

with great losses. See, on that matter, the report by Capitaine Chapuy. (Journal des Sciences Militaires, July 1863)."

CONCLUSIONS:

I don't have any, I am afraid. My essay is far to be extensive and exhaustive. It is, at best, no more than a status report. It is obvious than much more research has to be done to bring the facts out by using as much as possible PRIMARY SOURCES ("Waterloo Letters" etc.).

The primary eye-witness d'Erlon has failed (to the best of my knowledge) to produce any report or document covering his attack and the formations used.

At best, at the present time, I can only add the following notes:

I have only a partial excerpt from de Bas' book, and do not know de Bas' sources, if he claims the other divisions were formed in the same manner. That point must be investigated before we can extend de Bas' concept to the two other divisions of d'Erlon's Corps, i.e. that of Marcognet and Donzelot.

If Quiot's (Allix) formation as per de Bas also applies to Donzelot and Marcognet we would have a logical explanation on how the different echelons (in a Division) could have broken up in the manner presented by Wood's diagram.

The problem of deployment is really a complex one and depends on the formations at that time and on the space available. (see note 6)

The composition of each Divisions part of d'Erlon's Corps is given in note 3.

Note 1: (note provided by John Koontz) According to Six's "Dictionnaire Biographique des Generaux et Amiraux Francais de la Revolution et de l'Empire", Paris, 1934, Allix was absent at Waterloo performing some functions in the 16e Division Militaire, so the command of the Division was assumed by the senior brigadier.

Note 2: Digby Green in EEL 73 (pp 22) is of the opinion that some historians repeat mistakes, etc. (CERTAINLY NOT WITH THE INTENTION OF GIVING THE WRONG INFORMATION). We have already developed that point in many past issues of EEL. So, we agree (and have agreed many times in the past) that some falsehoods are perpetuated....Most English Language historians perpetuate a wrong order of attack for d'Erlon's divisions. See for instance the map from "Waterloo" reproduced above. (by the way the text gives the right Divisions order, i.e. Allix, Donzelot, Marcognet and Durutte)

How Donzelot could have attacked la Haye-Sainte if Bachelu was on his left? The right order is from left to right: (1) Allix (Quiot), (2) Donzelot, (3) Marcognet, (4) Durutte.

Note 3 D'Erlon's Division order of battle in from an extensive manuscript (already used in EEL 73, pp 50-51, for the Guard) prepared by John Koontz from several reliable secondary French sources. It is, to-date, in my opinion, one of the most (if not the most reliable) English language source for the French army at Waterloo.

D'Erlon's Corps for the Waterloo Campaign included beside 4 infantry Divisions, a cavalry Division (11squadrons), a Corps of artillery

(1096 men with 46 guns: 6 12-lbs, 28 6-lbs, 2 6" howitzers and 10 5.5" howitzers) and an Engineer Corps of 351.

Only the infantry will be covered :

1st Division: Lt. Gen. Allix replaced by Marechal de Camp baron Quiot
Officers NCO's & Men Total

1st Brigade: M.d.C baron Quiot

(1) 54th Line:	1st battalion	19	461	480
	2nd "	22	460	482
	Total	41	921	962

(2) 55th Line:	1st battalion	24	556	580
	2nd "	21	547	568
	Total	45	1103	1148

2nd Brigade: M.d.C baron Bourgeois

(1) 28th Line:	1st battalion	21	428	449
	2nd "	21	428	449
	Total	42	856	898

(2) 105th Line:	1st battalion	20	468	488
	2nd "	22	473	495
	Total	42	941	983

2nd Division: Lt.Gen. baron Donzelot

1st Brigade: M.d.C. Schmitz

(1) 13th Line:	1st battalion	23	620	643
	2nd "	20	600	620
	3rd "	18	594	612
	Total	61	1814	1875

(2) 17th Line:	1st battalion	25	527	552
	2nd "	17	428	445
	?		60	60
	Total	42	1015	1057

NOTE (From John Koontz). The extra 60 men are necessary to bring Couderc de St. Chamant's regimental total into accord with that of De Bas. That St. Chamant is in error is shown by the fact that his infantry total agrees with that of De Bas and exceeds his own figures, when they are totalled, by 60.

2nd Brigade: M.d.C. baron Aulard

(1) 19th Line:	1st battalion	25	504	529
	2nd "	18	485	503
	Total	43	989	1032

(2) 51st Line:	1st battalion	24	586	610
	2nd "	18	540	558
	Total	42	1126	1168

3rd Division: Lt.gen. Marcognet

1st Brigade: M.d.C. Nogues

(1) 21st Line:	1st battalion	25	508	533
	2nd "	17	488	505
	Total	42	996	1038

(2) 46th Line:	1st battalion	26	435	461
	2nd "	17	410	427
	Total	43	845	888

2nd Brigade: M.d.C. Grenier			
(1) 25th Line: 1st battalion	23	485	508
2nd "	17	449	466
Total	40	934	974
(2) 45th Line: 1st battalion			
2nd "	23	491	514
Total	43	960	1003

4th Division: Lt. Gen. Durutte

1st Brigade: M.d.C. chevalier Pegot			
(1) 8th Line: 1st battalion	23	489	512
2nd "	17	454	471
Total	40	943	983
(2) 29th Line: 1st battalion			
2nd "	23	566	589
Total	40	1106	1146
2nd Brigade: M.d.C Brue			
(1) 85th Line: 1st battalion	21	300	321
2nd "	19	291	310
Total	40	591	631
(2) 95th Line: 1st battalion			
2nd "	23	545	568
Total	40	1060	1100

