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Wargame Design



La Patrie en Danger *The Campaign in France, Part I*

Wargame Design, Spring 2014

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Quote of the day

A new study sponsored in part by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center has highlighted the prospect that global industrial civilisation could collapse in coming decades due to unsustainable resource exploitation and increasingly unequal wealth distribution, citing "the stretching of resources due to the strain placed on the ecological carrying capacity" and "the economic stratification of society into Elites and Masses."

High levels of economic stratification are linked directly to overconsumption of resources.

"... accumulated surplus is not evenly distributed throughout society, but rather has been controlled by an elite. The mass of the population, while producing the wealth, is only allocated a small portion of it by elites, usually at or just above subsistence levels."

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EDITORIAL

Turning that N on its side

I have always encouraged a free marketplace of ideas, in order to have many different approaches to the subject matter. The more games published about Napoleon, the more interest, the more players. It is a healthy thing that players have a range of choices, from super-complex battalion level games to quite easy division level games and everything in-between. The audience for Napoleonic games has grown along with the number of publications. A new game doesn't make an older game obsolete. But having two games with the same title? In order to avoid confusion in the marketplace, we are changing the name of our 2015 Waterloo campaign quad. Please vote for your preference (the link is on Consimworld—OSG Company Support, April 3). This game will be fully up to the present state of the TLNB system, with unit Initiatives, Hidden Forces, March Orders, etc.

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A Battlefield of Your Own Choosing

Win the battle before the first shot

Aaron Tobul, Christopher Moeller, and the staff and friends of OSG

The addition of the approach to battle and mini-campaigns adds so much to these games. Clearly the approach to battle sheds light on the Day of battle. There is a lot of fun and knowledge to be gained in the line-em-up-and-knock-em-down battle scenarios, but the Approach to Battle scenarios and mini-campaigns really give you an appreciation for why the battles were fought where they were and how they developed.

—Aaron Tobul

Our Thursday night gaming club is playing the Montmirail Mini Campaign, and I am commanding the forces of Russian general Sacken. Because I hadn't stopped to deploy in the historical positions Sacken had taken up for Montmirail, the question arose whether the game was recreating history properly. Flying straight from road march column directly into battle without taking time to deploy is very ahistorical. Generals of the time would want all their troops gathered in line of battle prior to meeting the enemy.

That isn't to say that there weren't sometimes "meeting engagements," just that they were generally not the preferred tactic.

In Sacken's case, he actually has the edge in terms of manpower (if Yorck's troops are included), but if he engages with his troops still strung out, he cannot bring that dominant power to bear and exposes his lead formations to defeat in detail.

Here's the beauty of the approach to battle—I can do my own thing and see what happens. I'm not shoehorned into any historical deployment. Thanks to that "freedom to fail," I realize NOW, why Sacken took up the positions he did historically. When I was marching in, I didn't understand what made that position a strong one. I thought my more forward positioning had better things to offer. The front was confined between two large forests, the victory point hexes were far to my rear, it was more aggressive "morally," and so on. Trying to FIGHT in that position has shown me the error of my thinking, and has done so in a way that no amount of explanations, reading, or military theory could have shown me. You can SAY things until you're blue in the face—the game SHOWED it to me.

First: if I had deployed east of Montmirail, where Sacken did historically, I would have had time to gather my forces and meet Napoleon on better terms.

Second: The French have Old Guard units south of the river—a river riddled with bridges and therefore porous as a barrier. In Sacken's historical position, my right flank would have been secure. In my forward position, I'm in danger of being turned by rampaging stacks of the Old Guard coming at me over any number of bridges.

Third: Yorck was marching to my aid from Chateau-Thierry in the North. If I had taken up the historical positions, he would have slotted neatly onto my left wing. As it is, he's having to march cross country to catch up to me, with a reduced initiative due to his lack of baggage, while my engaged front line is being mauled.

(continued on page 29)

La Patrie en Danger 1814

The Campaign in France, Part I

BRIENNE • LA ROTHÈRE
CHAMPAUBERT • MONTMIRAIL
VAUCHAMPS

29 January ~ 14 February, 1814

GAME DESIGN: KEVIN ZUCKER

OSG 204

The "1R" Result



Infantry of
the French
Naval
Artillery
Corps
(Regiments
de Marine)
1813-1814,
in campaign
dress.
*Painting by
Gaston
Roulett.*

Source:
Scott Bowden,
*Napoleon's
Grande Armée
of 1813*

A Consimworld Conversation

The question of the 1R result is a good example of the "tendrill effect" in game design. In a hedgerow there will be every so often long shoots that stick up above the nice smooth contour of the hedge. These get whacked by your neighbors with their hedge trimmers, and also sometimes by game designers. Otherwise they will just continue to grow and grow. I have also learned to listen to the voices of wisdom...

—Kevin Zucker

1) I see that you all play the R1 in Shock result differently from the Rules as written: Remove one step from attacking and one from defender, OWNING PLAYERS CHOICE In the video, you took it from the lead unit (that would be the one with highest initiative I guess) I kind of like your group's change... I wonder if Kevin has plan for it as an official rules update?
—John Vasilakos

2) We had this discussion a while back, and the final ruling as I understand it was this:

Each side reduces their "best unit," defined as the largest unit among those with the highest morale. Player's choice if two are equal.

I don't know that it made it into the rules, but that was the Consimworld ruling—*Chris Moeller*

3) The rules say only...

"1R = Reduce one attacking and one defending unit."—*Kevin Zucker*

4) I have been playing it as the unit with highest initiative gets reduced (owning player's choice if more than one unit has the highest initiative). So, for example, if there were two units with initiative "3" and one with initiative "2," then the owner must choose one of the units with initiative "3" to be the one reduced.—*Derek Lang*

5) This is from the NaL conversation..."A "1R" means that both sides lose a step (from the lead units) and the defender may, but is not required to, retreat?"

A) Yes

The lead unit is defined in 12.1 as the "Best unit" in the stack. That is, I assume, the biggest unit with the highest initiative. If so, that's a fine way to determine which unit gets reduced by a 1R (you can't, for example, put a 1-strength cavalry unit into a stack to protect your 9-strength infantry unit, unless the cavalry is also the highest initiative unit in the stack).

— *Christopher Moeller, Apr 27, 2013*

Highest initiative governs in shock losses as they are the ones contributing to the table. So unless I am wrong a 1 SP LC with a [3] would take a loss before a 6 SP Inf with a [2].—*Eugene Rodek, Apr 27, 2013*

6) At the moment I don't have a preference as to how it is played. I kind of like keeping it simple in the rules.

After looking at the performance of the VI Corps in the 1814 campaign, I am beginning to think that they couldn't accomplish as much in the game with the rule that the best (init) unit always gets reduced. I am leaning toward giving the owning player the choice of either the best (init) or the largest unit. My proposed solution would allow either the best unit or the strongest unit to take the step reduction.

Marmont's VI Corps: the undefeated
The basis of this corps were the naval gunners who were older troops taken from the coastal

batteries. Here were some of the achievements of these *Marins* who made up Clavel's and Pelleport's brigades of Marmont's VI Corps ...

- Held off Army of Silesia at Möckern
- Had a role at Hanau
- Won all the battles of Six Days, almost single-handed. Units of this corps did almost all the fighting at Champaubert, Montmirail and then Vauchamps, and then just kept on chugging even though they had been through Leipzig and a retreat of over 800 km during the winter.
- Went on to kick-butts in tandem with Mortier in March.

These troops were considerably older and stronger than most of the conscripts in both armies, except for the Guards. When formed in January of 1813 the average age of the naval gunners was 23 years.

7) "Using" lead unit initiative is (or should be) tied to a danger being reduced.

The lead unit is this brigade/regiment who suffer most casualties, because it is "leading" (it is in front of fighting units) attack/defense. So initiative rating should be the only option to check.

Size? Not really IMO. Napoleonic battlefields are full of examples, that size doesn't matter. If you know what I mean that on player depends what unit he chooses to be a leading unit (when he has more units with the same initiative). All in all he is commander.

One more thing—explaining this (definition of "lead unit") in a glossary in rules solves possibly discussions and misinterpretations.
—CezaryDomalski

8) I don't think the "1R" comes up all that often, so I am not sure changing the rule system-wide to account for VI Corps in 1814 is really necessary. If you want to replicate the history they just need to roll well. My opinion is that if they are involved enough to be influencing the outcome of shock combat, they are involved enough to be taking the losses. You could allow a player to roll using a lower initiative to shield the high-init unit, but that seems a bit out of place at this level of command.—Aaron Tobul

9) I thought the "1R" result was when good troops fought other good troops and neither side

would give. Those fights tend to be bloody. An ACW example was the Iron Brigade's action at Groveton.—Roger Taylor

10) Also, the best units are usually the guys that "step-up". —Jason Roach

11) That is good, because it means we are beginning to visualise what is really going on. The hazard that comes into play here is that we view the world as a wargame, instead of the other way around: we let our experience of wargaming distort our picture of the reality. That is why I like to find trustworthy narratives from the people who actually did things. Here is part of the report to Maréchal Marmont from General Ricard on the events of 11 February:

No undulation in terrain was even found on this part of the plateau in the interval between Le Tremblay and Marchais which made the scene of battle very long, very obstinate and very deadly. This point, which formed the extreme left of the French army, was very important because it was used to pivot and masked the great movement that the Emperor was preparing with his right. They attacked and took the village up to five times; we had officers who fought hand to hand with Russian officers, but we could never maintain our hold there because of the enormous superiority of the enemy forces, that were continually reinforced with fresh troops, while we successively engaged all of the bodies of my division. Even the village of Tremblay was being compromised, when the Emperor, at my request, sent me a battalion of the Old Guard. Upon arrival, I tried a last effort which was no more successful than the others. One of my brigade generals was wounded, the other dismounted, all the chiefs killed or wounded, more than 60 officers were out of action and the ranks exhausted. However, this last movement was, like the others, remarkable for the spirit and intrepidity of the troops."

Captain Parquin, from the Chasseurs à cheval de la Garde tells us:

"The farm of Les Gréneaux was the most difficult position to carry, being defended by a formidable array of artillery. The enemies were barricaded up to their chin behind the farm walls, and we had failed to dislodge them until

about two o'clock in the afternoon. The Emperor had instructed Marshal Ney with this difficult task. The Marshal dismounted and sword in hand placed himself at the head of six battalions of the Guard. Before rushing forward, he ordered his men to throw away the priming of their guns. His purpose was to strike the enemy at the point to the bayonet only, and so gallantly did he lead the charge that his audacity proved entirely successful. The Russians and Prussians (sic) retreated from the farm, abandoning all their cannon, ammunition-wagons, and even their canteens."

(The above passages are from *Special Study Nr. 7.*)

12) I agree with Aaron that the "1R" result usually doesn't occur very often. The random element (die roll) which modifies initiatives in Shock Combat helps to ensure a spread of results - even when opponents have similar initiative ratings. At least, that has been my experience.

To return to the example of Marmont's VI Corps in 1814, they could be involved in any number of Shock Combats in the game and never suffer a single "1R" result (depending on the opponents initiative ratings and the die rolls). To be honest Kevin,¹ you might be trying to fix a problem that doesn't really exist, because the rules as written are perfectly capable of producing the historical outcome—VI Corps could fight lots of Shock Combats and not suffer any "1R" results (depending on the die rolls of course).

For me, Shock Combat should be about initiative. It feels wrong to allow a lower initiative unit to take the "1R" result just because it has more SP's. That opens the door to "gamey" tactics where the high-initiative units never take the "1R" because they are always stacked with "larger" low-initiative units. That's not something I would want to see.

—Derek Lang

Rules of Play UPDATE

TLNB Rules v. 6.63 4/5/2014

7.61, second bullet: (add at end) "whether in Road March or not."

8.43 Blocking Hexsides: LOS along a hexside congruent to Blocking Hexes is blocked.

12.2 Shock Table, Shock Note E: With a 1R result, the owner must reduce either the strongest or the best initiative of his units involved.

15.14, second bullet: Units in Chateaux implement retreat results from the Shock Table normally.

24.32 Second Turn Bonus Cards

On the second game-turn (only) both players draw during the first player's Card Segment.

Glossary (add)

Column: If a corps has "corps artillery" that is absent in a scenario, the baggage train is also absent.

Surrounded: A unit is surrounded and may not retreat if all adjacent hexes contain enemy units, non-negated EZOCs, or prohibited terrain.

CHARTS AND TABLES

Reconnaissance Table (change): The table has been revised as shown below.

Reconnaissance Table (when moving into an EZOC)				
NON-PHASING	PHASING PLAYER HAS:			
	LC	Vedette	(no cavalry)	reconnaissance
LC	•	Roll Die*	•	no reconnaissance results
Vedette	V-Recov	•	•	no reconnaissance results
(no cav.)	Reveal	Reveal	•	Reveal = reveal enemy units
KEY:	V-Recov	Vedette is eliminated and transferred to the Recovered section		
	*Roll Die: 1 = Reveal / 2, 3, 4 = V-Recov / 5, 6 = Vedette is PEU			
	• = No Result			

¹ Whenever I hear Derek say that, I have to stop and pay attention.

A Fine Balance

The Library of Napoleonic Battles *has been called “the most comprehensive Historical Simulation Game-System of the Napoleonic era.”*

The system features hidden movement; optional cards to set your Movement Allowance, order of appearance, and score VPs; March Orders that allow a move regardless of Command; Road March formation; Light Cavalry units that can break-down into Vedettes, scouting and screening against enemy scouts. These are all recent innovations that add seamlessly to the original system of Command and Leadership first seen in Napoleon’s Last Battles.

