant major Faré was wounded and taken prisoner.

Cf. Mauduit, H.de Les derniers de la grande armée Vol.II p.395

Martinien, M. - Tableaux par corps et par batailles des officiers p.68

Friant, J.F. - Vie militaire etc. p.388

⁸⁵ Cf. Dörk, G.M. Das Königlich Preussische etc p.133

⁸⁶ GSA,VPH-HA,VI nr.V.4F.2.p.17, V.4C.p.7 (report prince Wilhelm), V.4C.p.19 Sometimes it is erroneously being asserted that this charge took place after the second attack on Plancenot. Cf.

Report of Von Bülow. In: Bas, F.de & T'Serclaes de Wommerson. La campagne de 1815 aux Pays Bas. Vol.III p.534

Report of colonel Von Hiller. In: Ollech, Von - Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.248-249 (see below)

Hiller, Von - Denkwürdigkeiten etc. p.250

Eberts, G.W. von - Hundertjährige Geschichte etc. p.200

⁸⁷ GSA,VPH-HA,VI nr.V.4A.2.p.17, 4F.2.p.13

88.Colonel Von Hiller. In: Denkwürdigkeiten etc.p.247-249

Cf. Dörk, G.M. Das Königlich Preussische etc p.130

Colonel wrote a report which was probably in the former Kriegsarchiv and from which Von

Ollech cites as follows:

"[...] Die Truppen des 15. Infanterie- und 1.Schlesischen Landwehr-Regiments drangen, alle Schwierigkeiten überwindend, mit nicht geringem Verlust durch Kartätsch- und Kleingewehrfeuer, bis an den mit einer hohen Mauer umgeben Kirchhof vor, den die französische junge Garde besetzt hielt. Es gelang hierbei diesen beiden Kolonnen, eine Haubitze, zwei Kanonen, mehrere Pulverwagen zu erobern und zwei Stabs-Offiziere nebst einigen Hundert Mann zu Gefangenen zu machen. Der freie Platz um den Kirchhof war von Häusern umgeben, aus denen der Feind, trotz der tapferen Versuche dazu, nicht zu verdrängen war. Auf 15-30 Schritt wurde hier ein Feuergefecht unterhalten, welches die preussischen Bataillone unvermeidlich decimiren musste. Hätte ich in diesem Augenblick nur die Unterstützung einiger frischen Bataillone zur Hand gehabt, so würde dieser Angriff doch geglückt sein. Eine französische Reserve nöthigte uns aber zum Rückzuge.[...]" In: Ollech, Von - Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.248-249

Cf. the report of Von Bülow which was most probably partly based upon this report. In: Bas, F.de & T'Serclaes de Wommerson. La campagne de 1815 aux Pays Bas. Vol.III nr.31.3.D1
Striking difference with his memoirs is that, in this report, Hiller doesn't mention his taking the churchyard.

89.This battalion was actually led by colonel Colomban, but it was here superior, general Pelet, who led the action.

Also see: Major Pelet. In: d'Avout, vicomte. L'infanterie de la garde etc. p.39

Mauduit., H.de – Les derniers jours etc. Vol.II p.394

Houssaye, H. 1815.Waterloo p.394

90. General Petit thinks it was 6 p.m. In: Moore-Smith, G.C. - General Petit's account of the Waterloo campaign p.324

General Christiani (2nd regiment of grenadiers) claims it was between 5 and 6 p.m, maybe later. In: In: d'Avout, vicomte. L'infanterie de la garde etc. p.112

91.Journal and memoirs of Pelet. In: In: d'Avout, vicomte - L'infanterie de la garde etc. p.42

92.Lettow Vorbeck, O.von – Napoleon's Untergang Vol.III p.432