

The Prussian intervention. The 1st corps.

The moment the advance guard of the 1st corps arrived north of Ohain at 6 p.m. ⁽¹⁾, it had reached the goals as described in the disposition written by Zieten.

The orders with which Zieten advanced from there have not been preserved but in all probability Zieten must have acted according to the circumstances he would find when approaching the battlefield.

As Zieten himself was further to the rear in the column, it was his chief of staff, colonel Von Reiche who preceded the column to find out about the situation. Von Reiche entered the battlefield on the road which leads to Ohain and here he bumped into the units of the Nassau troops of Saksen Weimar at the extreme left flank of Wellington's frontline. ²

General Von Müffling had also been there for some time by then being in observation of the Prussian whereabouts here and in order to coordinate their movements. ³ At some point of time, it became evident from different sources that Prussian units were approaching on the other side of the wood of Ohain.

Sir H. Vivian had, when he got the order through captain Seymour (aide de camp of Lord Uxbridge) to reinforce the centre of the line, sent this captain with a patrol towards Ohain to verify whether they were Prussians. Having spoken with them, captain Seymour confirmed this to Lord Uxbridge, who was accompanied by Wellington. The duke then instructed Seymour to ask the Prussian commander for immediate support. Seymour left, but soon lost his horse, after which colonel Freemantle (aide de camp of Wellington) left for the Prussian advance-guard. ⁴

Here he spoke briefly probably with generals Von Reiche and Von Steinmetz; he was told that the corps wasn't supposed to detach any units; with this information Freemantle returned to Wellington. ⁵

It is possible that after this information, general Von Müffling awaited the Prussians or rode to them when he met Zieten's chief of staff, lieutenant colonel Von Reiche.

Von Müffling made it clear to Von Reiche that the Anglo-Netherlands-German army needed immediate assistance and that there was no time to lose. Von Müffling then indicated that direct support was urgently needed at the extreme left flank of the army as Wellington had already moved troops from there to support his centre.

This support, he suggested, was best to be implemented by speeding up the march of the 1st corps, by reinforcing the vanguard with a battery of 12-pounders to be directed to the height in rear of Papelotte and the reserve-battery to be sent to join the British extreme left wing. ⁶

Von Reiche then returned to his advance-guard and had this, without Zieten's permission, continue its way over the Ohain-road. Von Reiche then again went ahead, but saw the situation was getting worse, as the Nassau units had left Fichermont and Smohain for some part.

As the advance-guard moved further west over the Ohain-road, the main body of the brigade (the 1st battalion of the 24th regiment included) had by now turned left on the crossing of the Ohain-road and the road which leads from Haut Ransbeek to Cheval de Bois. This route matched the original purpose of the corps, that was to emerge on the road which leads south of Ohain towards Smohain. ⁷

Von Reiche now returned to the advance-guard of the corps when it was just west of the Chapelle Notre Dame de Bon Secours ⁽⁸⁾ and east of the road Haut-Ransbeek-Cheval de Bois that captain Von Scharnhorst, an aide de camp of Blücher, joined him. It must have been about 6.30 p.m. ⁹

Von Scharnhorst gave Von Reiche Gneisenau's order for general Zieten to wheel the corps to the left in order to join the 4th corps. By then, the first assault upon Plancenoit had failed.

Von Reiche referred to the serious situation at Wellington's extreme left flank, but Scharnhorst did not accept this and referred Von Reiche to his responsibility in case he would not accept and

follow orders of the general headquarters.¹⁰

As the advance guard arrived and Zieten was not there, Von Reiche now got into a painful situation. He had the troops halt, but soon after general Von Steinmetz, commander of the 1st brigade, joined him. Without showing any understanding whatsoever for the situation he insisted that the troops continued their march. As Von Reiche refused to do this, Von Steinmetz restarted the march of his troops on his own. By doing so the units of the advance guard now took the road which leads through Cheval de Bois to the units of the 4th corps.

Von Reiche, in his turn, now took the decision to have the troops return to the crossing, but just at that moment general Zieten arrived at the scene.

