Wargame

Design

TLNB House Rules
March Orders
British Regiments
Stacking

Wargame Design Special Studies
All seven numbers of *Wargame Design Special Studies* are now available in pdf. Order at Napoleongames.com

To Place an Order
phone 1(443) 452-9487
or securely at www.NapoleonGames.com

Order Inquiries
Orders for games in print are usually shipped within *24 hours* of receipt. All customers should receive your game within *one week* of our receiving the order. Contact us if your order has not been received in a timely manner.

Guarantee
If for any reason you are dissatisfied with an OSG product, return it complete and intact (unpunched) along with proof of purchase for a full refund. If your game has a damaged or missing part, send us the damaged component or describe the missing component and we will replace it free of charge.

Game Questions
Email questions will be answered promptly.
Important: Begin by stating the specific rules heading in question with its case number, if any.

NAPTHA IS THE CRUCIAL COMPOUND

… for the production of plastics. Two main processes are polymerisation and polycondensation, and they both require specific catalysts. In a polymerisation reactor, monomers such as ethylene and propylene are linked together to form long polymer chains. Each polymer has its own properties, structure and size depending on the various types of basic monomers used.

WARGAME DESIGN
• C • O • N • T • E • N • T • S •

EDITORIAL
Why We Do What We Do
Kevin Zucker

Your approach makes room for fearlessness. I never realized what a huge undertaking designing a game like this is. There are countless places where things intersect, and getting all of those right is just so daunting. It makes me cautious about changes late in the process because of all the things one change will affect. I keep reminding myself that this needs to be fun, and approached in a generous, playful spirit. I don't want fear to close the process down.
—Christopher Moeller

In a barrel of crude oil, after you skim off the jet fuel, kerosene, gasoline, diesel oil, motor oil, and lubricants, you come to *Naptha* (see at left) from which plastics are made. At the very bottom is useless sludge. Game Design sludge takes up a huge amount of time and the actual usefulness to the player is minimal. Wiping out the last 10% of errors takes 90% of development time. To pursue consistency for its own sake was never my thing.

The Play's the Thing
One thing should be uppermost in the designer's mind, and that is the experience of actual play. Redmond Simonsen really understood how to run an assembly line without burdening the player. He played most every game during development and he had a checklist of ways to graphically smooth the player experience. He wanted to minimize historical detail if it had no bearing on play.

Redmond also hated typos! After everyone had left SPI I would work late searching them out and cutting-in corrections on the boards with an x-acto-knife.

Compiled List of TLNB House Rules November 2020

I no way endorse or recommend any of the House Rules below. They are simply tweaks made by TLNB players that fit their own vision of the Napoleonic battle. There is no official rubber-stamp from OSG. Players should agree pre-play which House Rules they are going to use. So, as an example, one could suggest using House Rule numbers HR 5.42b and HR 14.22. It makes it a whole lot easier than having to spell out in detail each and every House Rule suggestion.

In general, I have included rules that are merely tweaks to a system rule and therefore avoided those which are wholesale changes. All the same, you will find links where I have included charts that were too space consuming to include at face value. I also have to hand a house ruled set called the TLNB GWN Ver.19.3 that was submitted to me. That doc can be sent to you should you request it.   —Vince Hughes

The House Rules

(2.1.A1) Variable Weather Phase (and Recovery Phase): Instead of having weather phases at pre-determined turns (approx every 3 turns as depicted on the TRC), roll a d6 each Weather Phase. If a 5 or 6 is rolled, then there will be a Weather Phase. Any other result means no Weather check.
Likewise, you may either do the same for the Recovery Phase, or keep the Recovery Phase linked to the Weather check.

(2.1.D2A) Artillery Reaction Fire Step: Ignore completely and by extension also delete rule 13.5 (CBF)

(4.3) ZOC's & Movement
Involves a chart/table here: [TLNB House of Rules](#)

(5.42 & 5.5) Leader Loss, Capture etc Version A: Ignore the rules in the book. Instead

roll for EVERY leader involved in a Combat (both sides) or in a Bombardment hex that is with a Stack that he is ENHANCING the number of units it contains. Roll 2 D6, a result of 10+ will remove the leader. If a leader is removed, follow the RAW for consequences. Actual leader loss at this level were quite rare given the number of engagements throughout the Napoleonic Wars. This rule therefore intends to only punish those that use leaders at the forefront and in hexes that he is leading troops in numbers or being used for a main point of concentration.

(5.42 & 5.5) Leader Loss, Capture etc Version B: As RAW for stack that suffers elimination or a reduction result. If retreat or stand, roll 11+ on 2d6.