So, excluding the artillery of each divisions, we have the following for the infantry:

1st Division: 8 battalions	170	3821	3991
2nd Division: 9 battalions	188	4944	5072
3rd Division: 8 battalions	168	3735	3903
4th Division: 8 battalions	160	3700	3860
Total infantry: 33 battalions	686	16200	16886

NOTE 4: Waterloo, the new book given in reference, has been edited by Lord Chalfont in which the three sides of the battle are given by three different authors:

- (1) Anglo-Dutch side: William Seymour.
- (2) French side: Jacques Champagne.
- (3) Prussian side: Colonel E. Kaulbach.

NOTE 5: According to Margerit, Quiot's (or Ney?) placed one battalion of Quiot's brigade in reserve and attacked la Haye-Sainte with the 3 other battalions. When the attack of la Haye-Sainte stopped after the partial rout of d'Erlon's Corps, Quiot's reformed his brigade on that reserve battalion and was not trown in disorder.

Durutte also placed in reserve an important part of his division: 2 battalions (of the 85th of the Line) on a total of 8 battalions on which he reformed his Division which was under the attack of Vandeleur's cavalry (with the help of the timely charge of Colonel Bro's lancers). According to Margerit (p.369), Durutte's losses were in the order of 500 to 600 men (the effective of a battalion). It was, still according to Margerit, the less, and by far, affected, since the

losses for the entire 1st Corps were of at least 5000 including 2000 to 3000. (This figures are certainly subject to discussion and are given as an indication of the losses substained by d'Erton's Corps.)

I would like to point out here that, in this series, we have found 3 instances during the battle of Waterloo in which at least one battalion was placed in reserve most likely to provide a rallying point for the attackers in case they were repulsed. (one of these is during the attack of the Guard, when the 2nd battalion of the 3rd Grenadiers was held in reserve (see EEL 73, pp. 29 & 30 etc.)

It is, apparently, a standard practice to hold a reserve during an attack to provide a basis for rallying an eventual repulse. A principle that is outlined by George Jeffrey in our Wargame section of this issue of EEL.

Why d'Erton (or Marcognet and/or Donzelot and/or Bourgeois) did not provided such a reserve is an interesting point? We can only wonder if such a reserve would have been an effective tool (and how much effective tool ?) during Marcognet's, Donzelot's and Bourgeois' rout?

Note 6. A possible way to deploy 'd'Erton's ' type massive columns is provided by the deployment of Allix (Quiot's) Division. Houssaye (already quoted above) says that: "...The front of Allix Division (Quiot's brigade moved by a slight move to the left, toward la Haye-Sainte orchard...Bourgeois brigade, being alone to form the left echelon continued its movement forward..."

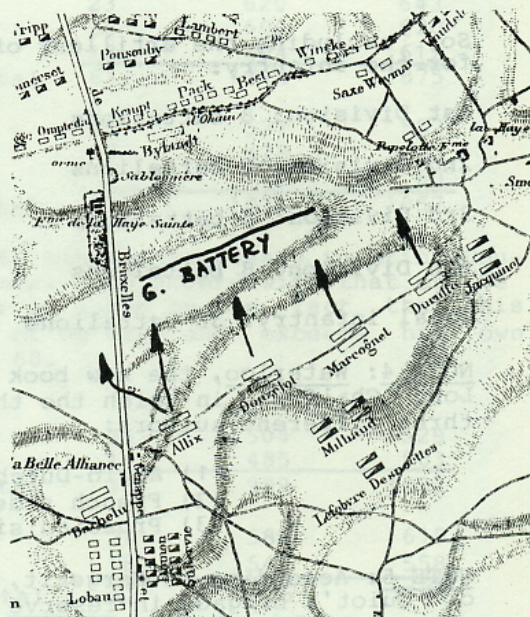
It should be noted before we go any further that the 4 Divisions of d'Erton's Corps did not, initially, occupied the space shown on the map of page 29. According to Houssaye, each Division or echelon was separated from the next echelon by a space of some 400 yards. Each echelon, if one battalion wide, considering the average strength of 500 men as about right (see note 3) we have a frontage of about 150 yards per echelon.

On the adjacent map, I have corrected the space that should have been occupied by each echelon at the beginning of the attack.

The next fact to consider is the movement forward of the 4 echelons. At least 3 of them (Bourgeois, Donzelot and Marcognet) had to go through the Grand Battery which ceased to fire to allow them to go through.

At that point some kind of change of formation (unknown to me) had to take place. Was the classical "passage of lines" of the Regiment of 1791 (passage des lignes) so often critized ?

In this case each battalion, in order to go through the grand battery and its spaced guns would have had to break the well ordered initial columns by:



- (1) Halting, then in each battalion:
- (2) Each company formed in column of half-company facing the battery.
- (3) Each half-company column marched through the spaced guns of the battery.
- (4) Then, the line reformed on the otherside of the battery.
- (5) The next battalion would then repeat the procedure and so on until the 4 battalions of Bourgeois' brigade, the 9 battalions of Donzelot's Division (2 brigades), the 8 battalions of Marcognet (also 2 brigades).