Reiche explained him the situation and Zieten decided to follow the road towards Wellington's left flank.¹¹ By now, it had turned 7 p.m.¹²

Around the same time, Zieten must have received a note from Von Valentini, chief of staff of Von Bülow, stating the need for his forces in order to relieve the French resistance towards the 4th Prussian corps. The message was carried by Jäger Diederichs; Zieten sent him back stating he would do his utmost to speed up his troops, as he still didn't have enough troops in front to engage.¹³

The Prussian battalions now continued their advance towards the Chapelle Jacques (¹⁴) which they reached around 7.30 p.m.¹⁵ From there, the Prussians entered the battle.

The brigade of Von Steinmetz formed the advance-guard and the brigade had in its front the 1st regiment Silesian hussars [¹⁶], the Brandenburg dragoons, and the horse and foot batteries nr.7; then followed both companies of Silesian sharpshooters and the 3rd battalion of the 12th and the 3rd battalion of the 24th regiment.¹⁷ The main body of the brigade was formed by the remaining battalions, plus the 1st regiment of Westphalian Landwehr.

As the advance-guard was too far ahead from the main body, a new intermediate advance-guard was formed with the 1st battalion of the 24th regiment.¹⁸

In the rear of the advance-guard marched the reserve cavalry of Von Röder. Here, the Brandenburg uhlans (in rear of the 1st squadron) was accompanied by horse battery nr.2¹⁹

Zieten engaged his troops first by opening fire of both batteries he had available, the horse and foot batteries nr.7.

Initially, both these batteries had taken up positions in front of Smohain, the foot battery to the left and the horse battery to the right.²⁰ They now fired upon the village and the adjoining valley. Soon after however, four guns of the foot battery no.7 moved to a position above the farms of La Haye and Papelotte as they were no longer needed to the left. It was also here that some time later the horse battery no.2 was placed, just next to the artillery of Winssinger, who had run out of ammunition.²¹

It was not long afterwards that horse battery no.2 had to detach two of its guns, under lieutenant Knobloch further to the left to support the four guns of the foot battery no.7 above the farm of La Haye. After having fired a few rounds, the view became very much obstructed by the smoke and captain Von Borowsky now moved his six guns further to the right towards the position of Best's brigade. Shortly after that, Von Borowsky also detached three of his guns led by lieutenant Patzig to the right flank of Best's brigade.²²

So all in all, the Prussian artillery formed a half-round line reaching from the front of Smohain onto the left flank of Wellington's front.

Soon after the Prussian bombardment, which appeared to be successful, Zieten engaged some of his troops right at the same time without waiting for reinforcements. His main purpose was to take Smohain and to attack the French forces immediately behind it.

These were the 2 companies of Schützen led by major Von Neumann, as well as the 3rd battalion of the regiment nr.12 under major Von Goetz. These units, moving forward from the

second line to the left of the artillery and from the height to the left of the road – having their skirmishers and Schützen in their front - took the village of Smohain without encountering any serious resistance whatsoever.²³ During this advance the 3rd battalion of the regiment no.12 must have been on the right flank, covering also the area between Smohain and the farm of La Haye.²⁴

The moment the Prussian artillery and infantry units started their offensive towards Smohain, it was in its northern part and to the west of the village, in the farms, that the Nassau troops of Saksen Weimar were still holding. Having got hold of the southern part of Smohain, Durutte now tried to force a wedge between the Prussian and the Anglo-Netherlands-German army by pressing further to the north and to the west, by pushing forward strong masses of skirmishers towards the farms of La Haye and Papelotte.

Taken by surprise by the sudden Prussian advance, the Nassau troops now recoiled and were even fired at by the Prussian units as these took them for French troops because of their uniforms.²⁵

The musketry took about 10 minutes until the misunderstanding had been solved. Now, the Nassau troops would have rejoined the Prussians during their advance.²⁶

In the third line, colonel Von Hofmann advanced with his 24th regiment of which he sent his 3rd battalion to the extreme left, to occupy the hamlet of Cheval de Bois.

Both remaining battalions followed, in masses of battalions, the movement to Smohain through the valley, while the 1st and 2nd battalion of the regiment nr.12, still a bit further behind, now headed through the low ground for the farms of Papelotte and La Haye, though their advance must have been kept slower due to the fact that the Prussian leaders didn't want to spread out the brigade too much.