(5.42 & 5.5) Leader Loss, Capture etc Version C: When a leader is alone in a hex and survives the initial capture attempt, he must move by using his personal movement allowance towards either the nearest friendly unit or Supply Source. This is instead of relocating him there as per RAW. For each EZOC he is forced to traverse during this movement, another capture attempt should be made. He then follows normal RAW for his activation and ability to move unless once again subjected to a capture attempt.

(6.31) Failed Officer Initiative Checks: If an officer that failed his Initiative test is located between 2-3 hexes from an enemy unit, his troops within Command Range may be Moved a maximum of 1 hex each. Place a '1-hex' counter on each unit allowed to do so. Units in EZOC's may not be moved.

(7.2) Artillery (rule A): Move as Trains but CAN move up slopes.

(7.2) Foot Artillery & Orchards: Orchards cost 2MP's for foot artillery instead of 1MP.

(7.2) Artillery Losses due to Moving (rule B): If artillery attempt to cross a stream without trestle, ford or marsh hex, roll 1d6
1 = PEU
2-3 = Loses 1 step & Ends Movement and does not enter hex
4-5 = Ends Movement and does not enter hex
6 = Unit Continues to Move normally

(7.2 & 7.6) Artillery and Waterways(1): Artillery may only cross waterways across a bridge or trestle.

(7.2 & 7.6) Artillery and Waterways(2): Artillery must begin their movement adjacent to any waterway that they wish (and are allowed) to cross without a span. Having crossed, they must stop in the first hex entered.

(7.2 & 7.6) Artillery and Waterways(3): Combine both (1) & (2) above into one rule.

(7.23) Leader Movement: Leaders may use infantry or cavalry costs in each hex the leader moves, whichever is the lowest.

(7.5) Road March Markers: In order to show the length of columns on a road, units of 3SP or less place the RM marker on top (or below) the unit counter. Units of 4SP or more will place the RM marker behind them.

(7.63) Damaging Bridges: Unless a specific Bridge was destroyed in the historical battle, do NOT allow that bridge to be destroyed in the scenario.

(7.63 Bullet Point): Ignore the *"It costs 2 MP's to damage a bridge"*. Instead, the side attempting to damage the bridge gets to roll one d6 per turn if an infantry unit starts the turn adjacent to it. A '1' must be rolled to 'Damage' the bridge. Note only one die roll per turn, regardless of how many units next to the bridge.

(8.2) Hiding Units: Instead of the RAW rule, instead allow only the top unit in any stack to be inspected. All other counters below may not be inspected unless a Recon takes place as per RAW.

(10.4) Combat Procedure: Step.1 The attacking player may voluntarily reduce the odds attack achieved by his units.

(11.2) Combined Arms (rule A): Negate Combined Arms bonus if the target hex also has Combined Arms.

(11.2) Combined Arms (rule B): Cossacks do not count towards fulfilling the requirement for a Combined Arms attack.

(11.3) Staking The Guard: Either ignore this rule altogether OR do not include the Ex result as a reason for the "Garde Recule" effect.

(11.5) Other Combat Modifiers: Cavalry units marked 'HC' Attacking a hex comprised of all cavalry none of which are marked as 'HC' receive a -1 DRM in Combat. Note this does not apply to defending HC.

(12.2.B) Artillery In Shock Combat: In all Shock Combats, artillery is rated just a '1' for Shock. (exception only when both opposing stacks consist of nothing but artillery, then use normal Initiative value).

(12.2.E) Shock Combat Loss: When a step is lost in Shock Combat, the opponent chooses which enemy unit loses a step. It may be from a full or reduced unit at the opposing player's preference.

(12.33) Retreat Across Bridges (not Trestles): The owning player has the option to avoid a Retreat Across A Bridge if there are sufficient empty hexes not in an EZOC to execute the Retreat. Therefore, units may ignore the requirement to Retreat towards a Supply Source. When Retreating, these units may not enter the same hex more than once.

(12.4) Advance After Combat: Horse Artillery may Advance After Combat into a vacated hex if another friendly unit also Advances into that hex. Horse Artillery may never advance on their own.

(13.38) Bombardment Results: Best used if not using the new CBT rules as this gives Bombardment hits a chance of longer effects. When a target receives an 'S','Dr','1R' or '2R' result, all defending units in the hex must take an Initiative Test. Using a d6, each unit that rolls higher than its Initiative will count as Suppressed (see Bombardment CRT). Units in a town gain a -1 DRM to their Initiative test. Therefore, the Bombardment CRT results should be read as follows:

S = All units take an Initiative Test. Failure Suppresses the unit.

Dr = Defender Retreat. On successful Initiative check of highest rated unit, the result may be converted to a 1R instead of Dr. If the unit fails the check, it Retreats and is Suppressed and the Dr result applies. All other units in the stack, whatever the result also take an Initiative Test. Each Failure means that unit is Suppressed.