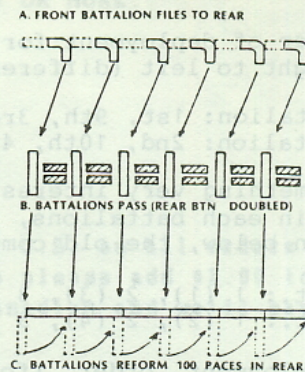
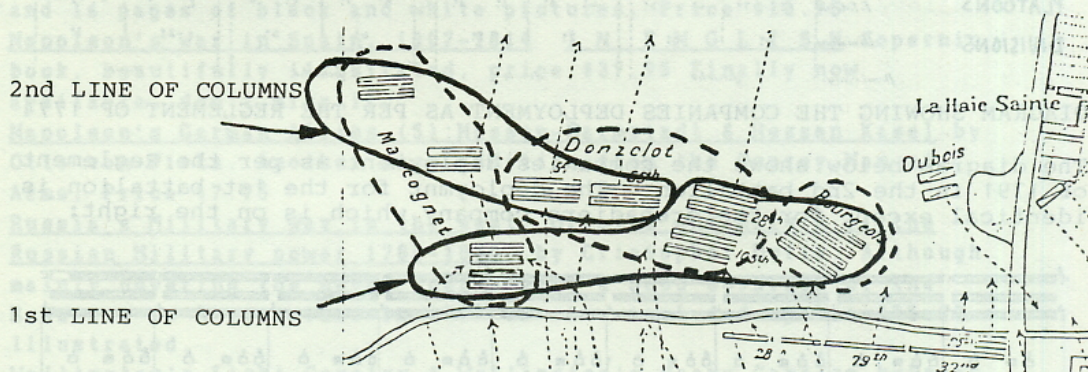


FIG 133 — PASSAGE OF LINES

The procedure would have, of course, be simultaneous for each of the 3 echelons (Bourgeois, Donzelot and Marcognet) as shown in the above diagram (excerpt from George Jeffrey "Tactics and Grand Tactics of the Napoleonic Wars", p.137). However, the important point here is the delaying action of such a movement. Each first brigade (under fire?) may have started to resume its forward move without waiting for the second brigade (of each Division) to have "passed the line".

We should take a new look at Woods map. We see a first line (from right to left) of 4 battalions in column (Bourgeois' brigade), then a second column of 5 battalions (certainly Donzelot's 1st brigade under M.d.C Smith, which included 5 battalions, see note 3), finally a third column of 4 battalions (certainly Marcognet's 1st brigade). I have outlined that first line. Then a second line (which I also show on the map) which includes 4 columns of 2 battalions each.



Is the second line made of the 2nd brigades of Marcognet's and Donzelot's Divisions each of them with their 2 regiments deployed, one battalion behind the other? How such a disorder (but is it a disorder?) could have taken place? That is easy to answer:

- (1) As suggested above the 1st brigade of each Division would have kept its initial formation then started moving without waiting for the 2nd brigade 'busy' passing the lines.
- (2) Each regiment of each 2nd brigade would have started to move without waiting for the 2nd regiment.
- (3) Each regiment would have slightly moved to the left, hence the resulting order we find on Woods' map...

That does not mean it is what took place...And that does not explain how Donzelot expected to deploy?

The order of deployment for the fusilier companies of both battalions from right to left (different from the two above sources) is given:

1st battalion: 1st, 9th, 3rd, 11th, 5th, 13th, 7th, 15th.
2nd battalion: 2nd, 10th, 4th, 12th, 6th, 14th, 8th, 16th.

Now something very interesting takes place when the fusiliers companies, in each battalions, are renumbered, in sequence, from 1 to 8, as shown below, the old company number is in parenthesis:

1st batt.: 1 (1), 2 (3), 3 (5), 4 (7), 5 (9), 6 (11), 7 (13), 8 (15)
2nd batt.: 1 (2), 2 (4), 3 (6), 4 (8), 5 (10), 6 (12), 7 (14), 8 (16)

The deployment order (following the above deployment order but replacing it with the new numbers from 1 to 8 becomes from right to left:

1, 5, 2, 6, 3, 7, 4, 8 (for both battalions).

That could be considered as an exercise in futility since it's not in the drill book. I would agree if the new deployment was not that of the Regiment of 1774 which also had an 8 fusiliers battalion:

I have reproduced below the deployment order of the Regiment (see note 2) which was from right to left:

1st batt.: grenadiers, 1st, 5th, 2nd, colonel, 3rd, 7th, 4th, 8th
2nd batt.: 1st, 5th, 2nd, lt.colonel, 3rd, 7th, 4th, 8th, grenadiers.