We have taken an original approach, somewhat iconoclastic, that has detractors as well as enthusiasts. The games speak for themselves, but only if you play them. Our goal is for your copy’s Napoleon counter to be scuffed and illegible and the maps falling apart at the folds. These controversial features of TLNB are the essential ideas that set the games apart from the common wisdom.

Feature #1. The first Feature of the *Library Series* is its base in a well-loved design from the 1970's that has sold over 100,000 copies.

True, most any hex-based wargame is based on a design from the 1970's—a period of intense innovation and creativity. However, the *Library Series* games have evolved well beyond their origins and have greatly benefited from OSG's wide-angle lens taking-in all aspects of Napoleonic warfare.

In some quarters, a Combat Results Table is the entire focus, and the other elements of the design are mere window-dressing. The *Library CRT* with its “**Dr's**” and “**Ar's**” is clearly rooted in the beginnings of wargaming. This combat system has grown in significant ways. (See “*The CRT then and now,*” below.)

But is it Napoleonic and does it actually work? The battle fronts move back and forth as they should, and that means that an historical outcome is very possible, not only in an aggregate sense, but on a turn-by-turn basis. I still think of the Kulm game in *Four Lost Battles*. That battle was a very unusual configura-

tion, with Allied forces converging from north and south, but the game plays out almost hour-by-hour with a historical fidelity that inspired me to continue the series.

But combat is not the whole story. Much else besides tactics was important to Napoleonic battle. Napoleon did not bother himself about the tactical business, beyond sometimes sighting a few guns (he was a trained gunner). If Napoleon was not concerned about tactics, then what *was* he concerned about? He was focused above all on the set-up of the battle—the approach to battle. Where this game system shines is in showing the interface between operations and battle.

“I suspect the basic game system is one of the longest lasting and most influential systems in wargaming; at one stage in my youth most games whether involving Greek Hoplites or Space Marines seemed to be variations on *NAW/ Napoleon at War*. Some have justifiably criticized it, but I think its survival is down to two reasons—it is reasonably simple and it is fun. Oh, and no one has produced a popular and effective replacement!” — Andrew Hobley

For a more in-depth look at the question of Grand Tactics, please see “Combat in the Library of Napoleonic Battles,” in *Wargame Design Magazine*, <http://napoleongames.com/images/Design%20Analysis.pdf>

Feature #2. The way the gamer obtains outcomes is not the same in a game as the way combats were fought in real life.

In other words, the turn-by-turn profile of the front line may move in quite historic ways, but how the gears turn does not always mirror the gamer’s mental image of battlefield tactics—which may also be based on a quite distorted picture derived from other games and movies (see also Features #4 and #5 below).

Because of Hidden Movement in *TLNB* this is less true than in games where the player has perfect knowledge of enemy dispositions and strength, along with perfect knowledge of both his own and his opponent's movement ability.

Is the game meant to teach something about actual military tactics—such as parade evolutions from column to line to square?

Attempting to show tactics at the brigade level is not really possible without a lot of markers to show what cannot be seen on the map. Tactics took place at the regiment and battalion level. In a Grand Tactical game, tactics are not seen; we only need to know how the front line changed from 1 O'Clock to 2. The possibilities are limited: either the units have moved forward or back, or they have been reduced or eliminated. We don't need to know what formation the regiments are in. At the brigade level, we just assume that the colonels commanding the regiments are making the necessary decisions.

I think we are chasing a chimera here. Charts and tables, dice, and a grid of some sort—any game is a distortion and simplification of reality. Yet it is precisely these distortions that make a game playable or even possible. It is a delusion to think you can design without them. The further you pursue that chimera, the more un-playable the resulting monster. It is fruitless to think that you can avoid this by digging down until you hit the bedrock "reality." That journey is a bottomless night, and any hopes of reaching ultimate reality will always break on the rocks of convention. However far you want to go chasing that down, at the end of the day you are working with paper and ink and cardboard. The majority of gamers—the players—do not want to pursue this ideal to the point where the game is no longer playable or enjoyable.

What is missing from most wargames is "defense in depth," when your regiments are laid out in checkerboard fashion with lots of space around them for maneuver. Your deployment zone is somewhat deep, not just a front line with three ranks—this image we have from watching movies. First contact is with only light troops and then your lead brigade.

Napoleonic battles never began with two long lines of men shooting at each other. That's not how battles were fought. The total manpower of a brigade was not to be engaged all at once (except in desperate situations). A division general might only put one or two of his 3 brigades into the front line: that brigade would start with only one or two regiments engaged. Therefore, although casualties are taking place

more or less throughout the battle, the manpower in contact remains constant (or changes gradually) for an extended period. Until the moment of the "evenement" when one side breaks, casualties have been equal on the two sides.

A striking feature of Napoleonic battles is the ping-pong effect of individual regiments bashing each other out of a town, or across a bridge, only to be pushed back by a fresh enemy regiment in their turn. That is a push-pull type battle, and some players find it frustrating. Attrition doesn't have any effect on combat power until all the reserves are committed. After that "evenement" the unit becomes very brittle, and either one side or the other will break first. Once the unit has used up its reserves, if the pressure of 'shock' is applied, it cannot continue to sustain losses and occupy its ground.

That is why we keep an aggregate tally of combat strength lost per corps. Demoralization comes after all the reserves in that corps are in the battle.

Feature #3 Napoleon at Leipzig, fifth edition, incorporates all the good gaming contained in the earlier editions.

Many gamers have played the earlier editions of NAL dozens or even a hundred times. Our goal was to produce a game that will be played another hundred times. We set out to preserve that great gaming experience, and not to make changes merely for the sake of change.

The result is "an entirely different animal," superior on its face to the earlier versions. We have provided a more lovely and efficient map and a more interesting set of counters without burdening the players. We decided we would avoid making 1-point changes in strength, even though we had more accurate data to show that the strength should round up instead of down. Similarly, with the map, we didn't want to make little insignificant changes.

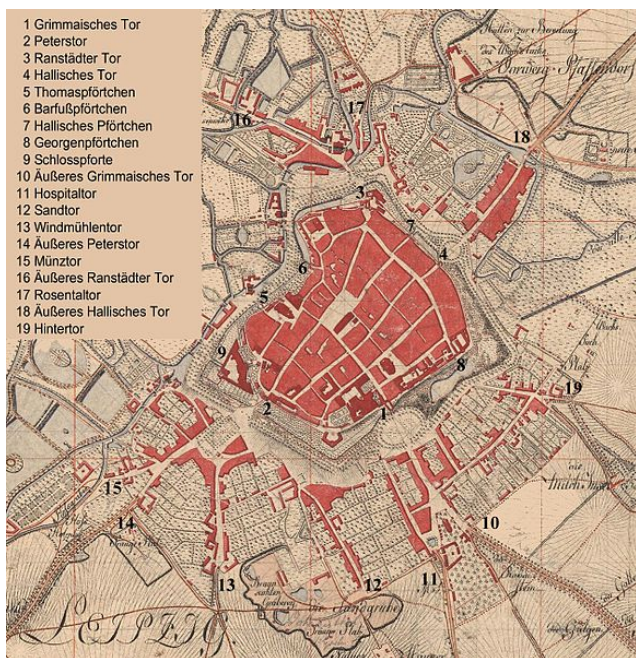
The most profound change to *NaL* 5th Edition is the TLNB system's evolution as a simulation. It has proven its fundamental soundness over a whole series of battles, from 1806 to 1814. Hidden movement alone is a complete game-changer. With its big stacks frontal assaults are now both possible and decisive. The game draws new distinctions between the roles of the three arms.

“Much has changed over the years (as an old grognard, it took me a while to get used to the cards), but some core elements remain the same. The 5th ED of *Leipzig* is the best version since the original, IMHO, because of the way it looks at the battle, and the greater flexibility in play (particularly the multi-day game). I see no other games out there that treat this battle as effectively on this scale.

“Look at what *TLNB* offers: a collection of Napoleonic battles based on a uniform platform and set of rules, with a moderate complexity of play that creates a basic understanding of grand tactics while offering versatility in set-up and playing conditions. You can play a battle in a single sitting. That is what *TNLB* advertises and that is what it delivers.

“*TNLB* will be the definitive collection of these battles. All Napoleonic battles fan should have them.” — Eugene Rodek

CHANGES MADE TO THE NAL MAPS



We referenced dozens of period maps and were even able to find a good map from 1813, that showed the Leipzig suburbs were not as extensive as shown on the 4th Edition. We also added the Sand Pit, the gates of Leipzig, and many churches! Of course, the overall map size is now 33% greater than the 4th Edition.

Possibly the most important change from earlier editions came about because of the difference in the

Slope effect. In the 4th edition slopes did not cost any MPS and had no effect on combat—they were exclusively for LOS purposes. We had to throw out all the slopes on the older map and start over. Many slopes were replaced by Crests. Since the countryside has been covered over by the enlargement of the city in the 20th Century, we had to find maps from the 19th c. with the requisite level of detail—the base map we used was from the Austro-Hungarian 1:200,000 topographical-map collection. Other sources consulted are listed in the Study Folder.

Counters

Six years before publication, Dave Jones and I began preparations for *Napoleon at Leipzig*, 5th edition, and joined together to create the most accurate depiction of the armies engaged in the battle. We have worked with new sources that were not available in 1979. We became aware that none of the published sources had taken into account the losses suffered by the participants during the two weeks prior to the battle. You can read our initial findings in OSG's Special Study Nr. 1, Appendix 5. Instead of having 320,000 men at the battle, the Coalition had only 287,000.

We conducted a study on each unit in the game, rating the effectiveness of the troops making up that unit, and found in many cases significant changes in the unit strengths. One feature that grognards had asked for was the possibility of St. Cyr's XIV Corps making an appearance (an alternate Reinforcement). The Coalition may also be able to bring in Tauenzien's Prussian IV Corps.

The following is a small sampling of the kind of work that went into the reevaluation of the units on both sides.

FRANCE—II CORPS

The regiments of II Corps were rebuilt regiments with veteran cadre. Rating: 600 men per SP. Reuss's Brigade had suffered heavily at the end of August.

IV CORPS

The Italian 15th Division contained some veterans. Rating : 700 men per SP. Belair's brigade contained rebuilt regiments with veteran cadre. Rating: 600. Toussaint, transferred from Italy, included an intact veteran regiment. Rating: 500.

Hulot had a cadre of veterans of the war in Spain filled out with Cohorts. Rating: 600.

The Württemberg 38th Division had only two composite battalions. Rating: 600.

Brigade Briche was a decent unit comprising four Chevaux Legers Regiments raised in Württemberg, Hesse-Darmstadt and Westphalia. Rating: 600.

Nafziger and Bowden's OOB numbers credit Bertrand with approx. 9300-10400 men. OSG's spreadsheet gives Bertrand a bit more-10,700 infantry and cavalry, but we have 1500 more men with the 15th Div. than Nafziger (3400 versus 1859). Nafziger lists three brigades in the 15th Div., while we have only two. So possibly it was the missing brigade of Martel that was detached. Anyway Martel is not in our countermix.

VIII CORPS

The Poles were excellent troops. Sierawski's Brigade included the famed Vistula Legion. Rating: 450. Uminski's brigade is unusual in brigading light cavalry and cuirassiers together. Rating: 450.

We found that Poniatowski had one brigade more than prior editions: Grabowski's brigade of Jan Henryk Dąbrowski's 27th division. Dąbrowski (aka Dombrowski) and Poniatowski disliked each other, so the 27th Division was operating detached on the northern front. In the first edition we assumed both brigades were together.

While Dombrowski lost an infantry brigade, he regained almost all of that strength in the form of a new cavalry regiment and a battery, so his division is now capable of combined arms.

Leaders

Leader Ratings can vary from campaign to campaign depending upon the performance of that leader (and to some extent his troops) and his echelon. For example, Macdonald is an Army commander in *Four Lost Battles* but is only a corps leader at Leipzig. Compare ratings in *4LB* and *NAL*, starting with the French:

Napoleon, Ney, Bertrand, Mortier, Marmont, St. Cyr, Lauriston—no change.

Souham—increased by one in *NAL*.

Macdonald—reduced from Commander to officer.

Reynier, Oudinot, Arrighi, Latour, Sebastiani—reduced by one in *NAL*.*

Reynier's Saxon troops had been defeated and were about to switch sides; Oudinot was now in command of Young Guard, not as free to act independently; Arrighi now commands a rag-tag collection of second-line troops; Latour and Sebastiani, both excellent cavalry officers, but a 5 cannot be sustained (Leipzig took place after three months of campaigning, so things are just running down).

Coalition: Barclay, St. Priest, Colloredo, Bernadotte, Stedingk, Yorck, Kleist, Bülow—no change.

Blücher, Taubentzen—reduced by one in *NAL*.

Winzingerode, Wittgenstein, Konstantine—went from commander to officer.

The Mystery of 17 October

Historians have pondered: "Why did Napoleon not construct any bridges over the Pleisse on 17 October?" After all, the entire army assumed this had been done. Why did Napoleon not begin withdrawing that day; why did he just stand there and do nothing?