1R = Reduce One Combat unit (attacker's choice). Defender may then apply Dr to whole stack. If stack wishes to stay, its component units must pass their Initiative Test. Those that do not are Suppressed and must Retreat 1 hex.

2R - As 1R but reduce two combat units.

A unit removes its Suppression Marker only at the end of its OWN side's 2nd LOS step.

(14.0) Charges: A complete table and chart of house-ruled charges may be found here: http://talk.consimworld.com/WebX/?233@@.ee6bef6/19689!enclosure=.1de25e6f

(14.21) Add to RAW Charge Procedure: If one of the charging cavalry units is marked 'HC' the player Charging may modify the Charge die result by -1. However, if the Charging player elects to use this bonus (he does not have to), the HC unit used for the bonus must lose an extra step whatever the result outcome, even if an 'OR' result is obtained.

(14.22) Charge Restrictions: Delete
• *"through an EZOC (except the ZOC of its target)"* and replace it with
• *"through an artillery EZOC unless the artillery is the target hex."* Also add *"Never through a cavalry EZOC"*

(20.23) Forces Removed From March Orders: Officer under March Orders testing for Initiative has +1 DRM (to account for him countermanding an Order).

(21.6) Demoralisation: A General Retreat Order may be issued for any Formation that becomes Demoralised. Place the Formation Officer on the nearest friendly Supply Source and Out of Command markers on all units of that Formation. These units may not voluntarily enter an EZOC and any and all movement must bring them closer to the Supply hex each time.

(22.12) Recovery: When a unit is sent to the UAR box a die is rolled. on a 1 or 2 it is placed in the 'This Turn'

(Study Folder) VP Counting: for corps Demoralised at the end of a scenario are awarded based on how many SP's it takes that corps to become Demoralised as follows: • 1-4SP = 2VP • 5-8SP = 3VP • 9+ SP = 4VP

(Study Folder) Counting Total SP's Lost: When counting the amount of SP's lost in a scenario, include the part SP's missing from reduced units also.

(Study Folder) VP Counting: Leaders lost will provide VP's to the enemy. As RAW, Napoleon's loss is an immediate defeat. For others, use the following:
Commander rated 3 or 4 = 4VP
Commander rated 1 or 2 = 3VP
Commander-Officer   = 2VP
Officer rated 4+   = 2VP
Officer rated 2 or 3 = 1VP

(24.0) Adding the Cards: Leave out the Mode Cards from the At Start Set-Up procedure.
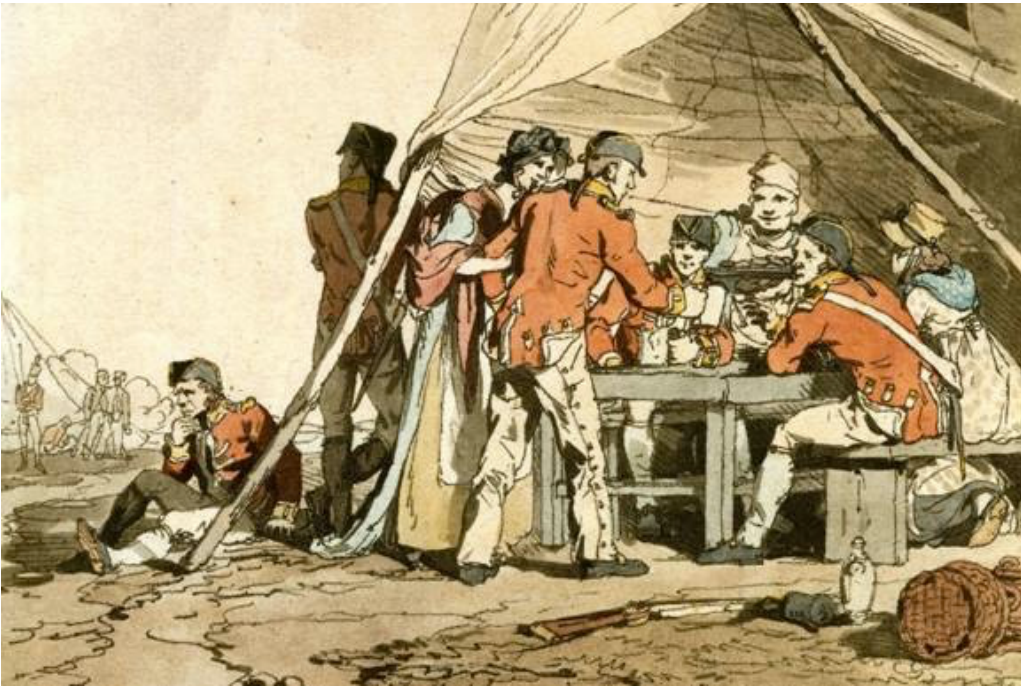
(Study Folder) Counting VP's: At the end of a game, include the SP's missing from Reduced units into the total SP count for losses

Fortunes of War: Fate is a fickle mistress. Ignore all VP costs of cards played.

