

## The attack on Ligny.

The garrison in Ligny of the brigade of Von Henckel consisted of about 3000 men. Sharpshooters occupied walls, ditches, fences and hedges which were sometimes loopholed. Strong detachments were placed in closed columns in streets. At some places barricades had been erected in sunken roads and at some places in front of the village the high crops were cut down to improve visibility.

Not long after the start of the attack on Saint Amand, Gérard launched part of his corps against Ligny. This part was probably the brigade Romme (of the division of Pécheux).<sup>1</sup> It must have been around 3 p.m.<sup>2</sup>

Apparently without a preceding artillery bombardment (see below), the infantry moved forward, shouting " Vive l'Empereur ", and drums rolling. In all there were three columns of attack (<sup>3</sup>) which advanced *en echelon*, right in front, preceded by skirmishers.<sup>4</sup> The attack was tempestuous, but failed.<sup>5</sup>

As the attack was *en echelon*, right in front, the column to the right hit the outskirts of Ligny first. It reached the outward hedges and outbuildings of the village under heavy artillery-fire, but recoiled for the strong musket-fire coming from the well posted Prussian infantry.

Here, the skirmishers of the French right column tried to drive Von Glasenapp (2nd battalion 19th regiment) out of his position to the (Prussian) left of the village twice but this was in vain. However, as the French kept up the pressure, Von Glasenapp retreated towards the Ligne. It was on the left bank that Von Stengel had seen the situation and had now major Von Büнау, commander of the 2nd battalion of the 19th regiment, which was until then in close column behind the sunken road leading to Sombreffe, deploy the battalion to the left. Büнау led his men over the road towards the Ligne, where they halted. The French pushed forward in column against the skirmishers of the 2nd battalion, driving them back on their close-order supports. Büнау's men fired a volley at the French, who then attempted to deploy to return the fire. While they were doing so Büнау had his battalion fire a second volley and followed it up with a bayonet charge, initiated by captain Von Chirocz of the 6th company and which threw the French back. Yet, covered by their artillery, the French reformed and counter-attacked, driving back the Prussians to their starting positions. The Prussians returned to their positions behind the Ligne.<sup>6</sup>

Now, the French attempted to drive Von Glasenapp away with small units of infantry, but these attempts were in vain. After that, the French brought up two battalions upon which major Von Büнау advanced with his 2nd battalion up to the road Ligny-Tongrenelle and from there he repelled the French with his musketry fire.<sup>7</sup>

Here, in the extreme left part of the village, captain Ragge and his fusiliers of the fusilier battalion of the 4th regiment of Westphalian landwehr also had their share in successfully defending the village.<sup>8</sup>

One of the Prussian batteries to fire successfully on the French columns was horse battery no.2 led by captain Borowski. From his position to the left rear of Ligny he managed to force the enemy to bring a heavy battery opposite his to silence his guns. It failed as the fire went over the heads of the crew. After about one hour Borowski was ordered to retreat over some distance but this was only for a short time: immediately he retook his position and started duelling with the

French artillery.<sup>9</sup>

The centre column, in which the 30th regiment of the line, under colonel Ramanel and general Romme, got a bit further into the village.<sup>10</sup> The regiment approached the village up to 200 meters and deployed while moving; the charge was beaten and the infantry crossed the hedges and entered the village through a hollow road near the farm of de la Tour (about 250 meters east of the farm of d'En Haut). This road was strongly barricaded and the French infantry came under heavy fire. Through the rue d'en Haut the regiment succeeded in entering the village as far as the church-square where it was hit again by heavy artillery and infantry fire, both in front and flanks. In just a few moments the regiment lost about 700 men; major Hervieux and the commanders Richard and Lafolie were killed; the third battalion-commander, Blain, was slightly wounded. Additionally, five captains, two adjutant majors and nine 1st lieutenants and 2nd lieutenants were killed; three captains and seven lieutenants were wounded.<sup>11</sup>

The regiment, led by colonel De Rumigny, now went back in disorder and was obliged to leave the wounded where they had fallen. The survivors were collected by captain Francois and Christophe in rear of the artillery of the corps.<sup>12</sup> In doing so, they crossed the fields which were under constant heavy artillery fire of the Prussian guns.<sup>13</sup>

To the Prussian right, the French left column fell upon the 10th company of the 19th regiment of infantry, led by captain Von Schachtmeyer but had no success.