On the 17th of October (and even on the 18th) Napoleon and Ney were anxiously awaiting the arrival of the Army Trains from Eilenburg. When one looks at the composition of the army trains one finds that besides lots of baggage, this train also included the bridging trains, pontonniers, and engineers. If that weren't bad enough, the train also included the Army War Chest with Napoleon's gold!¹ So no orders were given for the building of any bridges, because there were not enough tools or engineers available for the job. One very bad bridge was actually built but it collapsed under the weight of the traffic.

The Army Trains, which were escorted by Bavarian and Saxon troops, retired to the fortress of Torgau when its arrival was blocked by a group of Cossacks from the Army of Silesia. Even though they were then within three kilometers of Leipzig at that time! There is much more to this story, but that is the kernel of it.

Because the game includes units for both pontoon trains and baggage trains, this was the kind of information that I was looking for. On the other hand, most military historians are not interested in these

¹ Napoleon's Center of Operations

things. Hence, this mystery awaited a solution for 200 years.

New Cards

27. Traffic Jam—The French army had to wend its way through the narrow streets of Leipzig to pass through the Ranstadt Gate before crossing the Pleisse.

30. Gneisenau—The greatest Prussian general since Frederick, Blücher's head strategist and chief of staff.

9. Exit to Würzen—On the player turn this card is played you *may* roll the die once (d6). If the die result is 6 change the French Exit hex from Weissenfels (1013S) to Würzen (7023N) on the opposite side.



The Set-Ups

In preparing the 5th Edition of *NAL* we had the benefit of much specific information showing the exact location of brigades, so we entirely revisited the set-ups. In most cases the original was good, but we found, for example, that divisions were switched around within a given corps area. The new set ups provide a better reference for those wishing to study the battle in detail.

The CRT Then and Now

The first Combat Results Table in a commercial wargame was included in *Tactics II*. This table provided results of **Ae**, **De**, **Ar2**, **Dr2** and **Ex** and was employed in first generation games published by Avalon Hill through the mid-sixties. The table was adapted, with a new distribution of results, in the introductory game *Napoleon at Waterloo* published by SPI in the 1970's. This table in turn was carried over (in a slightly different less-bloody version) into a number of Napoleonic games published by SPI, including *Napoleon's Last Battles*.

Die Roll	Probability Ratios (Odds)										Die Roll
	Attacker's Strength to Defender's Strength										
	1-5	1-4	1-3	1-2	1-1	2-1	3-1	4-1	5-1	6-1	
1	Ar	Ar	Dr	Dr	Dr	Dr	Dr	De	De	De	1
2	Ar	Ar	Ar	Dr	Dr	Dr	Dr	Dr	De	De	2
3	Ae	Ar	Ar	Ar	Dr	Dr	Dr	Dr	Dr	De	3
4	Ae	Ar	Ar	Ar	Ar	Dr	Dr	Dr	Dr	Dr	4
5	Ae	Ae	Ar	Ar	Ar	Ar	Dr	Dr	Ex	Ex	5
6	Ae	Ae	Ae	Ar	Ar	Ar	Ar	Ex	Ex	Ex	6

Attacks executed at greater than 6-1 are treated as 6-1; attacks executed at worse than 1-5 are treated as 1-5.

Comparison of CRTs from Library (below) and NLB (above).

New results of **Ar2**, **3** and **Dr2**, **3** and **4** on the large table (top of next page) are plugged-in in place of plain **Ar** or **Dr**. The new "Shock" result can occur on an **Ar*** or **Sk** result. We took the idea for "Shock" from Mark Simonitch's Fire Fight result in *Ardennes '44*, which, as Mark explained,

was inspired by Evan Jones' wonderful combat table in *Blue vs. Gray*. In that game, troop morale is only important occasionally, but when it is, it is the deciding factor. So in *Ardennes '44* players need only check for morale when called for by a Fire Fight result on the CRT. At that point you can forget about the combat odds and look for a lead unit to use in a separate combat table called the Fire Fight Table. The morale of the lead unit determines the die roll modifier. In addition, odds play no part on the Fire Fight Table, so troop quality is brought into a sharp focus.

The **Ar*** result converts to Shock for units in confined terrain or when sudden encounters bring troops face to face. In the middle of the CRT, the Shock Result appears one-sixth of the time, and combined with the **Ar*** result the incidence of Shock represents about 25% of all combat results. The Shock Table is included in the Library rules folder:

<http://talk.consimworld.com/WebX?2333@@.ee6bef6!enclosure=.1dda8e4c>

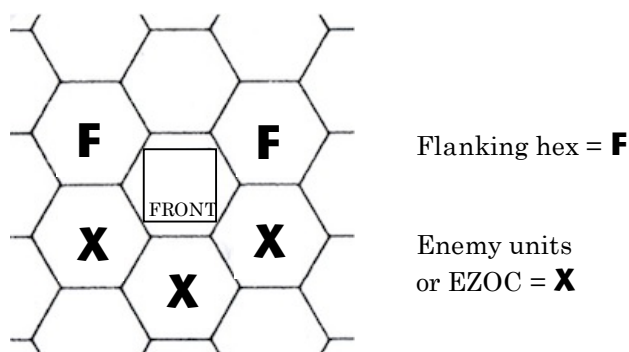
In addition to the Shock Combat Table, the Library Series also includes a new Cavalry Charge Combat Table and an Artillery Bombardment Table. So it is fair to say that the combat system adds important elements developed gradually over many years. The leadership and stacking rules are a subtle but hugely influential mechanic to allow for massed attacks. The final system is a melding of old and new, an evolution toward a more comprehensive system that keeps what worked while adding elements that were necessary to a more complete picture. All these elements have evolved together over time to produce, a comprehensive simulation, modern in every way.

COMBAT RESULTS TABLE

Die Roll	Probability Ratio (Odds) Attacker:Defender											Die Roll	
	1:5 ⁺	1:4	1:3	1:2	1:1.5	1:1	1.5:1	2:1	3:1	4:1	5:1		6 ⁺ :1
1	Ar*	Ar	Dr	Dr	Dr	Dr2	Dr2	Dr2	Dr3	De	De	De	1
2	Ar2	Ar*	Ar	Dr	Dr	Dr	Dr	Dr2	Dr2	Dr4	De	De	2
3	Ae	Ar2	Ar*	Sk	Ar	Dr	Dr	Dr	Dr2	Dr3	Dr3	De	3
4	Ae	Ar3	Ar2	Ar*	Sk	Sk	Dr	Dr	Dr	Dr2	Dr2	Dr2	4
5	Ae	Ae	Ar3	Ar2	Ar*	Ar*	Sk	Sk	Dr	Dr	Ex	Ex	5
6	Ae	Ae	Ae	Ar3	Ar2	Ar2	Ar*	Ar*	Sk	Ex	Ex	Ex	6

Feature #4 "Locking" Zones of Control

This is a misleading term that many gamers crack their heads on. Instead of trying to imagine exactly what this animal called a "Zone of Control" would look like on a battlefield—whether we should imagine the adjacent hexes filled with skirmishers—what if we dropped all such imagining and regarded "ZOC" as nothing but a technical term for certain geometrical configurations within the hex grid. Then you might see that the ZOC rules define very simply when a unit has been outflanked. You don't have to get bogged down defining the unit's front or its flanks, but the result is right. When we say a unit is "surrounded" in the ZOC rules, an enemy would have to be on one (or both) flanks. Perhaps there would be less confusion if we called this the "Flanking Effect."



Feature #5 The "Every Other Hex" Defense

This age-old tactic is hardly ever achieved in practice. While it is still useful, there are so many more options, that it is only one tool among many, and it can be trumped in numerous ways.

Since there are no free set-ups in TLNB your troops won't often start out in every-other hex deployment. Once the battle begins it is impossible to achieve because of enemy action, the unpredictability of movement, and the need to occupy important locations. Terrain benefits always mandate that your line follow the streams, crests, hills, woods, towns and châteaux and not the hex grid. The limits of command radius mean that it isn't always the best option in practice.

Important changes to TLNB have revolutionized the basic system—such as increased stacking and shock combat. You can now have up to five units with a leader. These are two ways that you can often blow right through the every other hex defense.

When I was designing *NLB* back in 1975, I made a decision to focus on areas like Leadership and Command, in order to provide a more realistic role for the player—and to stop reinventing the wheel in areas that already worked, like Movement and Combat. Yet designers are still revisiting these areas almost 40 years later, instead of participating in the forward evolution of game design. It was foreseen that by limiting complexity in the area of combat there would be an outcry from those obsessed therewith. My opinion is that combat is not all-important. In war, death and destruction are not the goal, but a side-effect. According to Sun Tzu, "To fight and conquer in all our battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy's resistance without fighting." The TLNB system is capable of handling a great variety of engagements, so that for the first time we can simulate Kulm, Pultusk, and the smaller engagements.

Bagages Ho!

Baggage Trains in *La Patrie en Danger*

CM: Chris Moeller

TD: Todd Davis

JP: Joe Perez

AT: Aaron Tobul

KZ: Kevin Zucker



12 February, Saturday – Vifort, early morning. After marching all night, the debris of general Sacken's Russian column, without doubt congested with baggage and stragglers, arrived in the early morning, passing through the Prussian line in order to cross the Marne at Chateau-Thierry. —Louis Bélanger, SS Nr. 7

CM: In my forward position, I'm in danger of being turned by rampaging stacks of the Old Guard coming at me over any number of bridges. Yorck was marching to my aid from Chateau-Thierry in the North. If I had taken up the historical positions, he would have slotted neatly onto my left wing. As it is, he's having to march cross country to catch up to me,

with a reduced initiative due to his lack of Baggage, while my engaged front line is being mauled.

KZ: About Yorck's Baggage Trains. I reckon I Corps Baggage would arrive if his Alternate group #2 units arrive.

TD: How many wagons are in each corps Baggage train, roughly?

KZ: More or less 100. That would vary from campaign to campaign. In 1814 the Corps are very small and there is a shortage of wagons. In 1813, the III Corps had the 5th battalion of Equipages militaires, with 155 wagons, 8 officers and 410 men for a corps of over 30,000 men. The wagons carried the ambulance and victual service, as well as the headquarters effects. In single file they would stretch out for over a mile on the road.

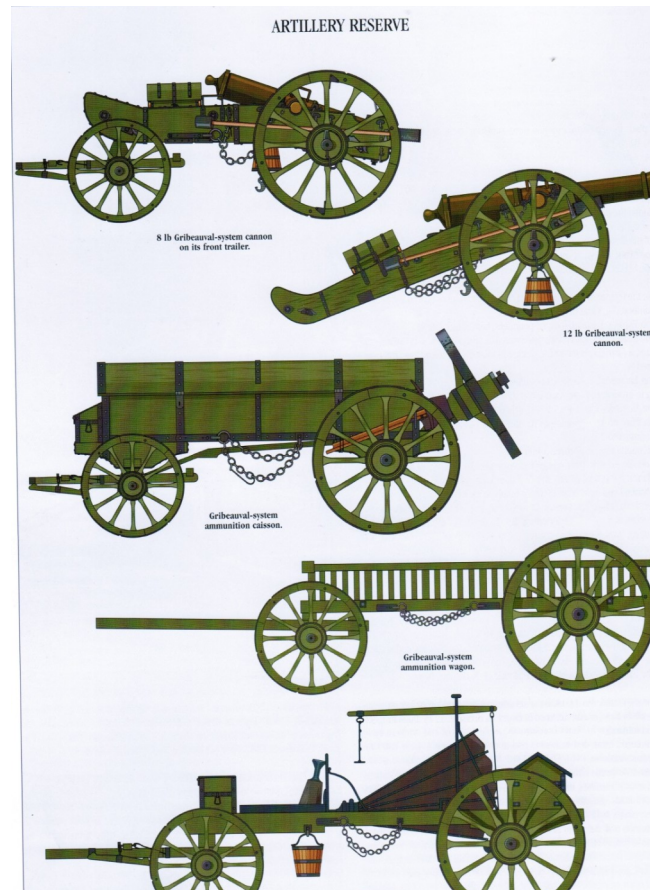
TD: I was wondering this because of how much "road space" they would take up when moving (and conversely, take away from the combat units)? It always seems to me there is not enough wagon counters to 'properly' occupy enough road hexes, realizing they can be 'parked' (and thus stacked up, out of the way) when NOT moving. I was pondering options about making and including more wagons for each corps, to try and replicate this fact in some



of the scenarios. With the smaller corps (and thus, smaller Baggage trains), would this be part of the reason the French corps were moving so fast in 1814, even with less experienced troops in them?

In the FPW (1870) a German army corps of two divisions (so, about 25-30,000 men) contained 824 wagons!! I was wondering how that compared to the Napoleonic Baggage trains.

KZ: To compare accurately you would have to include the caissons of the artillery and they are not included in the Baggage trains in the game. They are with the guns. (Some would be with the Grand Park which doesn't even have a counter!) The III Corps, at the start of the Autumn campaign in 1813, with nearly 40,000 men the corps, had: • 475 wagons containing artillery ammunition (for 104 guns) • 31 wagons containing tools and materials for the engineers (only 46 officers and men) • 155 wagons containing ambulances, food and HQ (a part of this battalion served on detachment in the surrounding neighborhood) • 661 TOTAL.



In 1814, by contrast, the corps were one-third that strength. So you could say they had perhaps 150 munitions wagons, 10 for the engineers, and 50 in the equipages.

JP: French Baggage Trains are mentioned on the Reinforcement Track, and others are not. The rules are clear that the Baggage Train is LAST in line to enter. The French YG Baggage Train is not mentioned as a reinforcement, and there are units of that corps set up in the last hex row of the eastern map edge. Is the Baggage Train positioned off map as if to enter after these units on the map edge, or can it be placed within 7 hexes of any unit of the strung-out corps?