British Regiments, 1808-09
Vince Hughes

The Redcoats who fought at Corunna, showing their experience in combat as individual battalions over the years. Unlike the general practice of keeping battalions of a regiment together, the British battalion was almost its own self-contained unit with different experience of war. Whilst the 2/39th may be in Holland, the 1/39th could be in Gibraltar, Menorca, India, Egypt, West Indies, Ireland, England: anywhere British units were active, Germany, France, Italy, Denmark.

British infantry almost immediately get a positive nod by the fact that they were ALL volunteers. Being a volunteer is not always a guarantee of battlefield steeliness, but in general it does help. The British enlisted-volunteer could probably be motivated by one of the following:

• Adventure • Sense of duty • Poor social conditions bettered by army service
• Crime, on the run • Crime, caught and sentenced but army service instead of prison

I have not bothered with the Foot Guards or the 95th Rifles, simply assuming they would be credited as '4' Initiative anyway. Each Line Regiment and Brigade within its Division lists battle encounters, as far back to 1792 as I'd imagine that the most senior NCO's would have served since that time as well as wayward privates, corporals and others whose behaviour blunted their career climb! I leave it to you draw your own conclusions as to how a unit's Initiative is affected by the battalion and NCO experience.

1792 Seringapatam, India
1793 Pondicherry, India
1793 Toulon, France
1793 Famars, France
1793 Valenciennes, France
1794 Tournai, 'Holland'
1794 Calvi, Corsica
1794 Flanders, 'Holland'
1794 West Indies, Various islands
1799 Alkmaar, 'Holland'
1799 Krabbendam, 'Holland'
1799 Bergen, 'Holland'
1801 Madora, Egypt
1801 Alexandria, Egypt
1803 Kandyan, Ceylon
1805 Copenhagen, Denmark
1806 Buenos Aires, Argentina
1806 Montevideo, Uraguay
1806 Maida, Italy
1806 Blaauwberg, South Africa
1808 Vimeiro, Portugal
1808 Rolica, Portugal

1st Division
Brigade Bentinck
4th Kings Own: *Alkmaar*
42nd Royal Highland: *Alexandria*
50th West Kent: *Calvi, Mandora, Alexandria, Copenhagen, Rolica, Vimeiro*
Opinion - Other than the West Kent's, there is no experience since 1801

Brigade Mannigham
1st Royal Scots: *This battalion (3rd) formed only in 1804 - No experience*
26th Camerons: *Alexandria*
81st Lincolnshire: *No experience*
Opinion - This brigade severely undercooked in battle hardiness

2nd Division
Brigade Leith
51st Yorkshire West Riding: *Toulon, Calvi, Kandyan,*
59th Nottinghamshire: *Flanders*
76th Foot: Seringapatam, Pondicherry
Opinion - A bit light, but they've seen varied European/Asian actions

Brigade Hill
2nd Queen's Royal: *West Indies, Flanders*
5th Northumberland Fusiliers: *Rolica, Vimeiro*
14th Bedfordshire: *Falmars, Valenciennes, Tournai, Gelderman*
32nd Cornwall: *Rolica, Vimeiro, Copenhagen*
Opinion - I think there is enough here for steadfast redcoats

Brigade Catlin-Crauford
36th Herefordshire: *Pondicherry, Buenos Aires, Rolica, Vimeiro*
71st Highlanders: *Seringapatam, Pondicherry, Blaauwberg, Buenos Aires, Rolica, Vimeiro*
92nd Highlanders: *Alkmaar, Mandora, Copenhagen*
Opinion - Recent experience and some world travel

3rd Division
Brigade Bereford
6th Warwickshire: West Indies, Rolica, Vimeiro
9th East Norfolk: West Indies, Bergen, Alkmaar, Rolica, Vimeiro
23rd Welch Fuzileers: West Indies, Alkmaar, Alexandria
43rd Monmouthshire: West Indies
Opinion - Although a lot of service in the islands, the 6th & 9th should steady them

Brigade Fane
38th Staffordshire: West Indies, South Africa, Montevideo, Buenos Aires, Rolica, Vimeiro
79th Cameronians: Flanders, Alkmaar, Mandora, Alexandria, Copenhagen
82nd Prince of Wales: Copenhagen, Rolica, Vimeiro
Opinion - Experienced NCO's that have been around

4th Division
Brigade Anstruther
20th East Devonshire: Krabbendam, Alkmaar, Alexandria, Maida, Vimeiro
52nd Oxfordshire Lights: Seringapatam, Pondicherry
95th Rifles: Well known enough
Opinion - Two units with elite status and the other with recent and wide experience

Brigade Disney
28th Gloucestershire: *Flanders, Alexandria, Copenhagen*
91st Argyllshire: *Rolica, Vimeiro*
Opinion - two useful battalions

DESIGN
The Development of Chess Took 1,000 Years

Game design for me is part story, part history. The game has to tell a story that is compelling, dramatic, with shifts of fortune... but it is a historical novel. All of the historical players need to be there, and the plot needs to follow the historical plot line and help the player "be there" in an authentic way. A historical novel can reveal the truth. That's what I like about games.