Again, Gérard led his units forward against the village for another two attacks, but both failed and were driven back in the same way.<sup>14</sup>

During these attacks, the French artillery must have come in action, mostly from the right, enfilading the long street in the village.<sup>15</sup>

Both the 3rd and 4th French corps were fighting the battle with the ammunition the artillery had carried itself; gradually, they faced a failing ammunition supply as the artillery-parks were still far in the rear. In fact, they only reached Châtelet on the night of the 16th.<sup>16</sup>

The fourth attack was carried out by infantry which attacked the village at several places at the same time, but which units these were is unknown.<sup>17</sup>

By now, in the centre, the Prussians evacuated the entrances of the village and now the French infantry while penetrating it in superior masses of skirmishers, managed to chase the Prussians out of the rue d'en Haut.<sup>18</sup> They, in turn, took up new positions on the churchyard, near the church, the square in front of it and the houses in the immediate surroundings. Having vigorously pushed forward, the French broke through just there and now a bitter and bloody fight ensued. The infantry fought - as if a personal hatred had taken over - with everything they got: muskets, knives, bayonets etc. In the end, however, the Prussians had to cross the Ligne. Despite the Prussian resistance, the French were here by now in almost complete control of the right bank of the Ligne and they were about to enter the left bank.<sup>19</sup>

To the left, the French presence in the centre of Ligny forced the 2nd battalion of the 19th regiment major Von Büнау), until then at the road Ligny – Mont Potriaux, to fall back to a position immediately in rear of the road Ligny – Sombreffe. Now, a strong fire-fight ensued in which the Prussians chased the French back over the Ligne, until the French again advanced starting from their artillery and again pushed the 2nd battalion over the Ligne. Four times after that, Von Büнау was able to drive the French back, but, in his turn, was forced back as well..

During these actions, major Von Zastrow, mixed with the 2nd battalion 19th regiment,

advanced as an extra reinforcement with his skirmishers, while being supported by two columns of companies of his 1st battalion of the 4th regiment Westphalian Landwehr. Now the French skirmishers recoiled back to their supports which fled. During the Prussian pursuit in front of the village two French guns fell into Prussian hands.<sup>20</sup> The Prussian troops, driven by their success, now got too far into the enemies canister-fire and had to go back as far as the edge of the village.<sup>21</sup> Due to a lack of limbers, they had to leave the guns in French hands.<sup>22</sup> From then on, the French no longer made any frontal attacks and tried to gain the Prussians flanks with skirmishers only.<sup>23</sup>

To the right, major Von Schouler was forced to wheel his left company as the enemy penetrated further into the centre of the village; at the same time his skirmishers were pressed from the front and driven back. Von Schouler had them advance to drive the French back but they were pushed back a second time. As the houses and the broken ground prevented Von Schouler from firing effectively he pulled back his men back for about 150 paces but this didn't help: the broken ground broke up his unit and he lost control over his men who now were in disorder. As a result, Von Schouler was only able to collect his battalion on the other side of the village. While captain Von Borcke was busy organising the battalion, major Von Schouler led his skirmishers towards the enemy, but they were not able to reply to the strong French fire, the more as they were not able to penetrate very far due to the presence of numerous fences and hedges, and flooded back. During these actions, Von Schouler had got wounded and he was succeeded by captain Von Borcke.<sup>24</sup>

After the French had got a foothold in Ligny, they extended their position and from there on they started to focus upon the chateau of Ligny as well.

Here, numerous French skirmishers established themselves in the hedges around the building.<sup>25</sup> Lieutenant Kessler now withdrew his skirmish platoon into the courtyard. Under the cover of the skirmishers fire, the French sappers now tried to smash down the eastern gate, but were prevented from doing so by the Prussian skirmishers. Not long after, as St.Amand had fallen to the enemy, French artillery started to bombard the chateau from about 400 paces distance. Meanwhile, masses of French skirmishers continued to attack the chateau, but to no avail.

Up to the moment that French artillery was put up to the chateau of Ligny, both the 1st and 4th company of the 1st battalion of the 19th regiment had not seen any action. Despite the long range, members of these companies were able to pick off a number of the French gunners. Here, French skirmishers and columns were not successful either.<sup>26</sup>

General Von Jagow had made Blücher aware of the critical situation in the village, the more as Von Henckel's brigade had already suffered severely. Now, Blücher decided to support Henckel with the remaining battalions of Von Jagow. It was almost 4 p.m.