Meanwhile the troops of the 24th regiment found Smohain unoccupied, crossed through it and took up a position on the other side of it.²⁷

Having taken up a position at Cheval de Bois, the 3rd battalion of the 24th regiment sent its two companies of skirmishers into the low ground towards Smohain. From here they supported the troops of Von Bülow which were in action near Fichermont.²⁸

Further behind, as a reserve, the 1st regiment Westphalian Landwehr infantry, as well as the reserve cavalry, advanced over the road which leads to the extreme left flank of Wellington's frontline.

While the Brandenburger battalions advanced on the right side and the battalions of the 24th regiment on the left side towards Smohain, the 1st regiment of Westphalian Landwehr also faced towards the south, being in a regimental column. In this way, the 1st battalion was to the right of the small road which led towards Smohain while the 3rd and the 2nd (at the extreme flank) were to the left of this road.

While moving towards the area between Smohain and the farm of La Haye, the 1st battalion approached the artillery which it had to cover for some time. However, as the 1st brigade was generally moving towards the southwest, a gap was about to arise between the Prussian units and those of Wellington. For this reason Von Steinmetz ordered the 1st battalion to send its skirmishers under captain Bennert towards Wellington's front as well as the 1st Jäger-detachment. Additionally, the skirmishers of the 3rd battalion plus the 2nd Jäger-detachment were sent in the same direction. During this march they would have been fired at by members of Wellington's army. At the same time, the 2nd battalion had to pass through a low ground, which caused it to be delayed and too far to the left from the other two battalions. In trying to keep up with them, it got the order of major Von Gillhausen to remain in the same line and follow the front battalions as a reserve. These were the musketeer battalions of the 24th regiment which were advancing to attack Smohain. During this action, major Von Rappard halted his battalion in front of the village but soon after he turned it on its western side while

having his skirmishers covering him in his left flank in the village.

Not much later, the battalion served as a reinforcement for the defensive position taken by major Von Hoffman on the other side of Smohain (see below).²⁹

In this way, the Prussians assembled in front of Smohain so that they would be able to support Von Bülow, while at the same time the interval between these troops and Wellington was filled up by the artillery and the reserve-cavalry.

Initially Von Hoffmann was able to advance for some distance on the other side of Smohain, but by now Durutte had taken up a strong position on the heights leaning with his right on Lobau and with his left on Marcognet. Durutte succeeded in driving Von Hofmann back into Smohain. But soon after, Durutte yielded again as the Prussian gunfire was intensified and the British left wing still resisted the last French attempts to break it.

Now Von Hoffmann took up a defensive position on the height by including the troops which were led by Von Neumann. Hoffmann placed the Brandenburger fuseliers to the right, the Schützen in the centre and both the 1st and 2nd battalion of the 24th regiment under colonel Von Laurens to the left. All these troops now advanced, covered by strong masses of skirmishers, but soon their front appeared too small and for this reason Hoffmann extended his front while marching. While doing so, the Prussian units were faced again by the remnants of Durutte's division. An intense skirmishers fight ensued which lasted at least for half an hour and in which the Prussians were thrown back a few times. Both the 1st and 2nd battalion of the 24th regiment had a hard time, being partly thrown back and partly engaged as skirmishers. Hoffman tried to support them to the left by the 3rd battalion of the same regiment (of which battalion its skirmishers had attached themselves to the units of the 4th corps to their left) and to the right by the 2nd battalion of the 1st Westphalian landwehr regiment. This particular battalion immediately sent forward its two platoons of skirmishers to fill the gap here.

In doing this, both these battalions received quite some skirmishers of both musketeer battalions, which were for about half of their numbers engaged as skirmishers and which were led by captains Von Maltitz and Von Arnaud.³⁰ Finally the fighting here was decided not so much by the Prussian success, but by the fact that the French were lacking any success in front of Wellington's army.³¹

At that moment, the situation was that Von Steinmetz had pushed his 1st and 2nd battalion of the regiment no.12 further to the south towards the right of Von Hoffmann's units. Both these battalions probably met less resistance.³²

Further to the right, he pulled the skirmishers of the 1st and 3rd battalion of the Westphalian Regiment to the front in the vicinity of La Haye, and which the battalions themselves followed further to the rear.

Towards the right of the position of Von Steinmetz the 1st Silesian hussars had moved up to cover the guns of the foot battery no.7 while the 5th regiment of Brandenburger dragoons covered the horse battery no.7.

In covering the artillery, the hussars had extended their right flank as far as the flank of Wellington's army. Due to the broken ground here, however, the regiment wasn't able to mean a lot except than to cover the artillery.