CM: Yorck's I Corps is in a similar position in the mini-campaign. They don't have a Baggage wagon listed when they enter, and they don't have any Corps Artillery, so they spend the whole campaign out of supply (or stay w/in 14 hexes of their entry hex). Chris

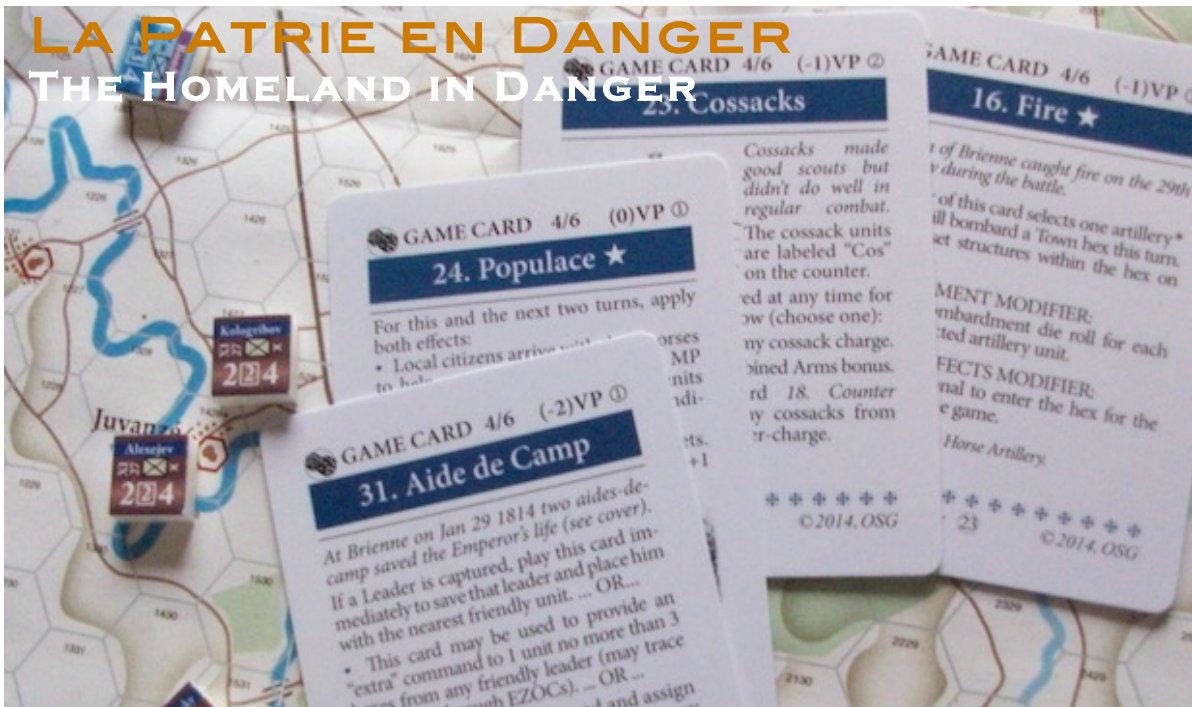
KZ: Column: We have said that baggage (unless otherwise specified) appears behind the non-divisional artillery, at the end of the column. If there is no non-divisional artillery, include the baggage with the main body (a force of that corps which includes the Corps officer), at the end of the column.

AT: We'll have to see if Yorck's corps has non-divisional artillery. Remember, the forces deployed in the mini-campaign are really just one of his infantry divisions and his cavalry and horse artillery (the other divisions came in as optional reinforcements). My sense is that this is a flying column without baggage.

CM: "No non-divisional artillery" = none in the entire I Corps counter mix (as opposed to = none appearing in this scenario). So if there are divisional artillery counters in the counter tray, the baggage stays with them. That's logical.

AT: You mean no corps artillery in the counter tray, but yeah that is my interpretation.

Illustration by André Jouineau from *Wagram: The Apogee of the Empire*, by F.-G. Hourtoulle, Paris, 2005.



*Quadrigrade of the Campaign in France, Pt. I
January-February 1814*

LIBRARY OF NAPOLEONIC BATTLES

This series is an update of the classic *NLB/NAL* system, introducing Hidden Movement, Baggage and Bridge Trains, Bombardment and Shock Combat Tables, and a card deck. The Library will cover all the major battles of Napoleon in 18 volumes—four have already been published.

Set at the brigade level like *Napoleon's Last Battles*—480 meters per hex and one hour turns—the game retains the familiar Command System of Commanders and Corps Officers.



In other wargames, the force structure and arrival schedule is not a mystery. Everyone on both sides knows exactly who is coming. But in the Napoleonic era, the uncertainty faced by

commanders on both sides played an important role in the way battles developed. Cards determine the order of arrival and O/B of the battles. For example, a card may specify an additional corps to arrive or it may cause a scheduled reinforcement to be delayed.

The Campaign game adds a twist, providing you with extra cards if you have done well in the prior battles. This mirrors the hesitancy at higher headquarters to release troops.

FEATURES

- Rules: The Standard Rules Folder for the series has reached an exceptional level of refinement and will not change from game to game.
- Optional Cards: There are two very similar decks of 50 cards apiece, one for each player. The decks are tailored to each side and each battle, according to the Scenario Information. Each Card played sets your Movement Allowance, and you gain or lose Victory Points.
- The printed Movement Allowance on the unit counter represents the normal movement. However, the actual Movement Allowance may vary depending upon the cards played.
- March Order: A March Order allows a Force to move during the Friendly Command Movement Segment regardless of Command Range.
- Road March: In order to benefit from road terrain costs a unit must be in "Road March." Units in Road March may not stack.
- Light Cavalry units can be broken-down into a number of Vedettes. Vedettes provide your scouting and screening abilities.



Vedette Encounters



What would it look like when a vedette unit encounters a Light Cavalry brigade? This would be like a 1-to-3 attack of the vedette unit (about one regiment) against three regiments of the brigade.

According to de Brack, in *Cavalry Outpost Duties*, "The duty of light cavalry is to clear the way for the army and protect its march, by preceding our columns, scouting their flanks, surrounding them and concealing them with a bold and vigilant curtain; following the enemy step by step, harassing and annoying him, discovering his designs, exhausting his forces in detail, destroying his magazines, capturing his convoys, and finally, forcing him to expend [his] strength in defensive operations."

We were trying to visualise Lasalle, for example, keeping several vedettes in his LOS over open ground.

De Brack defines a vedette as "a mounted sentinel posted in the vicinity of the enemy." His duties are "to watch with the greatest attention the movements of the enemy; to let no noise escape his notice; to watch carefully everything which may be of interest to protect the detachment to which he belongs; to signal to his small post notice of everything which may appear threatening, and to give warning of an attack by discharging his piece." He should position himself where he can see everything without being seen; if on a bare hill, he should be hidden by the crest, "so that the line of the crest will cover him as much as possible, without preventing his seeing beyond it." Vedettes should be posted on all

expected avenues of enemy advance. He estimates the distances at which to view the enemy as follows:

2,000 m.	men and horses are mere points
1,200 m.	infantry and cavalry are distinct
800 m.	individual movements can be seen
700 m.	men's heads distinct from bodies
400 m.	man's head can be clearly seen

De Brack goes on to define a patrol as a detachment of flying vedettes. A patrol generally contains two troopers and a corporal. A patrol should march without noise or conversation; with their scabbard secured so that it will not strike against the spur or stirrup; and carry the carbine in one hand to avoid any noise. The patrol should keep to the dirt roads, to avoid the sound of shoes striking on paving stones. In daytime the patrol should move under cover of hedges, walls, sunken roads and ravines. At night, to avoid smoking, so as not to light up their faces; and not to fire on the enemy, but conceal themselves, sending one man to warn the grand guard behind them.

Cavalry almost always moved in detachments—either with the advance-guard, rear-guard, as pickets, on reconnaissances or patrols, foraging parties, escorts, and partisans.

A Grand Guard is an advance-guard placed between the main body and one of its detachments, to relieve or support the vedettes in case of an attack by the enemy, in order to give the necessary time for the detachment or cantonment which it covers to prepare for defence or retreat. The Grand Guard is posted on the route by which the enemy will probably advance to attack the bivouac. Vedettes attacked will retreat upon their supports. "Therefore the junction of several roads or paths is a favorable place for posting a grand guard. The latter should bear to the vedettes the same relation that the hinged end of a fan does to the upper ends of its outspread sticks."

The advance guard moves out and takes a position in front of friendly lines. On arriving at the place assigned to the Grand Guard, the men are formed into small posts and move to the front. Corporals or old soldiers command each of the small posts, each of four men. These detachments move together under the advance guard's overall commander.

If one of these patrols did encounter enemy cavalry, the others would hear the firing and would either high-tail it out of there or else move to rescue their friends. They would all meet at the pre-selected rendezvous point.

According to de Brack, "If the vedette discharges his piece, the small post mounts instantly. Whenever the commander of a small post leaves it, he must keep within view of his men, and mount or dismount them by means of signals agreed upon beforehand."

Reconnaissance Table (when moving into an EZOC)			
NON-PHASING	PHASING PLAYER HAS:		
LC	Vedette	(no cavalry)	reconnaissance
•	Roll Die*	•	no reconnaissance results
Vedette	V-Recov	•	no reconnaissance results
(no cav.)	Reveal	Reveal	Reveal = reveal enemy units
KEY:	V-Recov	Vedette is eliminated and transferred to the Recovered section	
	*Roll Die: 1 = Reveal / 2, 3, 4 = V-Recov / 5, 6 = Vedette is PEU		
	• = No Result		

De Brack says he many times witnessed "a cavalry regiment, risking itself in a plain beyond reach of its supports, briskly attacked, turned, cut off by superior forces and, after a valiant and even desperate resistance ... compelled to execute a retreat, or rather individual 'devil take the hindmost' flight, during which it was used up before supports could arrive to assist it and help it to rally." He continues,

A colonel, finding himself in an open plain cut off from his supports by forces superior to his own, and having no hope of executing his retreat safely in echelon or in line, would deploy quickly into close column; for he has no chance except in a deep formation, where he will expose less surface, fewer men, and have them all in hand for making a more powerful and effective opening in the enemy's ranks.

With the new table (above) I give a vedette that strikes upon an LC unit one chance in six of completing its mission successfully and revealing enemy units. On a 2-4 the vedette is temporarily eliminated but goes straight to the UAR. Only on a 5-6 is the vedette PEU (which means PEU for the duration of the battle).

There were instances at Friedland where the French cavalry would lay an ambush for the Russian cavalry. Something like that could cause the vedette PEU.

John Keegan in his "cavalry vs. cavalry" chapter (pp. 148 and 149) explains that the side

with fresh horses has a big advantage. He also tells us why cavalry could "suffer very grievously at the hands of other cavalry when nerves failed, horses were blown or weapons markedly unequal. ... The most dangerous course in war is to retreat when in close contact with the enemy..." Cavalry that overextended its charge might end up "finding themselves at the end of it alone or scattered, on blown horses, and deep within the enemy's positions."

In the next excerpt one finds the distance from the outpost to the divisional HQ of 1.25 miles (2200 yds. or 4.2 hexes). This imaginative description of vedettes is in *War & Peace* (Book Nine, Chapter Four).

Having set off in the small hours of the fourteenth (26th), accompanied by a bugler and two Cossacks, Balashev reached the French outposts at the village of Rykonty, on the Russian side of the Niemen, by dawn. There he was stopped by French cavalry sentinels.

A French noncommissioned officer of hussars, in crimson uniform and a shaggy cap, shouted to the approaching Balashev to halt. Balashev did not do so at once, but continued to advance along the road at a walking pace.

The noncommissioned officer frowned and, muttering words of abuse, advanced his horse's chest against Balashev, put his hand to his saber, and shouted rudely at the Russian general, asking: was he deaf that he did not do as he was told? Balashev mentioned who he was. The non-commissioned officer began talking with his comrades about regimental matters without looking at the Russian general.

After living at the seat of the highest authority and power, after conversing with the Emperor less than three hours before, and in general being accustomed to the respect due to his rank in the service, Balashev found it very strange here on Russian soil to encounter this hostile, and still more this disrespectful, application of brute force to himself.

The sun was only just appearing from behind the clouds, the air was fresh and dewy. A herd of cattle was being driven along the road from the village, and over the fields the larks rose trilling, one after another, like bubbles rising in water.

Balashev looked around him, awaiting the arrival of an officer from the village. The Russian

Cossacks and bugler and the French hussars looked silently at one another from time to time.

A French colonel of hussars, who had evidently just left his bed, came riding from the village on a handsome sleek gray horse, accompanied by two hussars. The officer, the soldiers, and their horses all looked smart and well kept.

It was that first period of a campaign when troops are still in full trim, almost like that of peacetime maneuvers, but with a shade of martial swagger in their clothes, and a touch of the gaiety and spirit of enterprise which always accompany the opening of a campaign.

The French colonel with difficulty repressed a yawn, but was polite and evidently understood Balashev's importance. He led him past his soldiers and behind the outposts and told him that his wish to be presented to the Emperor would most likely be satisfied immediately, as the Emperor's quarters were, he believed, not far off.

They rode through the village of Rykonty, past tethered French hussar horses, past sentinels and men who saluted their colonel and stared with curiosity at a Russian uniform, and came out at the other end of the village. The colonel said that the commander of the division was a mile and a quarter away and would receive Balashev and conduct him to his destination.