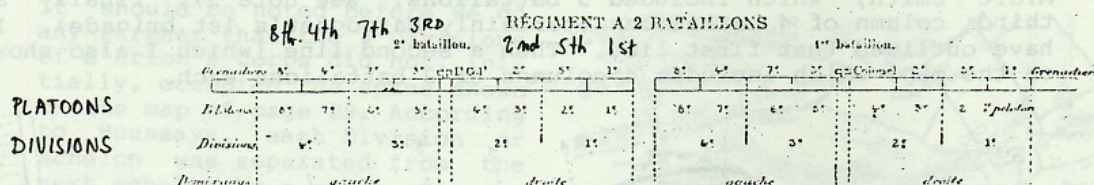


DIAGRAM SHOWING THE COMPANIES DEPLOYMENT AS PER THE REGLEMENT OF 1774

The diagram below shows the companies deployment as per the Reglement of 1791 in the 2nd battalion. The deployment for the 1st battalion is identical except for the grenadiers company which is on the right:

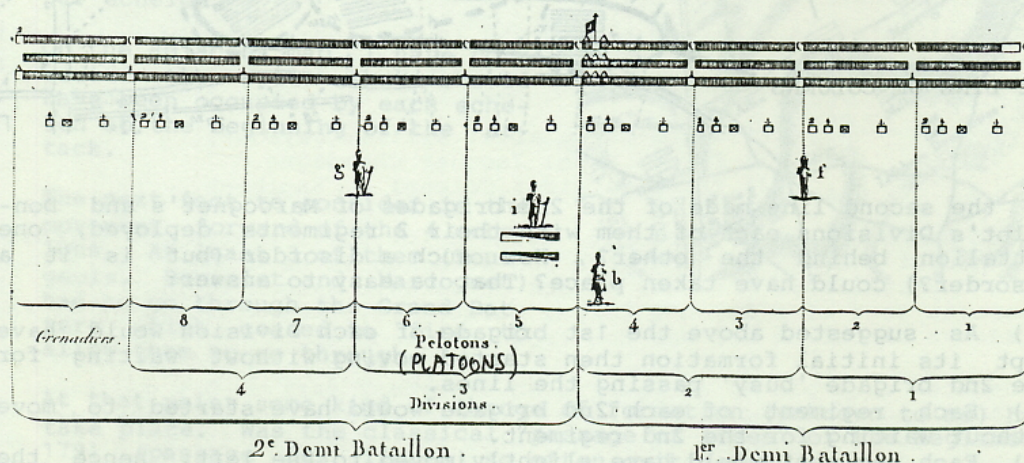


DIAGRAM SHOWING THE COMPANIES DEPLOYMENT AS PER THE REGLEMENT OF 1791
Note that the diagram does not show any fusiliers company numbers but shows: platoons, divisions, 1/2 battalion. That is identical to the Regiment of 1774 shown above.

2.0 ON THE NUMBERING OF COMPANIES IN FRENCH INFANTRY BATTALIONS:

by George Jeffrey

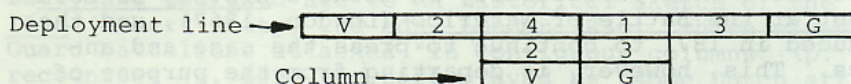
I wonder if the numbering in line of the companies of the French infantry battalions given in EEL 73, page is correct? My impression has always been that they numbered consecutively from right to left.

3.0 ANSWER TO ABOVE COMMENTS by Jean A. Lochet

The data presented in EEL 73, page 45, came from Belhomme "Histoire de l'Infanterie en France, Volume IV, p.394, and the English translation is given below: [Belhomme does give his source. It appears to be the decree (or an extended version) of the decree of 18 february 1808.]

"...When the 6 companies were present, they deployed from right to left in the following order: grenadiers, 3rd, 1st, 4th, 2nd, voltigeurs and the battalion maneuvered always by divisions. When the elite companies were detached, the companies deployed in the following order: 1st, 3rd, 4th, 2nd, the battalion maneuvered by platoons."

In my article (EEL 73, p.45), I have made one mistake in numbering the companies in the column of attack. The correct order should be:



I had no problems accepting the above from Belhomme since it has been a long practice in the French infantry, prior to the Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, to deploy the infantry battalions in a NON SEQUENTIAL order. However, after the above comments from George, I decided to simply reinvestigate the question. I knew that one of George sources was Macdonald's English translation of the Reglement of 1791. Quimby (see note 1) in his book used exclusively Macdonald's translation of the Reglement of 1791. Page 308, Quimby comments :

"The Ordinance retained the organization of French infantry regiments given by Choiseul's ordinance in 1762. There were two battalions to each regiment. Each battalion was composed of eight companies of infantry (fusiliers) and one company of grenadiers. The companies were identical with the platoons which were numbered in order from right to left...etc."

The amazing part is that Belhomme says the same thing:

"The companies deployed from right to left in the order of their number; each of them formed a platoon, which had the same number that the company..."

However, it's not what the partial copy of the Reglement of 1 August 1791 (courtesy of John Koontz) published in 1811 says. The Reglement is much too long to be reproduced here. We know the great lines of the Reglement. We are more interested the regimental and battalion organizations. Both are given. The strange thing is that the numbering of the 16 fusiliers companies is done for the complete regiment (and not for each battalion) from 1 to 16. However 8 fusiliers companies are allocated to each battalion, and the two battalions are composed of the following fusiliers companies:

1st battalion: 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th, 11th, 13th, 15th companies
2nd " : 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, 10th, 12th, 14th, 16th companies.

THE "WATERLOO LETTERS" AND THE IMPERIAL GUARD by
Philip J. Haythornthwaite

As a brief foot-note to the most interesting series of articles which have appeared in EEL on the attack of the Imperial Guard at Waterloo, perhaps a few related comments may be of interest to readers. As Siborne's Waterloo Letters receive repeated mention in the quotations from Houssaye, and as the book is reasonably scarce (published London, 1891) it may be of use to not a few comments from these letters, all having been elicited by Siborne in answer to questions including "what was the formation of the Imperial Guard at about 7p.m.?" As might be expected the Letters present different versions of what occurred, several correspondents stating that they simply didn't know how the Guard was arrayed, or even whether it was the Imperial Guard which assaulted their part of the line; some thought the smoke so dense that it was unlikely anyone knew the true facts with certainty! (see extract 25 below).