Meanwhile, the Prussian reserve-cavalry had advanced to a position north of the Ohain-road, thereby prolongating Wellington's left wing.³³ Some time later the 5th regiment of Brandenburger dragoons was used to advance towards the area in the vicinity of the farms of La Haye and Papelotte, immediately followed by the 3rd regiment of Brandenburger uhlands.

In this regiment of uhlans, horse battery no.2 had marched but the moment it was engaged, it was soon covered by the 1st squadron of the regiment which was led by captain count Von Röder. As soon as the Prussian infantry had taken Smohain and passed the farms of La Haye and Papelotte, the three other squadrons of the regiment advanced.³⁴

Both regiments were led by general Von Röder himself. He led them through the low grounds between Smohain and the farm of La Haye and towards the French troops of Durutte which were on the other side, but which didn't await the charge. There only must have been some action of the dragoons against the French rearguard formed by skirmishers, while there also was a confrontation between the Prussian squadrons and those of Jacquinot.³⁵

Soon after their arrival the remaining regiments of Von Röder must have marched up as a support in the second line of the left wing of Wellington's army. These were the 1st and 2nd regiment of Kurmark Landwehr cavalry, the 1st regiment of West-Prussian dragoons, as well as 2 squadrons of the 6th regiment of uhlans.³⁶

In this position the 2nd regiment of Kurmark Landwehr cavalry must have been to the right covering the battery of Von Rettberg. The 1st regiment of West-Prussian dragoons must have been led much further to the west in order to support the right centre of Wellington's army.³⁷

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1.Report of Von Steinmetz (Kriegsarchiv, Berlin – nr.VI.E.7.II), as referred to by F.de Bas. In: La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.227

Lieutenant Ingilby (battery Gardiner) says the Prussians approached before the brigade of Vivian left its position at the extreme left flank, at 6.15 / 6.30 p.m. In: BL, Add.ms.34.703 p.266-271

Major general Best confirms the Prussians approached by 6 p.m. In: BL, Add.ms.34.704 p.278-282

2.Reiche, L.von Memoiren etc. p.210-211

Houssaye puts it as if Zieten himself halted his corps and that he sent an officer to the front to find out about the situation, but this is incorrect, as it can be read from Von Reiche's account. In: Houssaye, H. 1815.Waterloo p.399

3. Müffling, Von - Passages from my life, p.247

Von Müffling in a letter written to general Von Hofmann. In: Hofmann, G.W.von Zur Geschichte etc. p.138

He must have been there at least before 4 p.m. Cf. Journal of Constant Rebecque. In: NA, 2.21.008.01 nr.25

Bernard van Saksen Weimar says Von Müffling announced him the arrival of Von Bülow by 4 p.m. Though this refers to the 4th Prussian corps, it is another indication that Von Müffling was there.

Cf. Letter of Saksen Weimar to captain Van Löben Sels dated 29th august 1841. Family-archive Van Löben Sels, in stadsarchieff van Zutphen. Nr.II.3.nr.5

4. Captain H.Seymour. In: BL, Add.ms.34.707 p.471-480

In another version Seymour says that not his horse was wounded but that he was taken prisoner but was rescued by a few dragoons. In: The Croker papers, Vol.I 1884 p.124

Von Müffling, however, claims all contacts with the Prussian army went through him. In: Passages from my life, p.247

5.Lieutenant colonel Freemantle. In: BL, Add.ms.34.707 p.462-464

According to Houssaye, Freemantle met general Zieten. Freemantle himself talks about a meeting with Zieten and Bülow, but from the account of Von Reiche it becomes clear that Zieten himself wasn't in front in the column. The men involved probably were lieutenant colonel Von Reiche and colonel Von Steinmetz. In: 1815. Waterloo p.399

⁶ Von Müffling in a letter written to general Von Hofmann. In: Hofmann, G.W.von - Zur Geschichte etc. p.138

It must have been around this moment that Von Müffling and Von Reiche were joined by a mission consisting of major Von Pfuel, captain Blücher and lieutenant Von Gerlach, sent out by the general headquarters, that Zieten should come up between the 4th corps and Wellington's flank. Cf. Von Gerlach in his diary. In: Aus den Jahren preussischer Not etc. p.152

By then, yet, the Prussian staff must have held to a more northern direction for the 1st corps (see below).