The sun had by now risen and shone gaily on the bright verdure...

Here is another excerpt that tells us that a whole squadron of French cavalry was captured by cossacks.

At dawn on the sixteenth (28th) of November (1805), Denisov's squadron, in which Nicholas Rostov served and which was in Prince Bagration's detachment, moved from the place where it had spent the night, advancing into action as arranged, and after going behind other columns for about two thirds of a mile was stopped on the highroad. Rostov saw the Cossacks and then the first and second squadrons of hussars and infantry battalions and artillery pass by and go forward and then Generals Bagration and Dolgorukov ride past with their adjutants. All the fear before action which he had experienced as previously, all the inner struggle to conquer that fear, all his dreams of distinguishing himself as a true hussar in this battle, had been wasted. Their squadron remained in reserve and Nicholas Rostov spent that day in a dull and wretched

mood. At nine in the morning, he heard firing in front and shouts of hurrah, and saw wounded being brought back (there were not many of them), and at last he saw how a whole detachment of French cavalry was brought in, convoyed by a *sontnya* of Cossacks. Evidently the affair was over and, though not big, had been a successful engagement. The men and officers returning spoke of a brilliant victory, of the occupation of the town of Wischau and the capture of a whole French squadron...

The skirmish at Wischau is recounted in the town history—

It is said that after the so called "Vyškov Scuffle," horse hoofs tread down the surrounding fields so much that the following season seed corn was unable to break the crust. ¹

How Napoleon performed his own scouting
During the night of 2 December, 1805, Napoleon went on reconnaissance to determine the Allied positions. However, he encountered a Cossack patrol, which prevented him from getting a clear sight of the Russian positions.

In 1809 the Emperor and Marshal Masséna, wearing sergeants' great-coats, and followed by Sainte-Croix in a private's uniform, went close up to the bank [of the Danube]. The colonel stripped himself, and went into the water, while Napoleon and Masséna, to still any suspicion on the part of the enemy, took off their coats as though they too proposed to bathe, and then examined at their ease the point where they wished to throw the bridges across. The Austrians were so accustomed to see our soldiers come in little parties to bathe at that place that they remained quietly lying on the grass. This fact shows that in war commanders ought strictly to forbid this kind of truce, and marking off of neutral points, which the troops on either side often establish for their respective convenience.²

Marbot tells us

General Lasalle, who fell at Wagram, was keenly regretted both by the Emperor and the army. He was the best light cavalry officer for outpost duty, and had the surest eye. He could

¹ <http://www.morava-napoleonska.cz/en/localities/vyskov-nekdejsi-moravske-versailles/>

² de Brack

take in a whole district in a moment, and seldom made a mistake, so that his reports on the enemy's position were clear and precise.



In the Polish Guard Lancer Regiment served men from eastern parts of Poland who spoke some Russian language. These were used as translators or put into the advance guard. They would speak Russian to anybody they came across and pass themselves off as Russian troops. Some of the locals knew that the Russian army had uhlan regiments, so they mistook the Polish Guard for one of those units. The Dutch 'Red Lancers' had no knowledge of Russian language, so General Colbert added 1 or 2 Poles to each Dutch outpost.

At Famonskoie the Cossacks ambushed and captured a whole Dutch detachment!"

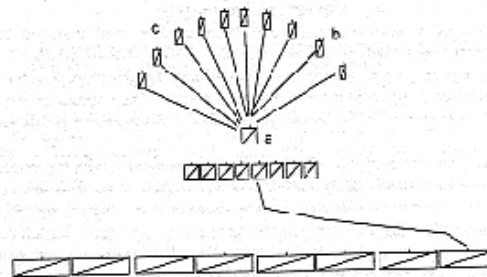
George R. Gleig wrote:

Moreover, as the light cavalry are always employed, wherever the nature of the country will allow, at outposts, both men and horses are forced to acquire habits of vigilance, such as to be rightly understood, must have been both witnessed and experienced. The cavalry soldier sleeps, like his charger, with one eye and one ear always open. Both must be quick to perceive the first flash of a carbine, or the first blast of the trumpet; and both must be in a condition to take their places in the ranks, within a minute or two after the alarm is given.



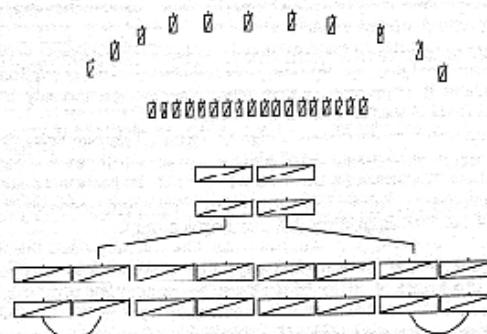
Figure 106. Austrian cavalry skirmishers – *Dienst-Reglement für die Kaiserlich-Königliche Kavallerie*, Vienna, 1808, Plate 22, Figures 1 & 2.

Figure 1: Advancing a skirmish screen with the 1st Zug of a division.



- a) Position of the Zug before the middle of the division.
- b) First rank under the direction of the 2nd corporal, deployed as skirmishers.
- c) Grouping of the skirmishers in small formations at intervals of 50 paces

Figure 2: Advanced guard with two Züge of a division.



Skirmishing Cavalry

Skirmishers screened their parent squadron or regiment. They fired upon the enemy and harassed him.

Usually the horse skirmishers advanced in front of their parent squadron or regiment, fired and moved about a bit to reduce their targetability. They were able to prevent the enemy's troops from hiding behind trees and broken ground, looked for ambushes, or simply observed the enemy's movements or intent. It was also quite good way to test enemy resolve at a specific point and gather information about his position as well.

They fired upon the enemy trying to take a better position or forced the enemy to move slower or even halt and form squares. Occasionally an odd charge would take place to drive the enemy horse skirmishers away. Sometimes these skirmish combats escalated and involved more troops.

According to George Nafziger, the French cavalry did not designate specific cavalrymen as skirmishers, "but would detach *pelotons* into

skirmish order". The Vistula uhlans (Polish unit in French service) however had troops specifically designed as flankers. Almost every Allied squadron had approx. 10-20 men armed with rifles or muskets who were trained as skirmishers (flankers). When recruits arrived the officers looked for men familiar with horses, who were better horsemen than others. These were selected into the flanker platoon.

The flankers moved in fast trot or gallop and the large spaces allowed for lots of individual movement. Usually the chain of flankers was formed 60 paces (French) in front of the squadron or regiment. The flankers operated in pairs — one flanker was in the front, standing and firing, while the second was on his left rear. They would alternate loading and firing. If necessary behind the chain of flankers was placed another *peloton* in formed order. It was the support or reserve troop.

In 1807 Russian A. I. Hatov wrote a work devoted to the cavalry, its use in combat and its tactics. Hatov thought any firing from horse while standing as peculiar. The only accepted exception was when the flankers (horse skirmishers) used their firearms. Although their fire was known as being rather harmless they played important role of protecting the troops during march and on the battlefield from being harassed or disordered by enemy's skirmishers.³

Every Russian squadron had 16 flankers (skirmishers), which were posted in the end files of every platoon. In hussar regiments all troopers were trained to function as skirmishers and sometimes they were used in large numbers like for example in 1806 at Pultusk and Golymin, or in 1812 at Kobrin.

During the 1806-1807 campaign Löwenstern was sent with flankers of the Soumy Hussars against French dragoons positioned in a wood near Makow. Löwenstern fired a few pistol shots at a gray-haired dragoon. The French veteran responded with his own fire. Both however were unharmed and none was rushing to cross his saber with the opponent. Soon the trumpets sounded and recalled the flankers.

Also the Russian dragoons and cuirassiers had their own flankers. In 1814 Grand Duke Constantine brought several cavalry regiments into the vicinity of Fère Champenoise where the French were retreating under the cover of their foot and horse skirmishers. Constantine sent forward flankers of Lifeguard Dragoons and the Guard Cavalry Regiment (Chevaliers Garde, Kavallergarde) and they pushed back the French skirmishers.

From Foucart – the campaign of 1806.

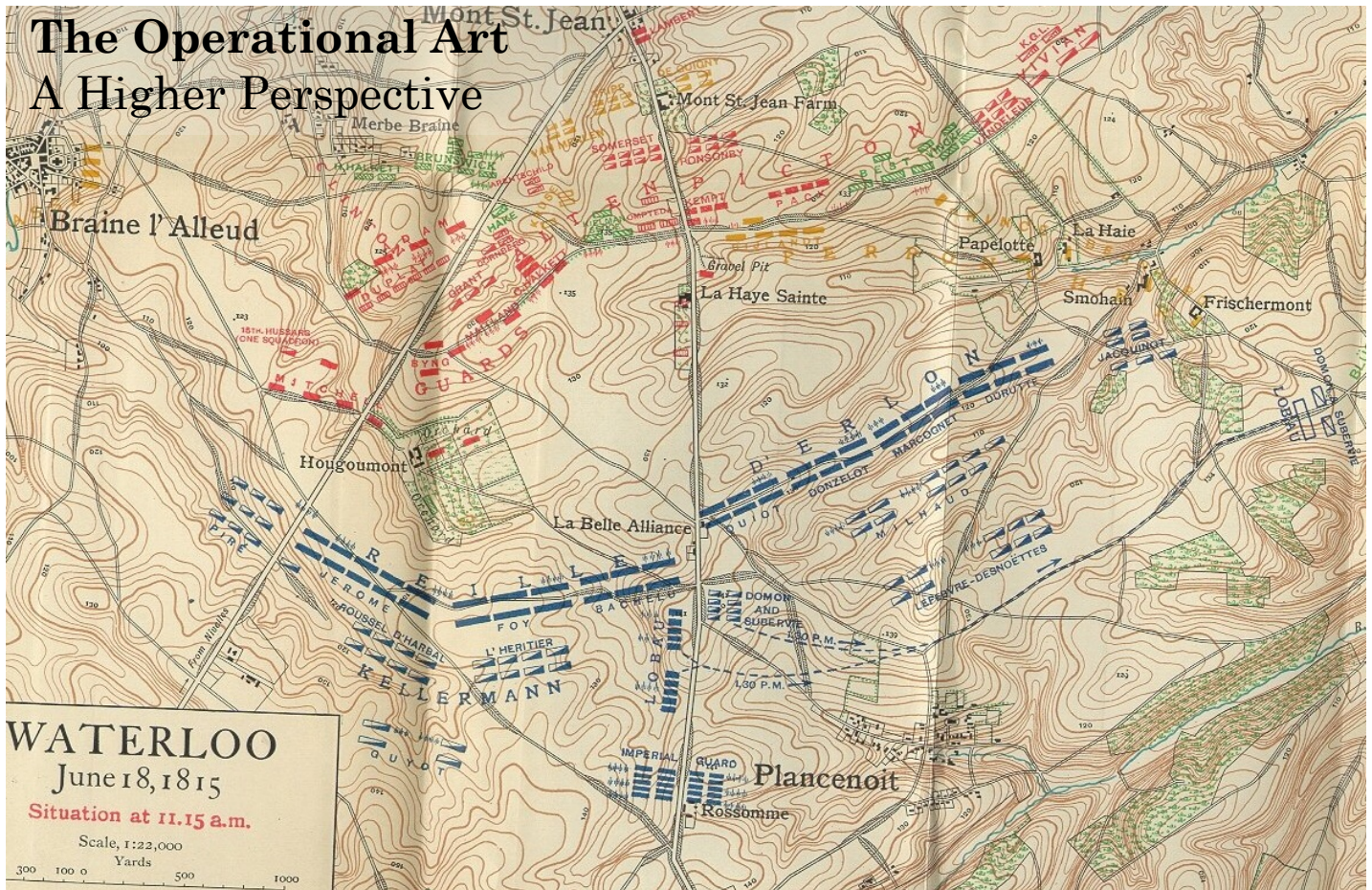
Marshal Soult to Capt Meuziac of the 11th Chausseurs (a cheval). Plauen 10th October 1806.

I have received your report on this date. I inform you that tomorrow there will be troops from the corps at Greitz, perhaps I will be there in person. In consequence you will depart from Pausa with the squadron that you command and direct it on Langenwetzendorf where you will immediately establish communications with the troops of the centre column which will be at Auma and of those troops from the corps which will be towards Greitz. From Langen you will push some groups towards Weyda to effect a reconnaissance of the enemy troops which are in this area, to obtain precise information on their strength, direction and position but recommend to the officer that commands this group do avoid compromising his patrol. Give me frequent updates.

Gen Watier to Murat, 11th October 1806, 02:00 hrs.

The colonel of the 5th regt. of Chasseurs (a cheval), went to Neustadt where he entered without finding any trace of the enemy but when he went to place his advanced posts on the routes that your majesty had indicated he (his unit) was received with carbine fire at 10 paces. ... My two regiments have made many detachments and are now understrength. The horses are exhausted and this one night is not enough for them to recover, however they (the riders) want to serve but it would be a shame to see such good regiments reduced to nothing as in the last campaign.