—Chris Moeller

A story can be sheer entertainment, but revealing a truth implies that one goes on a journey of discovery with the designer. We are all on this journey together. Hopefully the game will reward our efforts with a deeper understanding of events.

When people ask "why didn't you discover this in playtesting," I point to the game of Chess. Chess probably originated in India before the 6th century A.D., and only reached its final form in 1640 in France. Compare that to the evolution of the TLNB rules over a single decade.

Adding New Material
My rule of thumb when introducing new material is to weigh whether it is worth the effort for the player to deal with it. If it doesn't potentially advance his chances of winning, I either cut it away or re-design it to be more worth the player overhead.

Chrome
Just because something is called chrome, that isn't necessarily bad. Look at how chrome is used in the auto industry (where the concept arose). It is best used to bring out lines, and accentuate important parts of the design. I like to put it in places where the player would appreciate more detail, in areas that are important or can even be critical.

This is just like in a painting. The eye is invited to certain places on the canvas. Around those spots you may paint in more detail than in other places. For instance, there is always lots of chrome around bridges, since you rarely attack them but when you do it can get hairy. The player is very interested in getting across that bridge, and he is willing to put up with a 10-minute rules check or even a post on Consimworld.

A designer must be cold blooded about making cuts. You cannot get too attached to your creation. You have to discipline your ego. I learned this working at SPI, not as a designer but as production manager. I looked at my job as the "player's advocate." Remember that the player has to read those rules over and over, so I remove all the bumps. Clever asides can be in italics or better, excised.

Dead Wood

I just look for deadwood wherever I can. When writing rules I take the approach of (ideally) cutting one paragraph in every section, one sentence in every paragraph and one word in every sentence. If you look into it, you can usually do better! I find that I may struggle getting the concept into words, and when I go back, sometimes there are several sentences that are like spinning your wheels without any traction. These can often be cut out completely.

Usually my projects go through about 40 drafts on any kind of document. I may not be a natural born writer. I really have to work at it. At OSG we can have 350 rewrites over 8 years and still players will find it's not PERFECT!

I finally learned to write doing the Special Studies. That series started with 1807 (book Nrs. 2, 3, and 4). Like Chris, I am a story teller, maybe a playwright, using the experience of play to tell the story. Do not confuse the game with the rules. The rules are a secondary artifact, that's not where the story is. The story is what happens on the map - and the rules don't say that.

As a designer, or interested player, you must access three kinds of info before making any design change:

1) Use the imagination to visualize the scene *in situ*. When I have a difficult game question I automatically generate a picture in my head of how the troops filled out their positions.

2) Read the Rule (note ramifications), to see if that is or could be in line with the scene I just imagined.

3) Set-up the situation on the map. Play through the situation, and compare the outcome with (1). There should be a common point between those three different ways of looking.

What is Stacking?

Kevin Zucker

Many rules can be understood with a little imagination and common sense, but since there is no such thing on the actual battlefield as one unit stacking on top of another then an explanation is needed. If the units are not stacked one upon another then what is going on? The "stack" should be visualized as a chain of units standing behind the front line troops because that is how a division would usually engage—at first, with one brigade only. The additional support units are there to be called upon—perhaps in the same hex or very close by in an adjacent hex. What allows stacking is a leader and staff officers to coordinate this movement to and fro. The extra 1 MP is to account for the actual positioning of the "stacked" unit to the right or left or behind the unit stacked with. So a "stack" is an integrated command in battle formation.

It costs one movement point to stack one combat unit with another. Just remember that stacking is an "action." The act of stacking takes 1 Movement Point. Think of it as time need for the unit to get into relative position with the rest of the brigades in the hex. Once in formation the whole can follow the leader without any need to go around. What that implies is that the units in a "stack" are somewhat spread-out, either in column, line, or sometimes in a checkboard pattern. The latter arrangement provides the most responsiveness to a threat from any direction.