⁷ Wagner, J.Chr.A. Pläne der Schlachten und Treffen etc. IV p.90
Hofman, G.W. - Zur Geschichte des Feldzugs von 1815 p.109

8.This chapel, at the Ohain-road, about one kilometer of Ohain, dates from 1673. Count De Meeus had it reconstructed in 1859. Cf. Uffindell, A. On the fields of glory p.231

9.It was at the same time as the advance guard arrived at Chapelle Notre Dame de Bon Secours.

10.Reiche, L.von Memoiren etc. p.212

It must have been between 6 and 6.15 p.m. that Von Scharnhorst had left Gneisenau and Blücher. Just before, Blücher had learned about the French attack on Thielman at Wavre and at that time he was also busy preparing the storming of Pancenoit; Von Ryssel had just arrived at the field of battle.

According to Von Scharnhorst the situation at Von Bülow's corps began to deteriorate and help was needed. Let alone the situation of Von Bülow, the order which Von Scharnhorst carried is even harder to explain while looking at the note Von Müffling wrote at 11.30 a.m. for Blücher.

This document describes the situation of an offensive with the 4th corps as this now took place and adds "Mein Rath ist dass dann ein anderes preussisches Korps über Ohain geht um nach Umständen einen sehr bedrohten Ort der Stellung zu unterstützen. "

This description now was more applicable to the situation at the extreme left flank of the Anglo-Netherlands-German army as with Von Bülow at that moment.

11.Reiche, L.von Memoiren etc. p.212-213.

Houssaye makes a mistake here by having Zieten move to the left from fear not to be taken along in the flight of the Anglo-Netherlands-German army, and not according to the order of Prussian headquarters. On top of that, the column didn't move to the left, but the units which were in front returned to the junction of the roads without using it; before any units moved south, Zieten himself intervened. Then it was also not Von Müffling who convinced Zieten to support Wellington, but Von Reiche. In: Houssaye, H. 1815.Waterloo p.399

Also see: Von Müffling, Memoirs p.248-249

Von Müffling in a letter written to general Von Hofmann. In: Hofmann, G.W.von Zur Geschichte etc. p.139 In this version, Von Müffling says Von Reiche was not there at all and that it was he himself who convinced Zieten to continue his march towards Wellington's flank.

According to major Von Gröben, present at the advance guard of the corps, Von Reiche was startled by the order to turn left and accordingly gave orders for the first units to turn and wheel back. Von Gröben states then that Von Müffling came and said: "Die Bataille ist verloren wenn das Korps nicht in Marsch bleibt und die Englische Armee sofort unterstützt !" Von Gröben now tried to ease down both down, when Zieten came and settled the matter. Cf. His account in: Pflugk Hartung, J.von Belle Alliance. Die Schilderung der Ereignisse vom 16.-18.Juni 1815 durch einen mitbetheiligten Generalstabsoffizier p.12

Pflugk Harttung, J.von Das 1^e preussische Korps bei Belle Alliance p.153

The brigade of Pirch II, which followed the vanguard at a distance, would also have received the order to wheel towards the 4th corps but a short time later it followed Jagow's brigade towards Wellington's army. Cf. Von Lettow Vorbeck who refers to the report of the 2nd brigade (former KA, nr.VI.E.7.II). In: Napoleon's Untergang Vol.III p.434

Cf. Die Geschichte des 28.Regiments. In: Special ABN, nr.65 p.25

It would have been now that count Von Nostitz, sent out by Blücher to speed up Zieten's march, reached general Zieten, who was about to intervene in the battle. Cf. Nostitz, Von Das Tagebuch p.43

12. It was lieutenant Basil Jackson, member of the Royal Staff Corps and assistant of Sir W.Delancey, who rode after 7 p.m. on his own initiative towards the first units of Zieten to speed them up in supporting Wellington. He returned to the battlefield after the battle had been decided in favour of the allies. In: Notes and reminiscences of s staff officer p.54

¹³ Account of Diederichs. In former KA (VI.E.35.113) cited by Von Pflugk Harttung. In: V.4 E.1.p.62-63

14. The fact that this chapel is not indicated on contemporary maps may have to do with the fact that it was very small at that time.Cf. Navez, L. La campagne de 1815 Vol.II p.215-216
Navez, L. Waterloo en images p.65

This chapel would have been relocated to the farm of La Haye. Cf. Anon. A propos du champ de bataille de Waterloo p.43

The tablet on the current chapel reads: "Cette Chapelle est batie à la plus grande gloire de Dieu et de la Vièrge du Saint Rosaire afin quel prie avec nous et pour nous. Fait par Jean Jacques Vandeveld anno 1770." It is located at the Ohain-road, 1500 meters west of the Chapelle Notre Dame de Bon Secours. Sometimes the (incorrect) name of "St.Jacques" is used.