In order to do so, Von Jagow now changed the front of his brigade by wheeling left towards Ligny. The four battalions (1st and 2nd battalion of the 7th regiment of infantry (West-Prussian nr.2) and the 1st and 3rd battalion of the 3rd regiment of Westphalian Landwehr) were sent to Ligny to support Henckel, the men of the Landwehr battalions being in the second line.<sup>27</sup> The two companies of Silesian sharpshooters, led by captain Von Rudorff, established themselves in a part of the chateau of Ligny, even though this was partly on fire after the French bombardment.

Both battalions of the 7th regiment of infantry (West-Prussian nr.2) now marched in column towards the village, the 1st battalion towards the southern part, and the 2nd battalion, personally led by Von Jagow himself, towards the centre. Both were preceded by their skirmishers. The 1st battalion soon got as far as the southern edge of the village. The 2nd battalion passed the unoccupied church before it was hit in the flank by a French battalion. A second battalion then charged them in the other flank. The battalion fell back in such disorder that it took the 1st battalion with it. In its retreat, the 2nd battalion had almost lost its colour. The French however failed to follow up, so the Prussians were able to reform rapidly.

The two battalions reformed into close columns and counterattacked, forcing their way into the village once again. Their skirmish platoons, under captain Von Witten and Von Berg, were detached and sent to storm the churchyard which the French had now occupied. The West Prussians captured their objective, either killing or taking prisoner the French garrison. Both battalions were then preparing to advance south out of the village when they encountered the French battalions of the brigade of Le Capitaine (59th and 76th regiment line), which were now approaching Ligny in close columns.

As the Prussians were caught in the narrow streets, and as the French did not have the time to deploy, they both halted to fire as they were. The ensuing exchange of fire lasted half an hour with both sides suffering heavy casualties; general Le Capitaine was killed. The French had also some guns available which were loaded with canister, which made great havoc.

The flag pole of the 2nd Prussian battalion was shattered and the colours of both battalions were ripped to pieces by bullets. Captain Von Czarnowski, commander of the 1st battalion, suffered several bullet wounds and died.<sup>28</sup>

Then suddenly the alarm spread that the churchyard would have fallen into French hands. Some shots were fired there from the spire of the church and a lot of shouting was heard. The situation was that Prussians which were near fired in that direction, while bringing both musketeer battalions of the 7th regiment of infantry (West-Prussian nr.2) (which had by now gained one of the exits of the village) in uncertainty.

At the same time, the French deployed some artillery loaded with canister in front. This made the Prussians panick. First lieutenant Von Bojan attempted to rally the remaining 250 men, which he achieved to a certain extent, despite taking fire from several directions. Suddenly, a battalion of French charged out of a side street. Bojan ordered his men to counter-charge, but the French prevailed. They pursued the fleeing Prussians so closely that two Frenchmen attempted to seize the colour of the 2nd battalion which was carried by ensign Schulze. Privates Schwenke and Butzki rescues both him and the colour, killing the unfortunate Frenchmen in the process. For their deeds that day, these Prussians were honoured with the Iron Cross, 2nd class and Russian Order of St.George, 5th class.

All in all, both musketeer battalions were forced to fall back further to the interior of the village and continue their actions from there as skirmishers.<sup>29</sup>

In rear of these battalions, the 1st and 3rd battalion of the 3rd regiment of Westphalian Landwehr had advanced to the village as well, the 1st probably in front of the 3rd.

However, the share of the 1st battalion is not entirely clear: first of all, it would have been ordered to advance towards the village, but when it had got there it would have been counter-

ordered to return to its original position, initially leaving behind its sharpshooters; they, eventually also returned. Shortly after, these sharpshooters were ordered to advance again and this is what they did, followed by the companies of the battalion itself. However, after these had started to skirmish and the 3rd battalion had also entered the village, they must have been taken back again and the battalion as such must have been recollected in front of the village. Apparently it must have faced problems in maintaining itself in the village. A detachment of all companies, led by captain Von Büнау, however, was left in the village to be involved in skirmish actions for the remainder of the battle.<sup>30</sup>

The instability of the battalion also must have influenced the stability of the already hard pressed 2nd and 3rd battalion of the 4th regiment of Westphalian Landwehr (Von Henckel) in the centre and left part of the village.<sup>31</sup>

The 3rd battalion of the 3rd regiment of Westphalian Landwehr must have penetrated into the village with some success, but also faced French resistance which resulted in a continuous change of position further to the front or rear in the village. It seems, however, that the battalion in this stage of the battle, never actually left the village.<sup>32</sup>

The fusilier battalion of the 7th regiment of infantry (West-Prussian nr.2) which was still in reserve was now committed in the fight as well; the 5th regiment of Brandenburger dragoons (brigade Treskow, Von Röder) took its former position. It was here that it suffered under the French fire.<sup>33</sup>

At the same time, the fusilier battalion of the 29th regiment moved even closer to the artillery which it was supposed to cover. Both batteries suffered serious losses and volunteers of the battalion must have assisted the gunners to maintain their fire.