The whole subject was somewhat contentious during the 19th century, largely concerning whether or not the 52nd Light Infantry had been deprived of its rightful dues as the corps responsible for the overthrow of the Guard; in truth they had a case for believing themselves neglected, but not so great as some believed. The battle was re-fought in print by Col. Gawler and Rev. Leeke (both officers of the 52nd at Waterloo), most particularly in Leeke's History of Lord Seaton's Regiment at the Battle of Waterloo (London, 1867), and the Supplement produced in 1871 to continue to press the case and answer the critics. This, however, is departing from the purpose of this article, which simply is to provide readers with some idea of what the Waterloo Letters say about the affair.

Interestingly, Houssaye quotes three of the Letters in support of the theory that Ditmer's brigade played a vital part in the repulse of one part of the Guard, as noted in EEL No. 69. Colonel Taylor's evidence quoted by Houssaye (Letters, p. 172) does not, in fact, identify the nationality of the "two or three Battalions" which "advanced at double quick, their drums rolling, and drove back the Enemy" or indeed state precisely when this occurred (the annotation by Sir Hussey Vivian of Taylor's account suggests a little confusion), but the troops involved may well have been Ditmer's (35th Jagers, 4th, 6th, 17th and 19th Militia); but the other accounts quoted by Houssaye hardly support the "Ditmer" theory: Macready (p. 330) mentions only a corps of Brunswickers which he doubted ever came into contact at all, having been wavering at one stage; and Anderson (p. 338) notes only the presence of a "Foreign Corps" but is unable to say what happened to them as he was rendered insensible at the moment the Guard gained the crest of the position. Despite Houssaye's comment regarding the bias of British historians, there remains little British evidence that Ditmer's brigade did execute so vital a manoeuvre (which is not to say that it did not; simply that not British witness, save possible Taylor, remembered it).

Some British accounts do, as Houssaye says, "make believe that the English army won the battle all by itself" (e.g. Col. George Hall, a lieutenant in the 52nd at Waterloo, who was "certain that we had won the victory before the Prussians fired a shot": see Leeke's Supplement p. 7); but to suggest that all British accounts are similarly biased or deliberately falsified is not true. A more accurate version of informed British opinion is probably that provided by Sir Hussey Vivian: "we were greatly indebted to the Prussians, and it was their coming on the right and rear or Napoleon that gave us the Victory of Waterloo. We might have held our ground, but we could never have advanced but for the Prussian movement...those are most unfair to the Prussians who refuse them their full share of credit..."

(Letters pp. 161-62).

Houssaye implies that the officer he terms "capitaine Mac-Ready" (actually it was Edward Nevil Macready, an Ensign in the 30th) was revealing a deliberately-concealed secret regarding the breaking of the 30th and 73rd, but in fact Houssaye's translation "Je vous prie de tenir cela secret" is a mis-translation tending to over-dramatise. What Macready actually wrote was, "you must consider what follows to a certain extent as private, for I should loth to offend any of my old friends by causing a public allusion to an awkward circumstance, of which I really know nothing but its alarming consequences", i.e. as to who gave the order to move at the wrong time. As recounted in no. 23 below, the "breaking" was quickly remedied (though the consequences could have been grave), and like the temporary withdrawal of Maitland's brigade, it appears the result of confusion rather than adversely-affected morale, and initially the result of artillery fire.

The "Colonel Coburn" mentioned in the Houssaye extract on p.4 of EEL no. 70 was, of course, Sir John Colborne, later Lord Seaton).

With those few caveats regarding the literal acceptance of all Houssaye's footnotes, a precis of the information afforded by the Letters follows, which if nothing else demonstrate how confused the situation was! (In Cathcart's extract, no. 1, the references to Batty and Gourgaud are to An Historical Sketch of the Campaign of 1815 (Robert Batty, 2nd edn. London 1820), which claims the twelve Guard battalions attacked "in contiguous columns" (p. 107) and which recognises (p. 109) the part played by "some Dutch artillery", presumably van der Smissen's battery; and General Gourgaud's Campaign of 1815 (the English edition to which Cathcart refers being published in London in 1818), which claims that "four battalions of the middle guard...repulsed all before them, and stood undaunted under the fire of a considerable portion of the enemy's line" (p. 107), hardly an unbiased account of what actually happened!)

(1) Lieut. Hon. George Cathcart, A.D.C. (Letters, pp. 34-35); opinion rather than eye-witness fact, quoting Batty and Gourgaud: thought Guard advanced in two columns of twelve battalions. "It is... the interest of the defeated party to make their numbers appear to have been as small and inadequate as possible...the story of eight being called off and kept in reserve and only four engaged is "beau a dire" and excusable enough for a beaten party - and strictly speaking in such considerable Columns, not more than four Battalions can well come into contact, although when such a flank movement as that of General Adam's Brigade is able to take effect, the whole concern, reserve and all, must be involved in one general rout and confusion".