15. Report of Gneisenau. In: Bas, F.de La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.488

According to Von Müffling, Zieten reached the farm of La Haye at 7 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 Arcivalische Beiträge etc. Jahrbücher für die Deutsche Armee und Marine 1906 p.518

According to lieutenant Hope (92nd regiment) the Prussians were at La Haye at 7 p.m. In: BL, Add.ms.34.703 p.18-21

And in: Letters from Portugal etc. p.260

For the same conclusion see Von Knesbeck in his report dated 21st June 1815. In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von – Belle Alliance. Berichte etc. p.292

Officers of the 2nd regiment Nassau take it was about 6 p.m. In a letter 5th July 1815. In: Bas, F.de La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.571

For 7 p.m. also see: Pflugk Harttung, J.von Das 1^e Preussische Koprps bei Belle Alliance p.154

¹⁶ Wechmar, H.von Braune Husaren etc. p.62 On the 17th of June, lieutenant Sellin had rejoined the regiment, now with 49 men (he lost one at Quatre Bras).

¹⁷ Otto, F.von Geschichte des 2.Schlesischen Jäger Bataillons nr.6 p.82

¹⁸ Cf. Zychlinski, F.von – Geschichte des 24ten Infanterie-Regiments. p.282

19. Report of Von Röder (Kriegsarchiv, Berlin nr.VI.E.7.I), as referred to by De Bas. In: La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.227

Pflugk Harttung, J.von Das 1^e preussische Korps bei Belle Alliance, p.145

²⁰ In placing these batteries, both Von Reiche and Von Müffling claim to have had their share. Cf. Pflugk Harttung, J.von Das 1^e preussische Korps bei Belle Alliance p.221-222 Von Müffling, Memoirs p.249

According to Siborne, the horse battery no.7 took over the position from Von Rettberg, but this battery was much further to the west, on the crest of the position of Wellington's army. Cf. Siborne, W. History of the war etc. Vol.II p.191

Lehmann confirms both batteries got into action and that, despite the sodden ground, their position was a favourable one. Cf. Lieutenant colonel Lehmann. In: Former KA, VI.E.7.II.199 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.VII.5.p.3

²¹ Cf. Account of Winssinger. In: Cf. Eenens, A. Dissertation sur la participation etc. p. 52 Winssinger states that the Prussian artillery took up a position to his right and initially fired on Anglo-Netherlands-German troops.

The fact that Winssinger had run out of ammunition contradicts the fact as given by the diary of the 1st corps that the Nassau artillery joined the fray again. Cf. Das Tagebuch etc. In: Hafner, D. p.324 and in Pflugk Harttung, J.von Das 1. Korps bei Belle Alliance p.215

²² Cf. Diary of the 1st corps. Report of the footbattery no. 7 (VI.E.7.I.58), report of captain Von Borowsky (horse battery no.2 dated 22nd June 1815, in: Kriegstagebuch, artillery of the 1st corps p.36-38), report of Zieten (VI.E.7.I), colonel Von Lehmann (VI.E.7.I.198) In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von Das 1^e Preussische Korps bei Belle Alliance p.215-222

²³ Cf. Report of major Von Neumann. VI.E.7 I.24 Cited by Pflugk Harttung, J.von In: Das 1^e preussische Korps bei Belle Alliance. P.158
Otto, F.von Geschichte des 2.Schlesischen Jäger Bataillons nr.6 p.82

²⁴ Cf. report of the battalion. In: VI.E.7.I.92. Cited by Pflugk Harttung, J.von In: Das 1^e preussische Korps bei Belle Alliance p.158

Diary of the 1st corps. In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von Das 1^e Korps Zieten bei La Belle Alliance und Wavre p.200

Corporal J.K.Hechel (3rd battalion 2nd regiment of Brandenburg infantry nr.12). In: Coppens, B. & P.Courcelle. La Papelotte p.65

²⁵ Cf. Captain L.Wirths (2nd Nassau battalion). In: Aus der Schlacht bei Waterloo. In: Nassovia 1905 p.144

²⁶ Most of the Prussian sources mention the incident, except for Von Reiche. Cf. Pflugk

Harttung, J.von Das 1.preussische Korps bei Belle Alliance.