To help visualize that, a stack of more than two regular-sized infantry brigades probably extends beyond the bounds of a given hex. There must be either an (invisible) division commander or higher leader present to coordinate the movement of the larger force. Brigade commanders understood the drill to coordinate with one another, but it took the presence of a general (and his staff) to coordinate the actions of more than two brigades. For example, imagine a stack of five units moving into relationship and then setting off down the road. In an aerial photo it would look like a long column of men, with a long tail extending back 1 to 1.5 hexes beyond the nominal hex location. Hence the 1 MP cost to stack. Then, if the "stack" enters combat, it does so with two brigades in front and excess units "in reserve." All of this is unseen in play of course; it's only for visualization.

Think of the hexes in the game as the central local of the units concerned and their ZOC's as often representing that over-lapping deployment or the ability to adjust it in that direction with the approach of an enemy. A ZOC covers roughly 480 metres and musket effective area range maybe was up to 100 metres, so ZOCs are not so much about projected hitting power but the ability to manoeuvre to meet and engage an approaching enemy with some of the battalions of the brigade. Also the ZOC represents in my mind the cloud of skirmishers/voltigeurs often deployed.

Stacking is not about available space, it is about coordination. Stacking is predicated upon the presence of a leader. He and his staff bring the coordination; they have the authority to order the subordinates in the hex to take their places and go where they are assigned.

What is "Divisional integrity?" The Leader and his staff officers become traffic cops. Unit integrity means you don't have traffic jams. "Divisional Integrity" is for all divisions which do not have an on-map leader.

The stacked troops are within arms reach of their divisional general. Stacking is a way of showing that those units are within reach to be pulled in as needed, on the standing reserve principle. That is, the reserves are standing "behind" (not on top of) the front line units and can feed in regiments as others become exhausted. Their mere presence also gives confidence to the firing

line. Ultimately, the entire stack may get pulled in. The deployment area for a large stack could extend into adjacent hexes.

The Corps commander has the option to use any formation. It is assumed that the correct formation will be chosen for a given situation, but this aspect of grand tactics isn't built into the game in any way.

For a typical meeting engagement, you would have one regiment (usually the light infantry) in contact initially, with the other regiment(s) of the brigade in a supporting position. The other brigades of the division would be nearby. This is what David G. Chandler calls the "Broad Arrow" formation. See his "Campaigns of Napoleon," page 347.

I think few gamers appreciate the need to leave maneuver space within the hex. If you jammed 75,000 men into one hex they would be utterly defenseless and incapable of concerted action, an uncontrollable herd. At a bare minimum, a battalion would require open ground the size of its own footprint on all four sides. Not all ground is available for deployment; there are always obstacles within each hex that take up even more space. Besides all that, a large stack (3-5 units) has to be seen as overflowing beyond the bounds of a hex.

The stacking limit is NOT about available space. What does that leave?

TIME

The stacking rule gives the general on the spot (either Division or Corps officer) credit for keeping the "stacked" troops where he can have them marching to his aid in five minutes (or quicker if using a signal of some kind). Normally they would be kept beyond effective musketry range, not farther than 1 hex (525 yards) away.
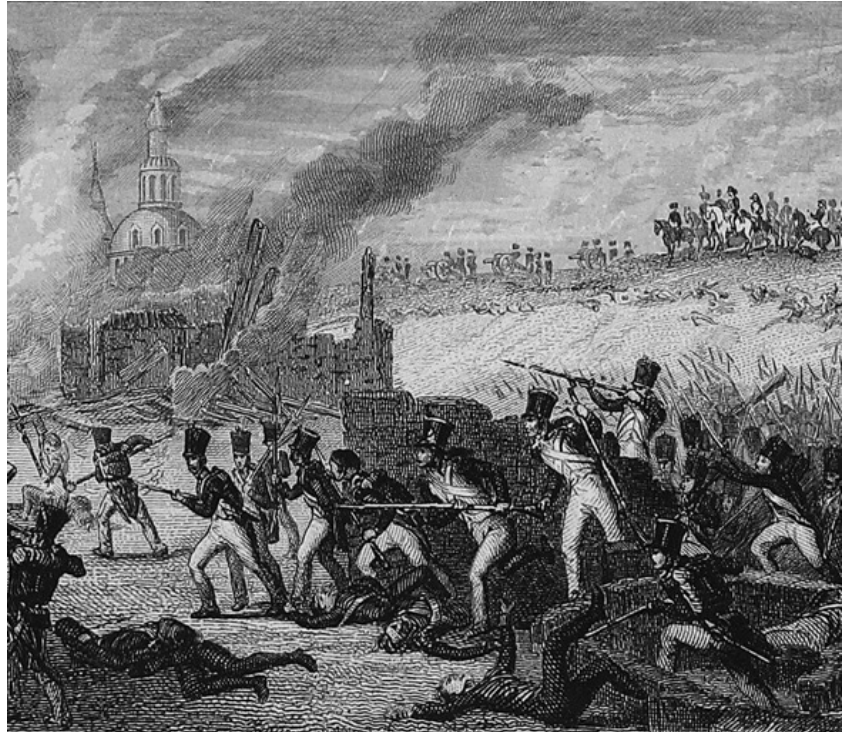
Assuming the troops have been warned and are formed and ready to step off, moving at 85 paces per minute (70 yards), they could arrive in 7 minutes or less.