Of the same battalion, after the request of Von Henckel, captain Bellmer took the 9th and 10th companies into Ligny in column after leaving his skirmish platoons behind to protect the artillery batteries. Here too, now two companies were left.

Bellmer's men moved through a meadow close to the church and engaged some French voltigeurs 100 paces away, in cover behind fences and hedges. Near their position some Westphalian Landwehr were also defending a footbridge but were pushed back. Volleys from the fusilier battalion held this attack off too. Some French approached the right flank of the fusiliers and called on them to change sides. Evidently, the great heat of the day had led to some of these troops discarding their grey overcoats to reveal their white uniforms and their identity as former Berg troops. Bellmer was shot dead just after having rejected this call. However, sergeant Schellpeper of the 9th company spotted the voltigeur who had fired the fatal shot, and returned the compliment the next time the Frenchman raised his head from the cover.

The Berg fusiliers fought tooth and nail to defend Bellmer's body, lieutenant Von Schmeling fighting off two Frenchmen while his fusiliers attempted to drag their former commander away. Schmeling suffered a bayonet wound and was shot in the left arm here. The 3rd battalion of the 29th regiment was gradually forced back, but not before Schmeling suffered two more wounds, one in his abdomen, the other in the leg. He was carried away on a limber.<sup>34</sup>

In this stage of the fight, the 2nd battalion of the 1st regiment Elbe Landwehr (brigade Von Krafft) had joined the fray in Ligny.<sup>35</sup>

Now, Gérard was probably forced to commit his last reserves at Ligny.<sup>36</sup>

Count Henckel now ordered a general attack on the southern part of the village. Borcke, with his

three fusilier companies of the 19th regiment, although exhausted by more than two hours of combat, formed a column at the western end of the village, and moved in support of the 1st and 2nd battalion of the 7th regiment of infantry (West-Prussian nr.2). This attack was more successful, reaching the southern edge of the village with such speed that the French gunners there cut the traces and abandoned their guns in haste. However, this success was squandered when the elated Prussians pursued the French out of the village. Again, French troops drawn up in the tall crops were able to surprise the Prussians, driving them off with effective fire at close range. The French followed the broken Prussians back into Ligny, regaining most of their original positions, including the church-yard, which the 7th regiment of infantry (West-Prussian nr.2) had recaptured only a short while earlier.<sup>37</sup>

Captain Schachtmeyer next led his 10th company of the 19th regiment, posted behind an earth bank at the south side of the village, in a local counter-attack. When a company of French grenadiers got to about 70 paces from his position, he led 40 or 50 of his men over the bank. From there, they charged the French who continued their advance to within ten paces of the Prussians before falling back in panic, being chased back over 100 paces. Then, Von Schachtmeyer led his men back to the edge of the village.

Meanwhile, to the left, major Von Stengel had been able to maintain his position at the hollow road which leads from Ligny towards Sombrefe. Due to the numerous French skirmishers, Von Stengel's units had got scattered into small mixed groups, composed of other units as well.<sup>38</sup>

Additionally, Blücher now led also four battalions of Von Krafft in a storm-march towards Ligny.

It must have been about 5 p.m. These battalions were the 1st and 2nd battalion of the 9th regiment and the 1st and 3rd battalion of the 1st regiment Elbe Landwehrinfantry.<sup>39</sup>

The four battalions marched down the slopes from Brye to Ligny under heavy artillery fire. The two musketeer battalions of the 9th Colberg regiment, under the command of major Von Schmidt, halted briefly just before reaching the village. The skirmish division under captain Von Borcke and captain Von Malotky and the 80-strong volunteer detachment under lieutenant Von Bagensky, were thrown out in front to begin the attack. The 1st battalion, under major Von Lukowitz, then advanced down the wide high street, with the 2nd battalion, under major Von Dorsch, remaining in reserve. These units drove the French across the Ligne, but as the French returned in force, a dragging fight ensued.<sup>40</sup>

Initially, Von Krafft kept two of them in reserve, but soon they were committed as well (the remainder of the brigade was sent to St.Amand-la-Haye).<sup>41</sup>