See for the incident:

Major Von Rettberg (3rd battalion 2nd regiment Nassau). In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von – Belle Alliance. Berichte etc. p.212

Captain Von Reichenau (2nd battalion 2nd regiment Nassau). In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von – Belle Alliance. Berichte etc. p.210

Colonel Bernard Van Saksen Weimar. In letter dated 19th June 1815. In: Bas, F.de – La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.568

Captain L.Wirths. In: Aus der Schlacht bei Waterloo. In: Nassovia 1905 p.144

General Von Kruse. In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von – Belle Alliance. Berichte etc. p.205

Officers of the 2nd regiment Nassau. In: Bas, F.de - La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.571-572

Report of general Zieten. In: Bas, F.de - La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.501

He mentions the taking of a village called "Franchemont", but must mean Smohain.

In the diary of the 1st corps the misunderstanding is not mentioned with so many words, but it states that the "enemy" evacuated the village even before the attack had been launched. This enemy were in fact the Nassau troops. In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von Das I.Korps Zieten bei La Belle Alliance und Wavre p.200

There are indications that the Nassau units would have identified the Prussians earlier as vice versa. Cf. Notes of the officers of the 2nd regiment Nassau. In: Officers of the 2nd regiment Nassau. In: Bas, F.de - La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.571-572

Captain Von Reichenau (2nd battalion 2nd regiment Nassau). In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von – Belle Alliance. Berichte etc. p.209-210

According to Von Reiche prince Bernard van Saksen Weimar approached general Zieten, while protesting in the strongest manners. Initially, however, Zieten would not have recognized the prince as being a Nassau colonel. In: Memoiren etc. p.213-214

The fact corresponds to the statement of Van Saksen Weimar himself, that he intervened in person to general Von Zieten. In: VLS, nr.II.3.nr.5

The incident with the Prussian units has given rise to a controversy between prince Bernard van Saksen Weimar and officers of the 2nd regiment Nassau.

Saksen Weimar wrote in a letter dated 19th June 1815 that his units got in confusion due to the Prussian fire, got as far back as 15 minutes from the battlefield and that they had to be recollected there.

Van Saksen Weimar, in his diary, makes a slight variation in this, i.e. that the brigade was fired at by the Prussians and then was led from the field by him; he doesn't mention any disorder, but makes clear that by then the battle had not yet started. Cf. Diary of Van Saksen Weimar. In: ThHStAW,Grossherzogliches Hausarchiv A,XXIV 30, p.195

To these statements, major Sattler, captain Frensdorf and lieutenant Wittich reacted in a note dated 5th July 1815 and which was published in the Frankfurter Ober Postamts Zeitung. Here, they explained that an actual fire-fight had taken place, until the moment that the Nassau troops found out that they had to do with Prusians after which they corrected their mistake under the guidance of captain Von Rettberg. After that, the Nassau troops would have fought along side by side with the Prussian troops until in the evening. In: Bas, F.de – La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.570-571

More as by this note, Saksen Weimar's words are refuted by the separate statements of captain Von Reichenau (2nd battalion 2nd regiment Nassau) and major Von Rettberg (3rd battalion 2nd regiment Nassau).

In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von – Belle Alliance. Berichte etc. p.209-212

Van Löben Sels and Uffindell erroneously situate the firing between the Nassau and the Prussian troops of Von Bülow. Uffindell bases himself here upon the account of Van Zuylen van Nijveelt but he is mistaken. In: Bas, F.de – La campagne de 1815 Vol.III p.342

Uffindell also refers to the account written by major Von Rettberg, who mentions the Prussian 18th regiment (4th corps). Yet, he is not sure of this number. Cf. Uffindell, A. On the fields of glory p.240

Starklof also describes the incident, but too far south, from Cheval de Bois. Starklof, R. Das Leben etc. p.205

²⁷ Cf. Report of both battalions. VI.E.7.I.37 Cited by Pflugk Harttung, J.von In: Das 1^e preussische Korps bei Belle Alliance p.160