³ Hatov A. I. "Obshchii opyt taktiki" 1807, Part I, p 186



The Operational Level is midway between Strategy (the overall war aims of a nation) and Tactics (action on the battlefield). Operations includes everything the leaders on both sides did to achieve their nation's strategic goals. The goal of operations in the Napoleonic era was to achieve a preponderance of force on the chosen battlefield and to insure the battle occurred most advantageously. Napoleon was predominantly the master of the operational art, and it was at this level that most of his victories were ensured —Napoleongames.com.¹

An 18th century general only had to decide where to move the army so as to force a battle (or avoid one), and how to deploy and engage on the battlefield. By blending the strategic and the tactical levels, Napoleon developed a new, opera-

¹ Jomini, states in *Precis de l'art de la guerre* that "Strategy is the art of making war upon the map, and comprehends the whole theater of operations. Grand Tactics is the art of posting troops upon the battlefield according to the accidents of the ground, of bringing them into action, and the art of fighting upon the ground."

tional, field of action.² It was only with the dawning of the operational method that the tactical and strategic levels came to be seen as separate.³

By carefully selecting the map scale and drawing the boundaries of the game map tight to

² The term "operational art" was coined by Soviet theorists prior to WWII. Wikipedia says, "During the 18th and early 19th centuries, a synonymous term of grand tactics was often applied to describe manoeuvring of troops not tactically engaged."

³ Claus Telp has written, "An awareness that warfare in this period was waged on two levels, the tactical and the strategic level, was not to be found in Frederick's or anybody else's works." *The Evolution of Operational Art, 1740-1813: From Frederick the Great to Napoleon*. However, within a generation, this situation had changed. As Telp notes in his conclusion, "The key feature of the change in warfare was the fluent transition from a campaign manoeuvre to a battlefield manoeuvre as divisions, and later corps, arrived on the battlefield from different directions and joined combat as independent tactical formations. Thus, the dividing line between strategy and tactics became blurred, creating a strategic-tactical continuum which suggests the introduction of the operational level in the analysis of warfare of this period. Contemporaries were by no means oblivious to the merging of the strategic and the tactical levels. Guibert, Bülow and Napoleon alluded to this feature of warfare in their time."

the shoulder of the farthest man on each flank, most Napoleonic wargames prevent the player from altering the approach to battle. They present the player with just one direction to go in—directly at the opponent across the board. That might be o.k. for medieval battles, or any set-piece affair, in the style of chess or football. But Napoleon was able to break out of the box that blinded his early opponents. Whenever possible he attempted to ensure the arrival of a large force timed to enter on the enemy flank during the course of the battle.

Napoleon's real genius was in the operational art of war, arranging the circumstances so he could meet the enemy with superior numbers at the decisive place and time, on a battlefield of his own choosing.

This dimension, that has gone unexplored in most (if not all) Napoleonic battle games, happens to be the key to understanding Napoleon's methods. By giving only the historical set-up at the opening salvo, all the hard work that went into strategic planning is handed to the French players. The cardboard Napoleon just has to harvest the victory already prepared by the historical Napoleon. To develop a battlefield situation to your advantage before the first shot is fired requires a skill that marks a first-rate general.

So how is it that we see so many wargames that ignore the operational level, these games that hem-in the two sides and have units lined-up from one map-edge to the other? The reason for this is because the average wargame falls apart if there isn't a solid line of units from edge to edge. These games need that mapedge to prevent the very kind of maneuver that made Napoleon the dangerous opponent he was. These games allow the French player the gift of that strong reinforcement entering on Turn 10, just in time to turn the enemy flank. Players are so accustomed to this sort of wargame that their entire focus is stuck on the one thing that they have some control over: Combat. It is difficult for them, at first, to see the possibilities when a truly operational game comes along.

What allowed Napoleon to maneuver a part of his army separately from the main body was the Corps d'Armee system. Each Corps was a balanced force of all arms that was able to achieve limited objectives and act on its own for 24 hours. In most wargames, the unit designa-

tions are for "historical interest only," and the parent formation of a unit does not matter. However, it was because of the Corps system the Emperor was able to easily detach a part of his army on a separate flanking mission.

The flexibility of Napoleon's corps system over the command arrangements normally employed by his coalition foes depended upon the initiative of the senior French officers, selected for their ability to think on their feet, rather than their aristocratic lineage. The advent of leaders like Davout and Marmont within the corps system created a synergistic effect which dominated the battlefield. Without leaders who understood their place in the operational scheme the corps system alone was insufficient to continue the great chain of Napoleonic victories.

Representing the Corps d'Armee

The first characteristic of the corps was their concentration. During the design of *Napoleon's Last Battles I* I was staring at the map of the Waterloo battlefield, and noticed the nice compact formations of the French corps. Sketching the corps boundaries onto the game map I found that all the French units in a given corps were well within 3 hexes of a central point; in fact, their corps frontages did not exceed 4 hexes. The 3-hex Command Range came out of this observation. I still didn't know the reasons for this but I wanted to see the corps formed into these tight formations instead of stretching out into long lines as would otherwise be the case.

Nonetheless these long lines of units, almost from mapedge to mapedge, still occur in *NLB* campaigns, so clearly there was more than Command Range to be worked out. One rule allowed a player to simply take his units out of command whenever he wished to withdraw from EZOCs. Our first solution was to change that so out of command units could not do *better* than an **Ar**; that was too harsh. Finally, we struck on prohibiting advance after combat for out of command units, and that strikes the right balance.

The second characteristic of Corps was their inclusion of all arms. Having infantry, cavalry and artillery together made the corps better, safer, and stronger than if they just comprised infantry alone. The first rule to address this was the Combined Arms attack. However, for the

most part further differentiation of the three combat arms was necessary so that cavalry would be more than just “faster, weaker infantry.” Hence, the cavalry retreat before combat and cavalry charge rule that premiered with *NAL*.

I began to think about the scouting and screening abilities of cavalry, and gradually over many years, over decades, the vedette rules achieved their final shape. As Chris Moeller wrote, “Vedettes first appeared in *The Emperor Returns* (1984) as dummy markers. Their role was the usual one of dummies everywhere: to confuse the enemy about where your real army is. In later games, beginning with *1807: The Eagles Turn East*, the dummies evolved into cavalry vedettes (touted as “smart dummies”), and assumed their mantle as that fabled Napoleonic presence, the cavalry screen.

“In the three games released since *1807 (Napoleon at Bay 3rd Edition, Bonaparte in Italy 2nd Edition, and Highway to the Kremlin)*, these daring outriders have matured into the true eyes and ears of the army.” Their evolution continued through *Four Lost Battles* (the precursor to the *Library System*) where they still had a small combat value. We even experimented with Heavy Cavalry rules but later decided these were too much of a burden on the players, and as they were not necessary for the design intent they were scrapped.

To add more differentiation for the artillery the Bombardment rules were devised. These went through several variations before reaching their final form in *Four Lost Battles*.

Types of Actions

US Army Manual FM 100-5 lays-out 20 different types of offensive actions, and none of these are exclusively modern in application. The ordinary wargame can only represent a handful of these, “Attack,” “Deliberate Attack,” and a few others. However, we wanted to be able to simulate the full range of actions, otherwise we would be limited to including just the largest and best known battles in our series. In order to meet this challenge, we set out to design a full range of subsystems in addition to movement and combat, Leadership and Command, Demoralization and Reorganization. Among the subsystems that have been added to the game design since *Napoleon’s*

Last Battles are Hidden Forces, Repulse, Shock Combat, Bombardment, Cavalry Charges, Vedettes, Baggage and Pontoon Trains, and March Orders.

The “Forms of the Tactical offense” according to FM 100-5 are the following:

- Movement to Contact • Approach March • Search and Attack • Reconnaissance in Force • Meeting Engagement • Attack • Hasty Attack • Deliberate Attack • Spoiling Attack • Counterattack • Raid • Feint • Demonstration • Exploitation • Pursuit • Envelopment • Turning Movement • Infiltration • Frontal Attack • Penetration

An even greater challenge to the designer is presented by situations where one side has to gradually retreat, such as at Vauchamps in 1814.

Cards

Card events help us to create the conditions for some of these (see “Forms of Maneuver”). The cards create unpredictable conditions on the field that mirror the chaos of battle.

Command and Control on the Battlefield

The commanding officer of a formation (general or marshal in charge of a corps) has a suite of officers with him—his general of artillery, of engineers, and his chief of staff, assisted by a dozen or so orderly officers awaiting missions—normally to carry orders to the divisions, brigades or regiments. While the office of the chief of staff is set up in a house further to the rear, these officers are located in open ground within full view of the entire corps (or as much of it as possible). Control erodes when subordinate units move out of view. The officers might be on horseback or on foot, with their mounts ready nearby so that they can arrive at any important point quickly.

Command Range in the game is established as 3 hexes for officers, a distance which could be covered on horseback in 10 minutes. A Corps officer might be able to see some units beyond 3 hexes but getting orders to them in time would be impossible—orders are out of date before they arrive. Anything beyond 3 hexes falls outside the C3 loop so those units are on their own initiative. The C3 Loop for a corps might look something like this [note the duration of the loop is one hour].

C3 LOOP

00:00 order dispatch
00:10 order received
00:15 troops move out (up to 3 hexes)
00:30 enemy contacted
00:45 combat result obtained
00:50 report sent to commanding officer
01:00 report read by commanding officer

In the longer Approach to Battle scenarios and the campaign games, command works differently. A unit doesn't need fresh orders every hour if it is far from the battlefield but it can continue to march each turn under a single march order until it reaches its assigned destination. Similarly in a General Retreat, individual units do not need any orders to follow the mass exodus of their army toward their supply base.

“It is often in the system of campaign that one conceives the system of battle.” —Napoleon⁴

Grand Tactics on the Battlefield

David G. Chandler makes an important distinction between Grand Tactics and simply “Tactics.”

We must pass on to consider the Grand Tactics [Napoleon] employed to achieve success at those supremely critical moments of warfare—the hours immediately prior to, during and after giving battle. Grand Tactics in the Napoleonic era comprised the science and art of handling men, horses, and guns during the crucial moves when close contact had been established with the enemy. It was not concerned with the confused and shifting techniques of actual hand-to-hand fighting, for these belong to the realm of tactics.⁵

TLNB follows Chandler's definition of Grand Tactics. Actual matters of tactics were resolved below the scale of TLNB, down at regiment and battalion level, and hence have no place in a brigade-level simulations. From the Grand Tactical perspective it is assumed that the Majors and Colonels in charge understand when to change formation, when and how to maneuver. Al-

though brigades are made up of regiments, a brigade doesn't deploy all at once. The regiments are acting sometimes in concert, sometimes independently as circumstances require. A whole brigade should not really be thought of as being in square, even if all of its constituent regiments are in square at a given moment.

Napoleon learned the techniques that he would later use to gain his signature victories from the textbooks of the time, especially those of Henry Humphrey Evans Lloyd and Jacques Antoine Hippolyte, Comte de Guibert.

The Welshman Lloyd taught him that battles should be fluid and not rigid, that surprise is the best way to demoralize an enemy and place him at a disadvantage. One idea of Lloyd's is frequently echoed in the *Correspondance*: “A battle is a theatrical piece, with a beginning, a middle and an end.” ... Frederick's conduct at Prague was to color much of Napoleon's Grand Tactical thinking, for it inspired him to undertake the task of devising a system of battle that would compel an adversary to break the continuity of his line, and thus expose himself to a fatal blow.



Guibert preached the need to select the correct target for attack with the greatest care, the importance of advancing into battle in a number of small columns for the sake of mobility but of deploying for the actual fight, and the advantages of the compromise

ordre mixte battle formation over both the *ordre mince* and the *ordre profonde*; all these tactical ideas found an important place in Napoleon's thinking.

Napoleon was trained as an artillery officer and during his wars the destructiveness of artillery on the battlefield increased ten-fold.

“It is necessary to have as much artillery as the enemy. Experience shows that it is necessary to have four guns to every thousand men” —Napoleon

⁴ *Correspondance*, Vol. XII, No. 10032, p. 230.

⁵ This and the following quotes are from David G. Chandler, *The Campaigns of Napoleon*, pp. 178 ff. Note that Chandler's definition of Grand Tactics is substantially different from both Jomini and Wikipedia (see above, FN 1 and 2.)

“Missile weapons are now become the principal ones ... It is with artillery that war is made.”

—Napoleon

Napoleon believed in fighting mobile battles and trained his forces to understand the decisive impact of maneuvers on the battlefield—these maneuvers can best be represented at the Grand Tactical level. He believed in the use of shock combat to demoralize the enemy.

Among the most important of [his ideas] was the concept of the offensive battle—based on the all-out attack—which aims to end the war at one blow. This was indeed Napoleon’s strategical as well as his tactical ideal, drawn from the teaching of Frederick the Great, who in turn based his precepts on the practice of the great Persian general Cyrus, who perfected the idea of the maneuver battle. ... Only three times did Napoleon definitely fight defensively—at Leipzig in 1813, and at La Rothière and Arcis the following year—but on each of these occasions he only resorted to such second-rate measures after the dismal failure of an initial attack.

Napoleon was committed throughout his military career to the idea of attacking the enemy, thereby winning the advantages of disorganizing him, unsettling his plans and retaining the initiative throughout. ... Generally speaking, Napoleon’s attacks were completely successful only when he stung his adversary into ill-conceived and ill-timed counterattacks.

The enemy must be thrown off balance from the very first moment and thereafter kept off balance. To help achieve this Napoleon adopted the advice of Turpin de Crissé—“It is very important to know the genius, character and talents of the enemy general; it is on this knowledge that one can develop plans...”

He often launched an immediate, though frequently short-term, spoiling attack, aiming thereby to pin the enemy, preclude the possibility of his refusing battle by means of a night withdrawal, and at the same time disrupt the foe’s battle formations by involving him in “spoiling” actions with a view to exploiting their disarray the following morning.... Napoleon was from first to last determined to dominate and overawe his opponent, building up a moral superiority which was frequently more useful than mere numerical advantage.