(2) Lord Edward Somerset, commanding Household Brigade: attack came in "heavy Columns of infantry, with crowds of Tirailleurs in their front, and supported by Columns of Cavalry" (p. 40)

(3) Major P.A. Latour, 23rd Light Dragoons: "as well as I could judge from the immense smoke and confusion of that moment, that a part of the Imperial Guards were overthrown and driven back by the 52nd Light Infantry" (p. 100)

(4) Lt. Col. J.W. Sleight, 11th Light Dragoons: Vandeleur's brigade moved up to "cover...some Belgian Brigades who were in the rear of (I think the Guards), and which timely support restored order to these troops, who were from the press made at that period upon this part of the position in some confusion and unsteady" (p. 108).

(5) Brevet-Major M. Childers, 11th Light Dragoons: confirms the above, noting that the 11th "assisted in restoring order in a

Belgian Square of Infantry which had commenced crumbling to pieces. I perfectly recollect the circumstance..." (p. 110).

(6) Capt. W. Tomkinson, 16th Light Dragoons: notes the Belgians "commenced firing their muskets in the air, meaning to move off in confusion"; says they rallied when he, Childers and Wellington rode up to urge them to be steady; (p. 118).

(7) Lieut. J. Luard, 16th Light Dragoons: was below the crest of the hill and could not see the action, but from the approaching noise believed that the French were carrying the crest and steeled himself for a charge to restore the position. "A Corps of Foreign Infantry (I believe Dutch)" was in front of the 16th, and "appeared to think so also, but certainly had not resolved to recover the day, for they began to give way rapidly. We closed our squadron intervals, and would not let them pass through, and by the persuasion... they again formed to the front..." (p. 121).

NOTE: the last four accounts must refer to that brigade of Chasse's which was shaken badly, for (as there is not reason to doubt that Ditmer's brigade did make a marked contribution to the repulse of part of the Guard) Ditmer's can hardly have rallied so completely, so quickly (?).

(8) Lieut. G. Pringle, R.A: recollected the advance of the Guard "in heavy close column"; main impression was of firing into the Guard, with "the column waving, at each successive discharge, like standing corn blown by the wind" (pp. 227-28).

(9) Lieut. William Sharpin, R.A.: saw "the French bonnets just above the high corn, and within forty or fifty yards...I believe they were in close Columns of Grand Divisions, and upon reaching the crest of our position they attempted to deploy into line, but the destructive fire of our Guns loaded with canister shot, and well-directed volleys from the Infantry, prevented their regular formation. They remained under this fire about ten minutes, advancing a little, but finding it impossible to force our position they gave way, and went to the right about and in a moment our Infantry and the French were so mixed together that an end was put to our firing for the day" (pp. 228-29).

(10) Capt. S. Rudyard, R.A.: says Guard advanced "in masses of Infantry" (p. 233); one of the few not use the term "column".

(11) Lieut. G.S. Maule, R.A: saw the Guard "coming up in front, and nearly to our Guards, and their being taken in flank by Adam's Brigade and my Guns" (Roger's battery) (p. 239).

(12) Lieut. J. Wilson, R.A.: Guard came in "heavy masses of close columns" (p. 241).

(13) Major-General Sir P. Maitland, commanding 1st Infantry brigade: French advanced in "two strong Columns of Infantry; a third Corps, consisting of both Cavalry and Infantry, being in reserve". Described how column of Grenadiers moved towards his brigade while the Chasseurs inclined to their left. Recounts the standard version: French held "in a position so comparatively helpless" and receive the fire of Maitland's brigade "with terrible effect", then retreats "with the utmost rapidity, leaving only a heap of dead and dying"; Maitland's brigade pursues, becomes exposed and threatened by the second French column; brigade "began to change its front" but does not say in so many words that confusion ensued and the brigade retired to its original position, which was certainly the case; then Adam's brigade fires upon the second French column

which retreats "with the utmost haste" (pp. 244-45).

(14) Lord Saltoun, 1st Foot Guards: describes the confusion in Maitland's brigade during their pursuit of the first French column, caused not by incorrect orders but simply the command "Halt, front, form up" not being heard or understood; as soon as it was understood "it was obeyed and everything was right again". States that after re-forming, Maitland's brigade advanced immediately upon the second Guard column but it had been repulsed by Adam's brigade before Maitland's could take much action; (p. 248).

(15) Capt. W.H. Powell, 1st Foot Guards: described "close Column of Grenadiers (about seventies in front) of la Moyenne Garde, about 6,000 strong"; halted abruptly when Maitland's brigade stood up about 50 or 60 paces away. Received Maitland's fire which felled over 300 men "in less than a minute"; rear divisions "began to draw out as if to deploy"; men at the rear began to fire over the heads of those in front, persuading Saltoun that they were sufficiently shaken as to break. Maitland's "sprang forward. La Garde turned and gave us little opportunity of trying the steel". Maitland's pursued, exposing their flank to the second Guard column; retired to original position from where they seconded Adam's brigade in the defeat of the second column; (pp. 254-55).

(16) Capt. H. Davis, 1st Foot Guards: attack of "French Guards... was made in column..." (p. 257).

(17) Ensign J.P. Dirom, 1st Foot Guards: Imperial Guard advanced "in close Column with ported arms...as regularly formed as if at a field day"; first fire "convulsed" them; "Part seemed inclined to advance, part halted and fired, and others, more particularly towards the centre and rear of the Columns, seemed to be turning round" (pp. 257-58). (Possibly the latter was the attempted deployment observed by Sharpin and Powell?).