By the time Von Krafft was involved in the actions at Ligny, captain Von Borcke, with the 10th, 11th and 12th company of the 19th regiment (to the right in the village) had crossed up and down the Ligne nine times. Further to his right, the 1st and 4th company of the 1st battalion of the same regiment were still defending the hedges around the chateau in such a way that both the 2nd and 3rd company still stood intact in rear of them. At the same time, the chateau itself was still under fire of the French guns and infantry.<sup>42</sup>

Ligny itself was a true inferno: infantry-men were fighting like devils with all possible weapons. The atmosphere was one of death and decay: houses were on fire, collapsing, the streets were

covered with corpses and wounded, barricades and debris. Smoke was obscuring any view and the noise must have been terrific: the roaring of artillery, the musketry-fire, the moaning of the wounded, the yelling of troops and the raging fires. There was practically no order: troops fought in small units or individually for every house, wall or enclosure.

First version: 22nd June 2005 - Last revised: 14th May 2010 - Copyright © Pierre de Wit

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Francois. Journal du capitaine Francois etc. p.880

2.Henckel von Donnersmarck, count Erinnerungen etc. p.353

He clearly states that the attack on Saint Amand preceded the one on Ligny, which started in his idea between 3 and 4 p.m.

Memoirs of prince Von Thurn und Taxis, Bavarian plenipotentiary at the headquarters of Blücher. In: Aus drei Feldzügen etc. p.323

Cf. Tagebuch des Königlich Preussischen I.Armeekorps etc. (Kriegsarchiv VI.E.13) In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von Die Schlacht bei Ligny In: Die Armee 1.Jg.1902 nr.2 p.16

Cf. Von Müffling. In: Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.13

According to Aerts it was shortly after 2.30 p.m. In: Etudes etc. p.382

For 3.15 p.m. cf.

Mauduit, H.de Les derniers jours de la grande armée Vol.II p.60

Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France etc. p.94

The official Prussian report of the battle. In: Bas, F.de La campagne de 1815 etc. Vol.III p.446

According to Charras it was 2.45 p.m. In: Histoire de la campagne de 1815 etc. Vol.I p.161

According to captain Francois (30th regiment, division Pécheux) general Pécheux gave the order to his brigade commander Romme to attack the village at 3 p.m. Cf.Francois. Journal du capitaine Francois etc. p.879

This hour is being confirmed by major Von Reiche, chief of staff of the 1st Prussian corps.

Cf. Reiche, L.von Memoiren etc. p.189

According to G.de Grouchy it must have been 4 p.m. Cf. Grouchy, G.de Mémoires du maréchal de Grouchy. Vol.IV p.12

Blücher, in his report to the king, erroneously asserts the attack here started by 4.30 p.m.

<sup>3</sup> Henckel von Donnersmarck, count Erinnerungen etc. p.354

In his report, major general Henckel von Donnersmarck mentions the presence of a French general with his staff, on the left flank of the village, reconnoitring. They would have preceded the attack here; while doing so, a French adjudant would have been injured by the premature fire of men of the 2nd battalion of the 19th regiment, posted here. This group may very well have been Gérard himself and his staff.

Cf. Report of Henckel von Donnersmarck. In: KA,VI.E.7.I.144 in GSA,VPH-HA,VI nr.VII.5.p.108

Captain Forget, of the general staff of the 4th corps, confirms he led the attack of a battalion onto the centre of Ligny; in his idea, Prussian Berg-infantry was there, but this was not the case. During the attack, Forget lost his horse and got wounded by the fall and was carried to the rear.

In: Chuquet, A. Lettres de 1815 p.308-309

For the three columns, also see: Wagner, Plane etc. p.41  
Charras. Histoire de la campagne etc. p.162

4.Damitz, Von Geschichte etc. p.139

Report of the 4th regiment of Westphalian Landwehr. In: KA,VI.E.7.II.152 in GSA,VPH-HA,VI nr.VII.5.p.90

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Tagebuch des Königlich Preussischen I.Armeekorps etc. (Kriegsarchiv VI.E.13) In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von Die Schlacht bei Ligny In: Die Armee 1.Jg.1902 nr.2 p.16

<sup>6</sup> Leszczyński, R.von - 50 Jahre Geschichte des Königlich Preussischen 2. Posenschen Infanterie Regiments nr.19 p.158

Report of major general Henckel von Donnersmarck. In: KA,VI.E.7.I.144 in GSA,VPH-HA,VI nr.VII.5.p.108