The usual attack might last no more than 30 minutes before it loses impetus. If there were five units to coordinate, the general would be sending orders every minute or two, sending units in and pulling other units out. He would have to delegate some of that work to his chief of staff. But that is as much "directing" as he can do. The performance of the brigades and regiments is out of his hands once contact is made (unless he is an officer like Wellington or Ney, who jumps into the middle of things).
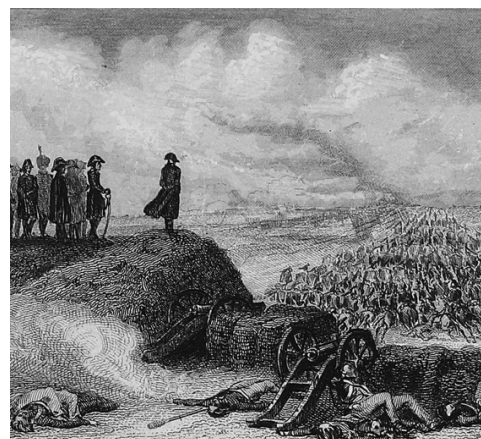
More likely he and his staff would be standing on the route of march directing traffic.

How to Read TLNB Rules

Kevin Zucker, Vince Hughes

Since the TLNB Series Rulebook was re-designed in 2012, it has been through hundreds of re-writes. We are never going to claim that the rules are perfect. Gamers are used to reading rules that are very far from perfect, and are used to "head-scratching" statements that they have to try and figure out. With the number of revisions logged with the TLNB series rules, however, one can begin to have some confidence in what is written. [KZ]

Despite our differences as human beings living across the ocean from each other it seems I fully understand the way the TLNB rules are presented. Even if not explicit at times, I am still able to follow 99 from 100 times, where a rule goes when it deviates from the norm. Why is it that other people don't get these things? Perhaps just couldn't find it for looking, ingrained rules mistakes made via solo play, etc. [VH]

Mainly, it may be because they just don't take the rules at face value, and read only what is printed on the page without reading into anything extra into it. At times they may have accepted a simplification of complex facts, or adopted a false image based on some other game they have played or book read. The TLNB rules are closely written. They are reduced to the minimum; verbiage is out! [KZ]

Between us, we have read a lot of battle narratives. Reading actual history is a good antidote for too many rules from too many game systems clashing in the brain, to help visualize images of battle rather than relying upon one's wargaming experience.

The 1807 campaign was the apogee of the French system. The battles of 1807 are where I rummage for examples of how a battle unfolds. Each battle has a certain rhythm. For example:

REPULSE
Run-up to Eylau: Action at Grünhofchen, February 7th, 1807

"Soult was uncertain whether he faced the whole Russian army or merely a rear-guard. He impatiently sent general Levasseur with the 18th and 46th Line up the road, preferring to skip the preliminary skirmishing and commence a massed charge with naked weapons."

He sent two regiments and struck on Bagration's powerful rear-guard: two musketeer, two grenadier and one jäger regiments covered by artillery in front, and one regiment of dragoons. The Russian horse artillery deployed across the road from Landsberg. The jäger regiment skirmished in front of the guns on a curving line to screen the left as far as Waschkeiten lake. To the right rear of the guns, a grenadier regiment stood on the frozen surface of Tenknitten Lake. Two musketeer regiments extended the line to the left of the lake, with another grenadier regiment behind them. The Petersburg dragoons stopped behind the village of Tenknitten.

"The 18th marched forward across Tenknitten lake, until an all-out Russian bombardment shook them. As they turned aside to the right, the musketeers charged with the bayonet. The dragoons then fell upon the 18th before they had time to form square, and threw them into such disorder that they lost one of their eagles. Only the arrival of Klein's dragoons prevented their complete dissolution. The 46th reached the Russian front in their turn, and received several changes but succeeded in maintaining an orderly retirement."

–Special Study Nr. 2, pp 55-56

March Orders

Kevin Zucker

Why, according to the Series rules, can't you issue March Orders during the daylight turns? Sure enough, "orders" were issued at any hour of the day or night by commanders, so the common-sense answer is, "sure, why not."

The game mechanism called "March Orders" is a special event, which is used for units transitioning from Operational Movement to the Grand Tactical environment.