The Emperor always sought to attack the flank and rear of the enemy.

As in his strategical system, so in his grand tactical formulae did Napoleon place the utmost importance on achieving an envelopment of the enemy. ... The aim of the flank attack, as employed in almost all the Napoleonic battles from the humble Montenotte in 1796 ... to the fully developed concept employed at the battle of Bautzen in 1813, was always to create an opportunity for total victory by disturbing the foe and upsetting his balance and morale.

The difference between a sweeping strategic turning movement and a more limited grand tactical outflanking maneuver.

There is, however, an important variation to this basic idea of turning the enemy’s flank with the aid of an independent force, which Napoleon employed when he was not sufficiently strong to be able to afford troops for this role. This alternative was the tactical outflanking movement. The difference between the two is important, though at first glance apparently insignificant. A “turning” movement could be executed only by a fair-sized force—at least a corps in strength—which as capable of moving into action independently of the main body. Such an attack, properly timed, could lead to the destruction of an enemy if the “turning” force was able to place itself well in the foe’s rear athwart his line of retreat. An “outflanking” movement, on the other hand, was productive of less dramatic results.

As Napoleon well knew, everything depended on the correctly timed sequence of initial concentration, appearance of the turning force, crucial bombardment of the key enemy sector, and finally the loosing of the devastating main attack.

Three types of Napoleonic Battle

It is possible to distinguish between three different types of Napoleonic battle ... the battle based on the simple frontal attack, the double battle, and the enveloping or “strategical” battle. There is no doubt that the third was his favorite...

The Frontal Attack

Napoleon was prepared to fight a straightforward [frontal attack] to exploit favorable circumstances. On other occasions, too, a battle of this type was forced on him; Marengo (June 1800) is one notable example. Similarly, at Borodino, because the Grande Armée was to be weakened by strategic consumption to permit a full-scale enveloping attack against Kutusov’s exposed left flank (or so Napoleon asserted, though Davout was of a different opinion), and because Prince Poniatowski’s tactical outflanking move round the Russian left failed to make ground, the Emperor was forced to accept another full-scale battle of attrition. Leipzig in 1813 is another case in point.

The Double Battle

Quatre-Bras and Ligny form another good example of a double battle, closely associated in this case with the strategy of the central position. Lastly, the famous battle of Waterloo should in reality be designated a double battle, although, as at Jena-Auerstadt, this was due to force of circumstances rather than to deliberate design. A better title would be “Waterloo-Wavre,” for Grouchy’s failure to pin down Blücher in the secondary action at Wavre away to the east of the main battlefield had a most decisive effect on the outcome of the day.

“It is by turning the enemy, by attacking his flank, that battles are won.”—Napoleon

The Strategical Battle

The true Strategical Battle... was employed on numerous occasions between 1796 and 1813, and it can be said to provide the real “moment of truth” in Napoleonic warfare. Like his favorite strategical maneuver, his ideal battle centered around the concept of an enveloping attack, designed to shake the enemy’s nerve and to induce the weakening of his main battle line at pre-selected, critical point... Envelopment, breakthrough and exploitation formed the main elements of the Napoleonic strategical battle.

Stages of the Strategical Battle

On the report of his cavalry screen that the enemy army was massed in its immediate vicinity, Napoleon would order the nearest major formation (usually a self-contained corps d’armée) to make contact with the enemy and at all costs pin him down in his present location, thus providing a fixed point on which the rest of the French army could concentrate.

Advantages of the Corps d’Armée System

The corps d’armée system, besides permitting this fine degree of maneuverability and adaptation, also permitted a single corps to take on several times its own number of enemy troops for a certain period. For each corps had its own components of infantry, cavalry and guns, and was, in fact, a miniature army.

The nearest supporting corps would be arriving on the scene to reinforce their embattled colleague, and the enemy general would find himself, to his surprise, involved in an escalating battle of attrition against ever-increasing numbers of French troops.

Hidden Forces concealed by Vedettes

All this while, concealed behind a screen of cavalry and unseen by the pre-occupied enemy, the troops of Napoleon’s enveloping force would be hurrying toward a designated spot on the enemy’s flank or rear. ... Napoleon habitually gave command of this crucial operation to his most trusted subordinate, for everything depended on the arrival of these troops at exactly the right place at the right moment if the effect of its intervention was to be decisive.

Timing of the Flank Attack

Now came the critical problem of judging the correct moment for the enveloping force to reveal its disconcerting position on the enemy flank. [Napoleon] had to judge the moment when all enemy troops were indeed committed to the frontal battle.

Then the *attaque debordant* would spring to life. A roar of cannon away on his hitherto secure flank would cause the enemy general to look apprehensively over his shoulder, and before long the spyglasses of his anxious staff would be able to detect a line of dust and smoke crawling ever nearer from the flank or rear. ... Napoleon would of course launch a general frontal attack against all sectors of the enemy line to coincide with the unmasking of his flanking force and thus pin the foe still tighter to the ground he was holding; or he would be compelled to find troops from somewhere to form a new line at right angles to his main position to face the new onslaught and protect his flank. As all reserves were (ideally) already committed to battle, this could be easily and quickly effected only by deliberately weakening those frontal sectors closest to the new threat. This thinning out of the enemy front is what Napoleon termed “the Event.”

The Evenement: Attack Upon the Hinge

The second act of the battle drama, the decisive attack, now began to unfold. Its aim was to launch a surprise attack with fresh troops against the newly weakened “hinge” of the enemy’s hairpin battle line in such strength as to ensure a breakthrough and the rupture of the enemy army into two disconnected parts.

The moment having arrived, the hounds were slipped from the leash. “At his signal the massed batteries of the Guard Reserve dashed to the front at a gallop, unlimbered within 500 yards of the enemy, and proceeded to tear with extreme rapidity a hole in the opposing battle formation with case shot.”

If all went well the enemy line would quickly crumble and then a fresh reserve of cavalry would be launched against the retreating foe to prevent their reorganization off the battlefield.

The design intent of the TLNB System is to allow players to enact the entire sequence as described by Chandler, or a variation thereof, so that a historical progression of battle is possible.

One important feature of *The Library of Napoleonic Battles* (TLNB) that allows us to “zoom-out” is the choice of scenarios offered. You can select the *Day of Battle* (DoB) scenario, which is where most wargames start out; or you can play the *Approach to Battle* (AtB) scenario that usually begins with the troops in their positions about 24 hours earlier. Here you see the armies as they march into contact. What is so interesting about the transition from maneuver to battle? Napoleon combined strategic and tactical moves into one seamless whole, so we want our games to afford players the chance to discover how this actually worked — hence the Approach to Battle scenarios.

Napoleon won on the day of battle because of what he did before the engagement, not because of tactics or superior weaponry, but because of how he carefully arranged in advance for the battle to occur. He employed his forces operationally, and then selected the place for his dispersed army to unite and achieve a decisive local superiority.

The Day of Battle represents the opening of the battle as it transpired historically. The opposing armies are in their historical starting positions with a chess-opening kind of feel. But non-historical alternatives still open up.⁶

The AtB scenario, on the other hand, gives you a much broader picture of what the opposing armies were trying to do. You are not locked-in to the historical deployment—you have the freedom to try to fight the battle your own way. The AtB gives you the freedom to try your own strategies and to ask “what if?” That question “what if?” is

one of the reasons for the great appeal of wargames: *not* to find out what happened in these battles—you can read about that in a book—but to find out what *could* have happened. The AtB allows us to find out what could have happened, and to ask “what if?”

With a DoB scenario you're in a situation where you see the combat develop based more or less on the same strategies that the historical commanders employed. To use a musical analogy, in DoB the orchestra is already seated with the sheet music arranged on their music stands, and the conductor has just mounted the podium. Conversely, in an AtB scenario only part of the orchestra is even on stage, the producer may not even have decided what piece they'll be performing that evening, and the conductor may not yet be in the theatre. In essence, DoB is simply a performance piece (e.g. can you recreate Napoleon's victory at Austerlitz?), while AtB gets to the very heart of the “Operational Art” (e.g. how do you lure a numerically superior enemy into a situation where you don't just win the battle but decisively crush him and force an end to the war?).

In the AtB you are trying to come up with a completely different plan of maneuver which might achieve a better result. When you play a DoB scenario of Austerlitz you see why the Pratzen Heights and Sokolnitz Castle were key features that the combatants fought over so ferociously. But when you play an AtB scenario you have the option of seeing if some other terrain feature elsewhere might have impacted the course of the battle in a different way: what if Napoleon had defended forward, deploying on the Pratzen plateau itself, rather than pulling back to lure the Coalition forces into a trap? With a DoB scenario you have no way of knowing how those alternate strategies might have worked out.

The flip side, of course, is that your “Battle of Austerlitz” in an AtB scenario might not resemble the actual engagement at all. A purist would argue that this AtB Austerlitz teaches the players nothing about the history of the battle, gives them no real insights into how the forces and terrain interacted. And there's some validity to that contention. How can you call it a game about Austerlitz when the battle might well occur nowhere near the actual battlefield?

⁶ The physical size of a game correlates directly with the breadth of its narrative possibilities. For example, *Napoleon at Waterloo* and the *Quatre Bras* folio from *NLB* have fewer units and less elbow room than, say, the *Eylau* DoB scenario from *The Coming Storm*, a scenario that yields non-trivial choices among courses of action even through it starts with most of the deployed forces ready to lock horns.

These two types of scenarios give players different insights into history. One is more about "how" and the other about "why." Which of those approaches you prefer is subjective and depends on personal preference.

TLNB is intended to show Napoleonic warfare without scripting or straight-jacketing rules. The DoB scenarios start with forces in position and the fighting about to begin—this is, of course, the exciting part. But the AtB scenarios allow players to wonder what would happen if they, as the commanders, could make changes to that situation prior to the battle but within the historical context. The players get to make some of the same operational decisions their counterparts did before the armies clash next day, providing an opportunity to simulate and experiment with how the forces arrive and deploy.

Some might think "Gee, no fighting. Looks pretty boring." But there is tension as the two sides decide where to engage and with what force—a kind of deadly dance with both antagonists trying to lead, switching partners and tempo as the emerging *pas-de-deux* dictates. The AtB scenarios and associated mini-campaigns give players greater appreciation for the challenges faced by the commanders than the more straight forward DoB scenarios: akin to comparing the view through a picture window versus peeking at a keyhole.

For example, at Jena, the AtB scenario allows the Prussian player the (somewhat risky) opportunity to attempt to throw Lannes's isolated V Corps back across the Saale, possibly destroying a large part of his corps in the process; or, more prudently, the Prussian player can try to squeeze space near Jena to hamper deployment of French troops on battlefield, gaining time to crush Davout. But in the DoB scenario, which begins a day later, that opportunity had evaporated because the rest of the French army has already concentrated in the vicinity of Jena.

The approach phase of a battle lets players see how battles develop, giving them first-hand experience in shaping the parameters of the engagement. They get to see what prevented Barclay, at Leipzig, from pitching into Napoleon's flank while he was still lining up all the constituent parts of his army just so; to appreciate what determined the length of an army's front line, or why a particular piece of ground

was chosen. Players make those same early decisions about deployment and routes of approach, shaping what the battlefield will look like and how the battle will unfold – perhaps along historical lines, perhaps not.

At the same time, AtB scenarios are not wild "free play" situations—there are limits to how much a player can accomplish in terms of maneuver. Even so, there's still plenty of decision-making to do, for better or worse. You get a much more complete picture than ever before.

AtB scenarios call for a different set of skills than DoB. You have to figure out what your opponent is likely to do, and figure out the best way to counter that while still affording yourself the flexibility to react in case he does something different. Will you be taking the offense or will you play defensively? You will need your own plan of battle. What are the critical avenues for advance? Where are the strongholds? What reinforcements can you expect, and when and from where are they most likely to arrive? What information can you get from your vedettes and light cavalry, and how can you deny that same information to your opponent.

With the fog of war and the uncertainty that the cards may bring, you face the frustrations of trying to command an army and get them into a position to gain advantage once battle is joined.

The AtB is your window of opportunity to gain such a position, for once battle has begun (as is the case in most DoB scenarios), such maneuver is typically not an option. You will need to...

• Use your Vedettes Skillfully

Vedettes simultaneously perform two critical functions: conducting reconnaissance to discover where your opponent is and what he is attempting to do, and covering your own forces to prevent the enemy from gaining the same information about you. How effectively you employ your vedettes will in many ways determine the shape of the upcoming battle. Interspersing the occasional light cavalry brigade into your screen to gain advantage in the vedette skirmishing can be invaluable, but it also means that you may not have that unit available to support the fighting along the main line (costing yourself a combined arms bonus at a key moment).

- **Coordinate the Movements of the Separate Parts of your Army**

The successful commander does more than just rush all his troops into action. He carefully coordinates their movement, using parallel routes of approach to avoid traffic jams while keeping all his forces within mutual supporting distance. He also strives to have friendly forces available to converge at the decisive points on the field from different directions in an effort to keep his opponent off-balance. Executed correctly these measures achieve a synergistic effect and are the absolute foundation of a successful operation.