Report of colonel Von Schutter. In: KA,VI.E.7.I.149 in GSA,VPH-HA,VI nr.VII.5.p.115  
Wagner, Plane etc. p.42

<sup>7</sup> Leszczyński, R.von - 50 Jahre Geschichte des Königlich Preussischen 2. Posenschen Infanterie Regiments nr.19 p.159

<sup>8</sup> Report of the major general Von Henckel. In: KA,VI.E.7.I.144 in GSA,VPH-HA,VI nr.VII.5.p.108

<sup>9</sup> Report of captain Borowski, dated 22 June 1815. In: Kriegstagebuch, artillery of the 1st corps. In: GSA Rep.15a nr.82 p.36-38

<sup>10</sup> Sometimes it is being asserted that this French action took place during the first attack, but from the several Prussian accounts I do not have that impression.

11.Francois, captain (30th regiment, division Pécheux), Journal du capitaine Francois etc. p. 880

Martinien, M. Tableaux par corps etc. p.192

Houssaye, H. 1815.Waterloo p.169 The regiment counted about 1400 men.

The fact that the French pressed the Prussian centre very hard is confirmed by Henckel. Cf. Henckel von Donnersmarck, count - Erinnerungen etc. p.354

12.Cf Francois, captain. (30th regiment of line, division Pécheux ) Journal du capitaine Francois etc. p.881

En passant, Francois states that the French had succeeded in taking 500 Prussian prisoners. General Rumigny, aide de camp of Gérard, mentions the desperate attack of the brigade of Romme against Ligny. Cf. Rumigny, M.T.G. Souvenirs du général comte de Rumigny etc. p.100

The fact that the first attack failed is confirmed by major Von Reiche. Cf. Reiche, L.von Memoiren etc. p.189

13. These guns were those of the foot batteries no.8 and 15 (16 guns), reinforced by the foot battery no.3 (of Pirch II). Von Damitz also mentions a battery of horse artillery, but he doesn't make clear which one. Cf. Damitz, Von Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.139

14. Report of Henckel von Donnersmarck. In: KA, VI.E.7.I.144 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.VII.5.p.108

Those who mention three fruitless French attacks are:

Wagner, Plane etc. p.41

Damitz, Von Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.139

Houssaye, H. 1815. Waterloo p.169

Charras. Histoire de la campagne de 1815 etc. Vol.I p.163

Lettow Vorbeck, O.von Napoleons Untergang p.330

Siborne, W. History of the war in France etc. Vol.I p.191

None of them however gives any details of these second and third actions, and are probably all based upon Von Damitz.

Captain Francois (30th regiment line, division of Pécheux) adds another four fruitless French attacks on the village that day, but here he probably means only his regiment, the 30th regiment of the line (or brigade). Only during the sixth attack the unit penetrated into Ligny. Cf. Francois, captain Journal du capitaine Francois etc. p.881

According to Von Reiche the third French attack was successful in stead of the fourth. Cf. Reiche, L.von Memoiren etc. p.190

Cf. Tagebuch des Königlich Preussischen I.Armee korps etc. (Kriegsarchiv VI.E.13) In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von Die Schlacht bei Ligny In: Die Armee 1.Jg.1902 nr.2 p.16

This last document claims the first two attacks were echeloned to the right, while the third one was simultaneous all along the front of the village.

15. Report of major general Von Henckel. In: KA, VI.E.7.I.144 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.VII.5.p.109

Wagner, Plane etc. p.42

Damitz, Von Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.139

Some claim there was a bombardment preceding the first assault, but there is no proof for that. Cf.

Charras. Histoire de la campagne de 1815 etc. Vol.I p.162

Siborne, W. History of the war in France etc. Vol.I p.191

16. Note of colonel Simon Lorière about the 15th and 16th of June. In: SHAT. C15

<sup>17</sup> Houssaye claims the first three attacks were carried out by the division of Pécheux, and that this division was reinforced by the brigade of Le Capitaine of the division of Vichery, the

moment the fourth attack was to be carried out.

The second brigade of this division, of Deprez, would have got into the battle by 7 p.m. Even though Houssaye mentions several sources, none of these is so specific about the time and the way the forces of Gérard were committed in the battle.

Charras mentions four French attacks, after which part of Ligny was taken, but as this was lost again the last reserves of the 4th corps were committed into action, by then it was 5.30 p.m. In: *Histoire de la campagne etc.* p.163-164

Only capitaine Francois of the 30th regiment of the line (brigade Romme of the division Pécheux) mentions several attacks of his regiment, but isn't specific about the moment other units of the corps were committed. At some point of time, towards 6 p.m., he states in a very general way that the remaining units of the 4th corps were involved in the battle.