(18) Major Thomas Hunter Blair, 91st, Adam's Brigade-Major; believed the "the summit of our position was partially gained by the Imperial Guard" and heard Colborne remark that at the crisis he had formed his left company en potence to "refuse" his flank "in the apprehension of its being turned" (p. 278).

(19) Colonel Sir John Colborne, 52nd; no comment on French formation, but described wheeling his regiment "nearly parallel" with the advancing French, which were first engaged by the 52nd's "extended Company" (i.e. skirmishers), attributing the defeat of the second French column largely to this movement and the support it received; (pp. 284-86).

(20) Lieut. G. Gawler, 52nd: Not certain of the French formation due to the smoke, but believed it to be two columns in echelon, "the left considerably to the rear" with the opening between the columns "distinctly visible". Confirms Colborne's account of the wheeling of the 52nd (pp. 292-94).

(21) Capt. T.R. Budgen, 95th: French columns halted as a result of being assailed in the flank by Adam, giving way "without retaining any order or discipline" as soon as Adam advanced; concerned that the 2/95th should be credited with part of the victory(!) (p. 299).

(22) Corporal Aldridge, 2/95th: French in "three Columns abreast of each other; they looked like quarter distance Columns". They "rushed forward three times" saw the 52nd charge them (p. 302).

(23) Ensign Edward Macready, 30th: confirms no Brunswickers en-

gaged the Guard, a "heavy Column" sent to reinforce the line initially falling back, but were rallied and stood their ground. French column assailing the 30th and 73rd approached "in beautiful order" but "was an inconceivable short time before us, turning and flying to a man at the single volley we fired, and the hurrah that followed it. Having expected great things from them, we were astonished at their conduct, and we young soldiers almost fancied there was some "ruse" in it. The men I spoke to as they lay wounded were all of the 'Moyenne Garde'". Macready then recounts the (earlier?) disorganisation of the square of the 30rd and 73rd. Under fire from two French guns, "some one in authority" decided that the square should retire to use the bank of a hedge as cover, but whilst engaged in this manoeuvre (encumbered by wounded dragging themselves along) the square was disordered totally by "a body of men (British)" which rushed among them, creating "a scene of frightful confusion". "Nothing could be more gratifying than the conduct of our people at this disastrous period", and the disorder was remedied by "a shout some one raised"; the troops, who had been "good-humouredly laughing at their excitement" re-formed quickly under the cover of skirmishers thrown forward from the disorderly mass; "this was effected without difficulty, and all afterwards went right". "The falling back in Halkett's Brigade, and of the Brunswick Column occurred very near together, and I can readily conceive this to have been the period to which the French 'Temoin Oculaire' alludes to when he speaks of Battalions being seen 'en debandade' on our height" (p. 330-31).

(24) Lieut. H. Anderson, 69th cannot confirm that Brunswick troops were near his regiment, "but I recollect perfectly having seen, a short time previous to the advance of the Guard, some Foreign Corps in rear to our left, having shakos covered with white". Personal knowledge very limited as he was wounded as the Guard approached "and remained for some time insensible"; but "I never was aware till I read your letter that there was any published account of our Line having been forced at any period of the Battle, and though I have often fought the Battle o'er again with my cold companions in arms, I never heard the circumstances alluded to, nor do I believe it occurred. If it had, I must have hear of it from my brother Officers who had the good fortune to see the Enemy retreat. I believe I may say run"; (p. 338).

(25) Major Dawson Kelly, 73rd; did not believe that the 30th and 73rd were attacked by the Guard and, due to heavy smoke (such that they were only aware of the French approach by the noise and clashing of arms), believed that any account which discusses the event minutely "must have a good deal of fancy in the narrative". When the French did appear through the smoke, it was "as usual with the French, very noisy and evidently reluctant, the Officers being in advance some yards cheering their men on"; the French kept up a "confused and running fire" but when fired upon by the Allied line "turned about to a man and fled". Could not say whether any French column was taken in the flank or rear, for "from the heaviness of the atmospher we could see but little of what was going on"; (pp. 339-41).

Such is the testimony of the "Waterloo Letters", recounted here neither to support nor disprove Houssaye but merely to illustrate that "eye-witness" testimony rarely agrees in the smaller details. Taken alone, the letters suggest that the Guard advanced in two main formations, each perhaps comprising several battalions, though national and even regimental bias may have coloured the memories of those which include such bias. It is interesting that some accounts suggest the attempted deployment into line of the French, and even more that whilst several write of the steadfast way the French approached, another suggest they were "reluctant"(!) Perhaps one of

the most telling remarks is Dawson Kelly's last, emphasizing a fact that can often be overlooked: the smoke could cause even the most careful eye-witness to become confused and mis-interpret what little he could see. One is reminded of the comment of Lord Eythin upon seeing a battle-plan some 171 years before Waterloo: "By God, sir, it is very fyne in the paper, but there is no such thing in the field"!

NOTE FROM EDITOR. It is a pleasure to present such a fine article presenting some of the "Waterloo Letters" quoted in my series of articles on Waterloo (mostly Houssaye's "1815").

EEL can certainly use many other fine similar articles on the unanswered questions we constantly raise in EEL.

What particularly impresses with the above article, beside its erudition, is its smooth conciliatory tone in sharing the data and points of view and its desire to find out what really took place.