- **Select the Battlefield**

Choose a position that is not too large in extent for your force. If you are outnumbered by the enemy you will need a defensive position that cannot be easily outflanked, with plenty of room to

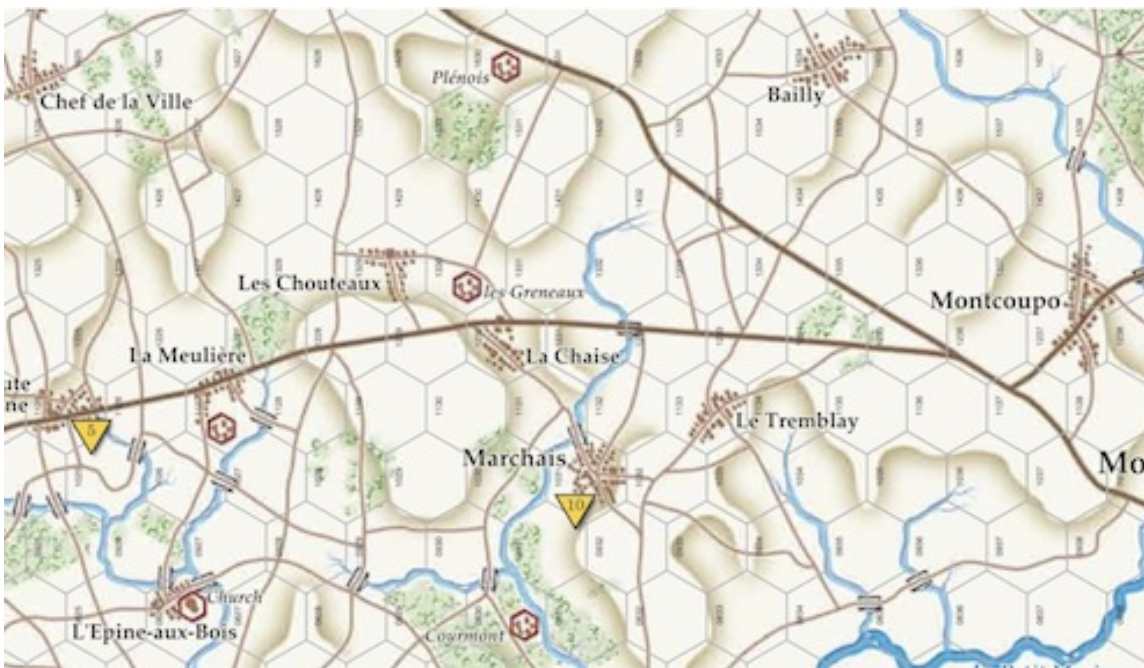
the rear, clear of heavy woods, rivers or other obstacles. There should be defensible features such as ridgelines, towns, chateaux, etc. The best position is of no use if the enemy is close by.

- **Deploy on the Battlefield**

Decide whether you will maintain advance strong points in front of your main line. Do you want to deploy cavalry on your flanks to protect yourself and threaten the enemy's flanks, maintain it in readiness to react to enemy moves, or use it in such a way to create the false impression of your intentions? Will you keep a central reserve, and if so where will you deploy it and who will command it? Ensure you position your forces so as to keep everyone both in supply and in command.

Contributors to this article included Lance McMillan, Gene Rodek, Chris Moeller, Aaron Tobul, Dave Demko, Forrest Atterberry, Derek Lang and Jason Roach.

A BATTLEFIELD OF YOUR OWN CHOOSING (continued from page 3)



Fourth: I blithely sent VI Corps south of the river to threaten Chuck's supply and harass the reinforcements collecting there. Not only are those forces now isolated and struggling simply to escape, I'm left facing Napoleon's army with only two of my four Corps.

So I'm learning history in a fairly thorough and painful way. I've also learned greater respect

for Osten-Sacken... far more than I would have learned simply by looking at his performance in the battle and saying: "Sacken is a 1 and Blucher's a 2. Sacken sucks!" There is much to admire in the approach to battle and mini-campaigns in these games... so much great history just waiting to come alive.

The Thin Red Line

There are those who still believe that image of a Napoleonic battle as two long lines of men blasting away at each other all day. We'll call this the myth of the "thin red line." This is a myth forced on us from the movies and, as it appeals so splendidly to the imagination, wargame designers have adopted it.

There is plenty of documentation of Napoleon's view that battle losses would be equal until the point that one side retreated. Generally that side would have to leave behind their wounded, guns and baggage. That is the reason for Ney's remark on the battle of Eylau, "Quel massacre! Et sans résultat;" the Russians were able to depart the battlefield with their army intact. Losses were almost exactly even: 24,000 Russians versus 25,257 French.

By now I have designed 25 battles: Quatre-Bras, Ligny, Wavre and Waterloo; Grossbeeren, Kulm, Katzbach and Dennewitz; Jena, Auerstadt, Pultusk, Golymin, Eylau and Friedland; Abensberg, Eckmühl, Aspern-Essling, and Wagram; Leipzig and Hanau; Brienne, La Rothière, Champaubert, Montmirail, and Vauchamps; I have documented these designs with 800 pages of the Special Studies series; and I cannot find any substantiation of this myth. What I find instead are battles focused on particular strong points, or choke points, passes, and redoubts.

David Chandler writes of Ligny: "The struggle for control of the line of the Ligny brook and the small villages overlooking it swept to and fro with the utmost ferocity. Captain Charles François ... left a graphic description of part of the titanic fight for Ligny itself..."

'When within 200 yards of the hedges which concealed thousands of Prussian sharpshooters, the regiment took up battle order while still on the march. The charge was sounded and the soldiers went through the hedges. The 1st Brigade's left half-battalion, to which I belonged, went down a hollow track blocked by felled trees, vehicles, harrows and ploughs, and we got past these only after considerable difficulty and

under fire from the Prussians hidden behind the hedges, which were extremely thick. Eventually we overcame these obstacles and, firing as we went, entered the village. When we reached the church our advance was halted by a stream, and the enemy, in houses, behind walls and on rooftops, inflicted considerable casualties, as much by musketry as by grapeshot and cannonballs, which took us from front and flank.'

Four times the battalion charged into Ligny only to be driven back on each occasion. But on the fifth attempt, led in person by General Rome, the Prussians were at last compelled to relinquish their forward positions. - The Campaigns of Napoleon, pp. 1041-42

In several visits in person I was always struck by the tendency of the battle to swirl around the narrow defile of the bridge over the Ligny brook, which was eventually piled six feet high with corpses. I could almost say categorically that there is one (or more) such focal point on nearly every Napoleonic battlefield:

Strong points, or choke points, passes, and redoubts on Napoleonic Battlefields.

Napoleonic battles were marked by intense struggles over a dominant piece of terrain that neither side was willing to concede, with one side and the other coming back again and again.

Here are some examples:

Hougoumont and La Haye at Waterloo
The Granary at Essling
The church at Aspern
The redoubts and flèches at Borodino
The bridge at Wavre
The bridge at Arcola
The bridge at Eckmühl
Vierzehnheiligen at Jena
Hassenhausen at Auerstadt

The following passage from OSG's Jena Special Study, Nr. 5, makes it clear how the vaunted Fredrickian volley fire had been rendered obsolete by the increased dominance of artillery. It also illustrates what can happen to retreating troops...

"French artillery moved forward to tear gaps in the Grawert's line with canister. Judging the carnage sufficient, Napoleon gave the general advance order. Except for the Guard, the ultimate reserve, the whole line moved forward at once. "The Prussians and Saxons could not withstand the pressure, and began to give ground, whereupon Prince Hohenlohe ordered a general withdrawal to the ground between Gross and Klein Romstedt. The withdrawal began in good order, but then dissolved into chaos as Napoleon unleashed Murat's massed squadrons." ¹

"When volley firing finally began, it had "but little effect on the French," skirmishing in gardens and potato fields or behind village walls." ² What is very clear is that the image of a long line of troops engaged in regulated volley fire was outmoded by 1806 and it was proven so at Jena as the passage illustrates.

The Prussians tried to fight that way at Vierzehnheiligen and they were ultimately defeated. But it wasn't merely a defeat in one battle, it was the death of Frederick's way of making war. And this was recognized by Clausewitz, Scharnhorst and the other Prussian theorists at the time.

On one side, we have Clausewitz. On the other side we have Napoleon, who stated "In war the moral is to the physical is as three to one." But Clausewitz was mistaken in many of his assumptions. Foremost among these, in my opinion, was his reduction of warfare into a contest of killing, as though victory were always determined by the numbers of dead bodies on the battlefield. Among the many counter-examples are Napoleon's 1812 campaign, in which he won all the battles he fought, and the American experience in Vietnam with the daily body count. By the numbers the U.S. and South Vietnam won that war by a ratio of 4 to 1.

To the contrary, I have always followed Napoleon's explanation of Napoleonic battle as a contest of morale; some trifling "evenement" takes place that breaks the morale of one side. "There is a moment in engagements when the least maneuver is decisive and gives the victory;

it is the one drop of water which makes the vessel run over." This is from the Correspondances (cited by Chandler, p. 189) and is very far from Clausewitz.

As St. Cyr expressed it: "[Napoleon's] principle was to attack the enemy with the greatest force possible ; that the nearest corps being once engaged, he left them to act, without troubling himself much about their good or bad chances ; that he only took great care not to yield too easily to demands for succour from their chiefs. He cited as an example Lützen, where, he said, Ney had demanded immediate reinforcements, though he had still two divisions not engaged ; he assured me that, in the same affair, another marshal had also demanded them before having any enemy in front of him. He added that it was only towards the end of the day, when he perceived that the enemy was worn out, and had employed the greater part of his resources, that he united what he had been able to keep in reserve, in order to be able to launch on the field of battle a strong mass of infantry, cavalry, and artillery; that, the enemy not having foreseen this, he made what he called an "evenement," and by this means he had almost always obtained a victory."

"This very remarkable passage, if we may assume that it was not an unconscious afterthought of St Cyr, is a very clear profession of the Emperor's tactical faith. ³

Editorial (cont'd from page 2)

Upcoming game releases and projects currently in development: what direction do we intend to take the company in the future? The reader should see where we are heading after reading all the articles in this issue. Now that we have a solid rules book for *TLNB* we look forward to advancing the game production schedule to 8 months instead of 12. The immediate goal is to get the Russia game in print, to release the 1815 Quad in time for the 200th anniversary in June, and to publish the remaining volumes, with a pause to give some attention to the Campaigns.

—Kevin Zucker

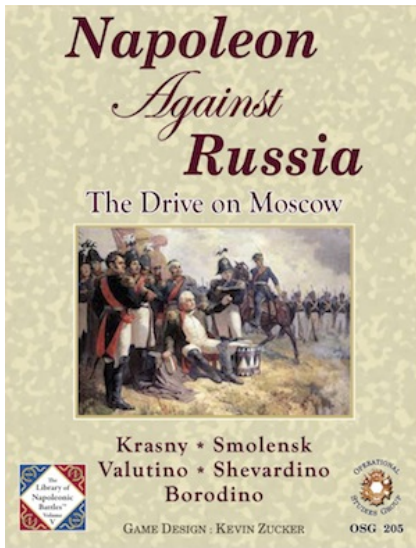
¹ Chandler, *Jena* p. 63

² F.L. Petre, *Napoleon's Last Campaign in Germany*, p. 137

³ F.L. Petre, p. 141.

Napoleon Against Russia

August 7 – September 7, 1812



Napoleon Against Russia, 1812 is the next new game now on P350 from OSG.

The game includes the following battles:

- Krasny (August 13-14)
- Smolensk (August 16-17)
- Valutino (August 18)
- Shevardino (September 5)
- Borodino (September 6-7)

Components:

- Four full size 22" x 34" maps
- Two counter sheets (560 units)
- Two rules folders
- 100 cards
- Numerous player aid cards.

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THE LIBRARY OF NAPOLEONIC BATTLES

is a two-player simulation of 70 battles at the Grand Tactical level. The series is planned to cover all the major battles of the Napoleonic Wars, from Napoleon's first army command in Italy, 1796, to his final defeat at Waterloo 19 years later.

The French Player must exploit the strengths of the constantly evolving French army against a host of Coalition Forces, using a tried and tested game system based on the classic *Napoleon's Last Battles*. On to that solid base the system adds Hidden Forces, Vedettes, Road March, Baggage Trains, March Orders, Repulse, Pontoons and Alternate Reinforcements. You must use your vedettes to break through the enemy outpost line, and obtain scouting reports on enemy forces. You will need to maintain your supply line, as each Corps has its own baggage train that was of symbolic value as well as serving a practical need. You will need to make skillful use of your officers and commanders to maximize your striking power.

The optional card rules allow for uncertainty as to both sides exact Order of Battle, and allows forces that were actually within range to participate unexpectedly. This uncertainty allows for a more real-world situation, since the actual commanders never knew what forces they were facing, sometimes even after the battle was over.

THE LIBRARY OF NAPOLEONIC BATTLES

is to include 18 volumes, several of which have been published already. The next three titles of this series are now available for pre-order on Napoleongames.com. Each volume of the Library includes between three and five complete battle games, each with one long scenario – the "Approach to Battle," which can be played in 4-5 hours – and one short "Day of Battle" scenario, which can be played in 2-3 hours.

For players desiring the complete experience, each volume includes a Campaign Game that encompasses all the battles played in sequential order. Each package concentrates on a single year of campaigning, and the results of one battle will influence the set-up for the next game in the campaign. Guide your army from its first contact with the enemy until the final showdown!

THE LIBRARY OF NAPOLEONIC BATTLES

uses one and the same mature set of rules that will not be redesigned along the way. Hence, you will be able to learn the rules once and then just focus on the unique situation presented by each battle.