Cf. Houssaye, H. 1815. *Waterloo* p.168, 169, 179

Capitaine Francois. (30th regiment of line, division Pécheux ) *Journal du capitaine Francois etc.* p.879-883

<sup>18</sup> Report of the 4th regiment of Westphalian Landwehr. In: KA, VI.E.7.II.152 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr. VII.5.p.90

19.Cf. Charras. *Histoire de la campagne de 1815 etc.* Vol.I p.163

According to Houssaye the brigade of Romme (30th and 96th regiment line) would have crossed the Ligne for some time. Cf. Houssaye, H. 1815. *Waterloo* p.171

Houssaye depicts this period of the fighting in Ligny too unrealistic, that is too much in favour of the French, while Von Damitz does so for the Prussians.

<sup>20</sup> Wagner, Plane etc. p.42

<sup>21</sup> Henckel von Donnersmarck, count *Erinnerungen etc.* p.354

Report of the 4th regiment of Westphalian Landwehr. In: KA, VI.E.7.II.152 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr. VII.5.p.90

Report of Henckel von Donnersmarck. In: KA, VI.E.7.I.144 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr. VII.5.p.108

According to the *Tagebuch des Königlich Preussischen I.Armeekorps etc.* this occurred during the second attack; it sees the penetration of the French immediately after as the third attack. In: Cf. *Tagebuch des Königlich Preussischen I.Armeekorps etc.* (Kriegsarchiv VI.E.13) In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von *Die Schlacht bei Ligny* In: *Die Armee* 1.Jg.1902 nr.2 p.16

22.Cf.Reiche, L.von *Memoiren etc.* p.189-190

*Tagebuch des Königlich Preussischen I.Armeekorps.* In: Pflugk Harttung, J.von *Die Schlacht bei Ligny.* P.23

And in: Hafner, D. Hans Carl Ernst Graf von Zieten, *Königlich Preussischer Generalfeldmarschall* p.260

Report of Henckel von Donnersmarck. In: KA, VI.E.7.I.144 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.VII.5.p.108

<sup>23</sup> Leszczyński, R.von - 50 Jahre Geschichte des Königlich Preussischen 2. Posenschen Infanterie Regiments nr.19 p.159-160

<sup>24</sup> Report of major Von Schouler (3rd battalion 19th regiment). In KA, VI.E.7.I.151 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.VII.5.p.104-105

25. Houssaye, H.1815.Waterloo p.170

Charras. Histoire de la campagne de 1815 Vol.I p.163

Damitz, Von Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.140

According to Von Reiche the chateau was taken by the French. Cf.Reiche, L.von Memoiren etc. p.190

Cf. Tagebuch des Königlich Preussischen I.Armeekorps etc. In: Hafner, D. Hans Carl Ernst Graf von Zieten, Königlich Preussischer Generalfeldmarschall p.161

<sup>26</sup> Leszczyński, R.von - 50 Jahre Geschichte des Königlich Preussischen 2. Posenschen Infanterie Regiments nr.19 p.160-162

27.Cf. Zieten's report of 8 July 1815 in Reiche, L.von Memoiren etc. p.418  
Zieten mentions six battalions.

Wagner mentions the 1st and 2nd battalion of the 2nd regiment WestPrussian infantry nr.7 and the 1st and 2nd battalion of the 3rd regiment of Westphalian Landwehr. In: Plane etc. p.43

Damitz, Von Geschichte des Feldzugs etc.140

Wellmann, R. Geschichte etc. p.94

Report of colonel Von Rüchel. In: KA, VI.E.7.I.128 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI, nr.VII.5.p.71-72

Von Ollech claims the brigade of Von Henckel went back in rear of Bussy. In: Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.151

However, from Zieten's report it is clear that Henckel was supported by Von Jagow and not taken back.

Aerts and Von Damitz claim Von Henckel only went back after the reinforcement by the four battalions of Von Langen. According to them, these battalions went back towards Sombrefe. Additionally, one battalion of the 4th regiment Westphalian Landwehr was kept in the village.

<sup>28</sup> Report of lieutenant colonel Von Seydlitz (2nd regiment of WestPrussian infantry nr.7). In: KA, VI.E.7.II.127 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.VII.5.p.78-79

Muthvolles Benehmen zweier Musquetiere etc. In: Militär Wochenblatt

Hofschröer, P.1815.The Waterloo campaign. Wellington etc. p.309

He bases his details on the work of Lewinski & Brauchitsch. Geschichte des Grenadier etc.