Looking to 20.1, there are three kinds of March order available for forces under certain circumstances:
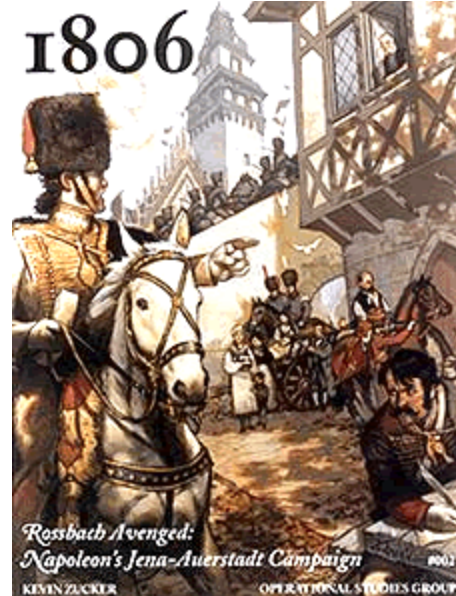
 · One force at the start of play
 · Reinforcements upon arrival.
 · One force at night.

One of the interesting challenges of game design is to hit upon the average behavior - in order to have a consistent basis for the rules; whereas, we all know, ANY thing could happen at ANY time on the actual battlefield, and usually did.

So we need a compromise rule that fits the greatest number of situations for all battles; there will always be historical events that fall outside the parameters of the rules, because rules represent the average behavior. If needed, Special Rules can be created, but keeping the burden on the player down to reasonable limits.

Napoleon's Correspondances reveal that operational level orders were usually issued at night, while the kinds of commands issued during the day of battle were related to action on the battlefield, to what is going on in the immediate environment of the commander. That makes sense. No one is thinking about the VI Corps at the battle of Ligny, because there is a battle going on around you and you need to take care to win with the troops at hand.

The reason March Orders are limited at night is because of the difficulties of transmission. There was no telegraph, field telephone or radio. Orders had to be carried by horseback in the pitch dark, to locations very likely unknown to the rider. Messengers often got lost or delayed. The orders for III Corps on the morning of June 15th, 1815, were delayed when the rider suffered a fall and broke his leg. This mishap delayed the entire army, because III Corps was the first formation in the road column.

"Napoleon on campaign should not, in any case, be imagined as sitting behind a desk and dictating orders ... Messengers carrying information reached him irregularly during the day; he himself normally issued his orders in writing and did most of his dictation in the evening ...

"Retiring to bed at about 2000 hours, he would rise around midnight in order to study the detailed situation reports sent in by the corps. *It was usually between then and about 0300 hours that the most important work of the day was done; his orders dictated, the emperor would return to bed for a few more hours sleep while Berthier saw to it that the marshals received their orders in time for them to prepare the next day's movements."* Martin van Creveld, *Command in War,* page 84

Operational Level movement had to be decided upon, and the March Orders sent by 3 AM in order to reach the Corps by daylight. If a Corps officer had no orders by the time his troops were assembled and ready, then he would have to move under his own initiative.

A failure of initiative doesn't ALWAYS mean a unit is sitting still. It might be marching in the wrong direction and then counter-marching, but you don't see that literally in the game.

One of the most intractable problems a designer has to deal with is literal-minded gamers who MUST have every detail literally represented. Check out the article on "What is Abstraction," for my view on this.

There is the literal rule and then the deep structure. The gamer doesn't need to be burdened with that stuff, but the design and development staff know it. When you begin to start asking questions about "why," remember there is a lot of hidden design under the surface.

In every campaign, every day things went wrong:

· Orders fail to arrive or arrived too late.
· Orders were not clear or open to interpretation.
· Intelligence was faulty.
· The situation became clearer at HQ after the orders were dispatched, but too late to recall them
· Orders provided for the recipient to make a judgement call.
· The officer was away from HQ when orders arrive.
· An alarming threat developed from an unanticipated direction.
· The chief of staff had a better idea.
· The column got lost. (Remember there were few signposts and not great maps.)

· A local guide provided the wrong directions on purpose.
· The troops needed rest.

We tend to forget that the corps officers were operating in a vacuum. Because we can see where all the units are, we don't even question whether the officers knew the overall grand scheme. We assume that each of those officers was totally in the big picture and completely up to date with the thinking at headquarters. We forget that it took time to draft orders and those orders took time to percolate through the system. By the time they reached their recipient, they could be completely out of date.

"On the other hand, it seems that none of the marshals was allowed a glimpse of the grand design underlying all these moves; to this extent command remained Napoleon's own exclusive concern and totally centralized. Each order, whether written by Napoleon or by Berthier, contained a few details only: the direction to be taken by the corps, the situation of its neighbors to the right and left, the expected location of Imperial Headquarters ... More than that, apparently, was not required." -van Creveld, page 87