In this issue, in my article (on Waterloo again!) from pages 23 to 37, I raise again many questions which certainly outnumber the possible answers..

I was very surprise, for instance, that it is difficult to find for sure how many guns were part of the Grand Battery at the time of d'Erlon's attack. The number of 24 guns appears to be a minimum quoted by many historians but was it the real number?

I have another very pertinent request . Does anyone has access to the report of General Petit which, according to Houssaye is in the Morrison collection in London, and reports the Middle Guard forming squares, closed squares (as suggested by Paddy Griffith which by the way would explain why British side eye-wittnesses report the Middle in columns) or open squares? (See EEL p.19)



SOME COMMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS ON FRENCH TACTICS, PART IX
 THE ATTACK AND THE FORMATIONS OF THE MIDDLE GUARD AT WATERLOO
 REVISITED...
 by P.A. Shopfer and Jean A. Lochet

The very interesting article authored by Philip J. Haythornthwaite: "The Waterloo letters and the Imperial Guard" (see EEL 74, pp.18-24) presents many British side first hand accounts suggesting the Middle Guard attacked in columns.

In EEL 66 (pp.27-30), I presented data from Houssaye's "1815", that is, to use Houssaye's own words, General Petit's 'precise and very detailed relation (to be found in the Morrison's collection in London)' reporting he witnessed the formation of the squares and saw them depart to attack.

General Petit who commanded a regiment of the Guard at Waterloo should know the difference between a square and a column...(the problem is that he did not specified the type of square used!) Yet, the tendency is to simply discard General Petit's testimony and consider that the British side of the story is correct, i.e. that the French were in columns. (Note here that the smoke was very thick and the visibility very poor as related in many accounts of the Waterloo letters.)

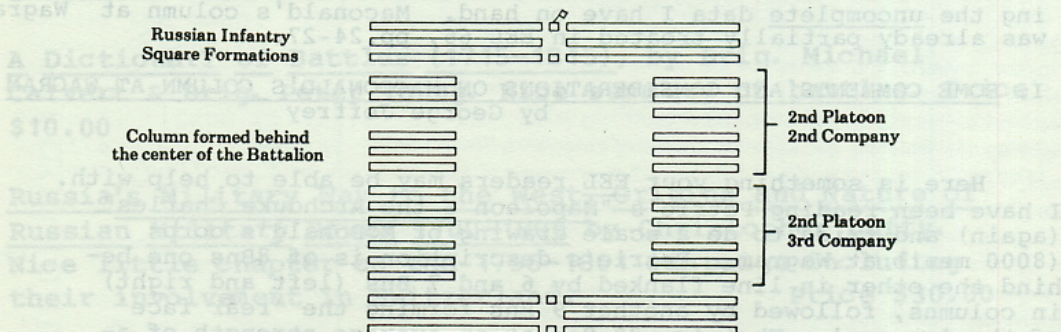
Paddy Griffith in EEL 69, pp.2-3, tell us on the squares at Waterloo:

"...I would incline to the view that the "squares" were really solid squares and not the hollow ones - or in other words "columns". There is an overlap in the accepted terminology, here, which means we should not take "squares" too literally. The picture shown in EEL 68, page 29 of a hollow square, I assume, was drawn long after the event."

I received a letter from Mr. P.A Schopfer on the question which suggest that the Middle Guard at Waterloo may have been formed in a solid square of a non-regulation (?) pattern similar to the one used

by the Russian infantry and presented in George Nafziger's new booklet: "The Russian Army, 1800-15", (see note) p. 13 and is reproduced below:

Another type of column was introduced after the Turkish war and immediately prior to the 1812 campaign. This was used to react to surprise cavalry charges when there was insufficient time to form a true square. It was known as a "column formed behind the center of the battalion," which was in imitation of the Austrian "Quarre auf der Mitte." In this formation the first company closed up so that the gap between the fourth and fifth sections disappeared. The first and eight sections, forming the rear company, also closed this gap. The second and third sections in the right column divided into half sections and redoubled, forming one behind the other. This resulted in the flank of the formation having six company files of three men each. The interval between these files was one archine (28"). The sixth and seventh sections formed in the same manner on the left flank. When this formation was formed, the staff and musicians moved into the middle of the formation. (See Illustration).



RUSSIAN ARMY COLUMN FORMED BEHIND THE CENTER OF THE BATTALION

Mr P.A. Schopfer goes on to say that such a column would have been very well adapted to the Middle Guard tactical situation :

(1) The Guard, apparently, feared a cavalry attack similar to the one suffered by d'Erlon's corps earlier in the battle with the disastrous consequences known and,

(2) Also to the fact that the French Guard infantry had a 4 company (8 platoons) organization very similar to that of the Russian infantry.

Furthermore:

(1) Such a formation could have remained in the form of a close column type to move and attack but be on the ready to form a solid square by 'bunching up' together pretty much on the same manner the Klumpen is formed in the Austrian Battalionsmasse.

(2) Such a formation would almost look like a column especially with poor visibility.

Thus, both British accounts of the Waterloo Letters and General Petit would be right; Petit referring, as suggested, by Paddy Griffith to a solid square (without mentioning it) which was interpreted literally as a hollow square by Lachouque and Jean Auge, the artist who made the drawing used in Commandant Lachouque's book: "Waterloo."

It is an interesting theory and comments would be appreciated.

Note: "The Russian Army, 1800-1815" is available from the RAFM Co.13