Vol. I p.149-150 – this, in its turn, is based upon the mentioned report.

Wagner, Plane etc. p.43

Damitz, Von Geschichte des Feldzuges etc. p.141

Again, Damitz is a bit too positive on the situation, keeping silent on the initial lack of success of the battalions.

<sup>29</sup> Report of lieutenant colonel Von Seydlitz (2nd regiment of WestPrussian infantry nr.7). In: KA, VI.E.7.II.127 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.VII.5.p.79-80

Von Seydlitz just mentions the retreat of the battalions further to the interior of the village, without using the word panic.

Wagner, Plane etc. p.43

Hofschröer, P.1815.The Waterloo campaign. Wellington etc. p.311 He bases his account on the work of Lewinski & Brauchitsch, Vol.I p.151-152 (see above).

<sup>30</sup> Report of captain Von Blomberg (1st battalion 3rd regiment of Westphalian Landwehr). In: KA, VI.E.7.II.137 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.VII.5.p.95

<sup>31</sup> Report of the 4th regiment of Westphalian Landwehr. In: KA, VI.E.7.II.152 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.VII.5.p.92-93

<sup>32</sup> Report of captain Von Fischer (3rd battalion 3rd regiment of Westphalian Landwehr). In: KA, VI.E.7.II.143 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.VII.5.p.103

Von Garrelts claims the fuselier battalion drove the French twice with the bayonet to the other side of the village, but that the battalion was forced back again. At a later stage, being reinforced by two battalions of the 4th regiment of Westphalian Landwehr, the battalion would have advanced again into the village where it was unable to deploy because of the presence of a hollow road. Here it was under fire for about 30 minutes, when it drove off the enemy. In: Die Ostfriesen etc. p.172

33.Cf.Reiche, L.von Memoiren etc. p.191

Damitz, Von Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.141

<sup>34</sup> Report of major Von Poellnitz (in former Kriegsarchiv). In: Wellmann, R. Geschichte des Infanterie-Regiments etc. p.102-103

<sup>35</sup> Report of major general Von Krafft. In: KA, VI.E.15.4 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI,nr.VII.5.p.14

<sup>36</sup> Gourgaud confirms that by 5.30 p.m. Gérard had committed all his troops. In: Campagne de dix-huit cent quinze p.49

Cf. footnote nr.16

<sup>37</sup> Leszczynski, R.von - 50 Jahre Geschichte des Königlich Preussischen 2. Posenschen Infanterie Regiments nr.19 p.162-163

Which unit of this regiment must have been is not clear. It may very well have been the

fusilier battalion. Of both musketeer battalions we know that they must have advanced into the village a second time (after their retreat due to the rumour around the church) but whether this was around the churchyard is not clear. Cf. Report of lieutenant colonel Von Seydlitz (2nd regiment of WestPrussian infantry nr.7). In: KA, VI.E.7.II.127 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI nr.VII.5.p.80

<sup>38</sup> Leszczynski, R.von - 50 Jahre Geschichte des Königlich Preussischen 2. Posenschen Infanterie Regiments nr.19 p.163

39. Report of major general Von Krafft. In: KA, VI.E.15.4 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI,nr.VII.5.p.14

Damitz, Von Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.153

Siborne, W. History of the war in France etc. Vol.I p.203

Ollech, Von Geschichte des Feldzugs etc. p.151-152

Bagensky, Von – Geschichte des 9ten Infanterie Regiments p.236-237

Franz Lieber (member of the 9th regiment, brigade Von Krafft). In: Brett James, A. The hundred days p.74-75

The 3rd battalion of the Elbe Landwehr would have been joined by the 2nd detachment of Markaner sharpshooters under lieutenant Pilgrim. This detachment lost 33 men. Cf.Harkort, F. Die Zeiten des ersten Westphälischen Landwehr-regiments p.48

<sup>40</sup> Von Bagensky – Geschichte des 9ten Infanterie Regiments p.237

Also see: Report of major general Von Krafft. In: KA, VI.E.15.4 in GSA, VPH-HA, VI,nr.VII.5.p.14

<sup>41</sup> Wagner, Plane etc. p.43

<sup>42</sup> Leszczynski, R.von - 50 Jahre Geschichte des Königlich Preussischen 2. Posenschen Infanterie Regiments nr.19 p.164