²⁸ Cf. Report of major Von Blücher (3rd battalion 24th regiment). Cited by Pflugk Harttung, J.von In: Das 1^e preussische Korps bei Belle Alliance p.159

²⁹ Cf. Reports of major Von Gillhausen (1st battalion), major Von Rappard (2nd battalion)(VI.E.7.I.54). Cited by Pflugk Harttung, J.von In: Das 1^e preussische Korps bei Belle Alliance p.163-168
Harkort, F. Die Zeiten des ersten Westphalischen etc. p.60

³⁰ Also see: Zychlinski, F.von Geschichte des 24.Infanterie-Regiments p.283

³¹ In these actions, near a hollow road, on the French side of the village, corporal Hechel (3rd battalion 2nd regiment of Brandenburg infantry nr.12) was wounded and led to the rear. During the action his men were erroneously fired at from behind by their fellow Landwehr men, but the mistake was soon corrected. Cf. Corporal J.K.Hechel (3rd battalion 2nd regiment of Brandenburg infantry nr.12). In: Coppens, B. & P.Courcelle. La Papelotte p.65

³² Cf. Report major Von Götz. VI.E.7.I.32 In: Cited by Pflugk Harttung, J.von In: Das 1^e preussische Korps bei Belle Alliance p.162

³³ Cf. Letter of major Best. WL, nr.704 p.278-282
Account of major Von Gröben. In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von Belle Alliance. Die Schilderung der Ereignisse vom 16.-18.Juni 1815 durch einen mitbeteiligten Generalstabsoffizier p.13
According to the diary of the 1st corps, the regiments of the reserve-cavalry were the first units to reach the battle-field, as well as both batteries of artillery mentioned above; as they needed support of infantry, the regiments initially covered the guns. In: Hafner, D. Hans Carl Ernst Graf von Zieten, Königlich Preussischer Generalfeldmarschall p.323-324

³⁴ Report of captain Von Wildowski (3rd regiment of Brandenburg uhlands). In: Former KA, VI.E.7.II.172 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.VII.3 E.p.54

³⁵ Cf. Report of Von Zieten. In: Former KA, VI.E.3.15 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.VII.3 E.p.2
Report of major general Von Röder. In: Former KA, VI.E.7.I.156 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.VII.3 E.p.80

This is being confirmed by the accounts of captain Chapuis (85th regiment) who states that his regiment was charged by Prussian cavalry.

Colonel Bro mentions the conversation he had had with colonel Marbot telling him about the charge Marbot carried out that evening against Prussian troops.

Cf. Chapuis - Notice sur le 85^e de ligne pendant la campagne de 1815 p.49-50

Colonel Bro - Mémoires p.153

³⁶ Cf. Plan of captain Von Brandis. Captain Leach, of the 1st battalion 95th regiment, in position in the centre of Wellington's army mentions the arrival of Prussian lancers towards 7 p.m. These men must either have been those of the 3rd regiment of uhlans or of the Kurmark Landwehr cavalry. They announced the arrival of Zieten's corps at the extreme left flank. Cf. Leach, J. Rough sketches etc. p.392

³⁷ Cf. reports of Von Röder (VI.E.7.I.159), Von Treskow (VI.E.7.I.113), report of the 1st Silesian hussars (VI.E.7.I.159), report of the Brandenburger uhlans and the Geschichte des 1.Brandenburger Ulanenregiment no.8 (Guretzky-Cornitz), reports of the 1st and 2nd regiment of Kurmark Landwehrcavalry (VI.E.7.I.180 and 185), report of the 6th uhlans (VI.E.7.I.172) In: Cf. Pflugk Harttung, J.von Das 1^e preussische Korps bei Belle Alliance p.209-214

Captain Von Rettberg confirms the passage of Prussian cavalry near his battery. In: BL, Add.ms.34.704 p.229-234

Both captain Mercer and lieutenant colonel Van Heerdt of the brigade of Ghigny both confirm the arrival of Prussian cavalry in the right centre of the line.

Cf. Mercer, C. The Waterloo campaign Vol.I p.328

Account of lieutenant colonel Van Heerdt in the archive of Van Löben Sels, nr.II.5.1
Erroneously, Van Heerdt believes they were the vanguard of Von Bülow.