

# Waterloo BBB Scenario

## Set-up Notes

By Matthew Green

[diningtablenapolen@icloud.com](mailto:diningtablenapolen@icloud.com)

June 2015

## 1 INTRODUCTION

---

This document sets out how I set up my scenario for the Waterloo Bicentennial, using Chris Pringle's Bloody Big Battles Rules, adapted for the Napoleonic era, using house rules. They have been modified based on my experience of the game.

### 1.1 PREMISE

The scenario aims to start Waterloo at more or less the historic point (11am), using the historic starting positions. Napoleon starts with his historical battle plan. The Prussians arrive at the historical times. .

The idea of this type of scenario is as much to explore the minds of the historical generals as to see whether players can do better. And it is the quickest way to set up a scenario. To take in the wider possibilities, and allow players to take alternative battle plans, requires much more research. Also it would be very hard to do it with just two players, as we did. Such a scenario would start earlier in the day with not all the French forces in place, etc.

### 1.2 SCALES AND TABLE

The table is 90cm by 120 cm (roughly 36" by 48"), with 1" representing 150m (1mm to 6m). Each base is 1,500 infantry, 750 cavalry or 36 guns, roughly speaking.

We start at 11am. The first two turns, when the ground is still wet, represent 1½ hours of real time. After that each turn is one hour. The game lasts until turn 9.

The figure scale is 1,500 infantry or 750 cavalry per base (25mm square), and 36 guns for each artillery base.

I wanted to take a bit of trouble to represent the historical terrain. I used Fortescue's contour map, taking contours from 100m (the base level) to 140m, simplifying to ignore features less than 5cm wide on the table (i.e. 300m). I ignored representing the contours for the lower areas around the Lasnes river. I

haven't got a digital version of the map, but I can email something rather messy on request. Each contour was cut from 10mm Styrofoam.

In fact the 140m contour in the rear of the French position, does not add much more than aesthetic value. I skipped a couple of smaller 130m features (on the left of the British position) and between the Bois de Paris and Planchenoit, that it may have been worth including - the former to create more dead ground, the latter as a minor defensive feature.

Hougoumont and La Haye Sainte were represented by small 6mm buildings. Each fitted into a small recess in the contours, as they were built in hollows (which makes artillery attack hard). The wood in front of Hougoumont was represented as a separate feature. The Papelotte-Smohain area was represented as a village area under the rules, fitting into the recess marked by the 110m contour level. In hindsight this would have been better represented as a "town".

Mont St Jean and Merbe Braine were treated as villages, and Braine l'Alleud and Planchenoit as towns. Planchenoit fitted into the recess formed by the 120m contour. Other settlements were ignored. Some, such as Ohain, were certainly big enough to merit inclusion, but were not of tactical significance in this game.

The river Lasnes was featured as an impassable obstacle until just short of the Charleroi road, with three crossings, one at Lasnes, others south and east of the Bois de Paris. The Ohain river was counted as a linear obstacle, dropping down from the Papelotte-Smohain complex.

Wood features were the Bois de Paris, the wood in front of Hougoumont, and strips of woodland along the Lasnes to the east of Planchenoit. In hindsight it would have been worth representing the small areas of woodland to the south of the Papelotte-Smohain complex, to give a bit more structure to the approaches to Planchenoit. These woods should all be open, and passable to cavalry and artillery.

I showed only two roads: the Charleroi road and the Nivelles road joining at Mont St Jean on the way to Brussels.

### 1.3 THE FRENCH ARMY

Here is the French order of battle. The requirements of the rules require some simplification (for example merging divisions in Lobau's corps). Ney is made corps commander of the reserve forces - which was not strictly his role, but works for games purposes. The two Guard artillery bases act as separate units (one is the true reserve of 12 pdrs, and the others are

ordinary units nominally attached to the infantry formations, but in fact used as a reserve pool).

<i>Unit</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Bases</i>	<i>Attributes</i>
Napoleon	General		
<b>I Corps</b>			
D'Erlon	General		
Quiot	Infantry	3	T
Donzelot	Infantry	3	T
Marcognet	Infantry	3	T
Durutte	Infantry	3	T
Jacquinet	Cavalry	2	V
Artillery	Field	1	
<b>II Corps</b>			
Reille	General		
Bachelu	Infantry	3	R
Jérôme	Infantry	5	T
Foy	Infantry	3	T
Piré	Cavalry	2	T
Artillery	Field	1	
<b>V Corps</b>			
Lobau	General		
Simmer	Infantry	5	T
Subervie	Cavalry	3	V
Artillery	Field	1	
<b>Reserves</b>			
Ney	General		
Old Guard	Infantry	3	V A D
Middle Guard	Infantry	3	V A D
Young Guard	Infantry	3	T A
Guard Light	Cavalry	3	V A
Guard Heavy	Cavalry	2	V A
Guard Artillery	Foot	2	
Guard Artillery	Horse	1	
Kellerman	Cavalry	5	T A
Milhaud	Cavalry	4	T A
Horse artillery	Horse	1	

The BBB rules are very spare with their gradings. There are only three stamina categories (Veteran, Trained, Raw). In addition I have used the Aggressive and Devastating Volleys grades to give some extra grade oomph in Assault and Firefight respectively. I saw no need to bring in the Fragile and Ragged Volleys grades in this or any of the armies.

It might be considered rather harsh making the bulk of the French infantry Trained - but although the men were largely veterans, their formations had been only put together rapidly, and I don't think they deserve a higher grade. I'm more generous with the light cavalry, and may be a bit harsh on the heavies - but the use of cuirasses by the latter would not have

enhanced stamina. Bachelu's infantry and Piré's cavalry are downgraded because they were in the thick of Quatre Bras - and indeed Reille gave these units an easy ride on the day.

There are no special grades for generalship ability in BBB - though that may reflect the era they are designed for (1856-1870).

Initial set-up as follows. D'Erlon's infantry to the right of the Charlroi road in a line running about 20cm south of La Haye Sainte up to about 5cm short of the Smohain complex. In front, near the road is the artillery unit together with one of the reserve field artillery units. Behind this are Milhaud and the Guard Light Cavalry. On the left Jérôme is ranged about 3m to the south west of the Hougoumont wood, with Foy to his right, and Bachelu to the right of that, near the road. Piré is to the left of Jérôme, covering the Nivelles road. Place the artillery unit somewhere amongst the infantry. Behind these are Kellerman and the Guard Heavy Cavalry. Lobau's corps are in march column straddling the Charleroi road with the Guard infantry behind it, also in march column. The rest of the artillery is limbered in this area.

#### 1.4 ANGLO-NETHERLANDS ARMY

This is much harder to represent than than the others. This multi-national army was not fully integrated, and Wellington bypassed its nominal corps command structure when managing the battlefield, and the divisional structure was often ignored too. Few of the following units (especially infantry) correspond exactly to actual commands, but overall they should give a realistic flavour to the battle within these rules. This version is different from the one we used in the bicentennial battle - which proved a bit generous - especially considering that I had been quite hard on the French.

Wellington is the only general - reflecting this army's command weakness. The headings reflect the general dispositions at the start. Like the French some account is taken of the battering some units took at Quatre Bras.

<i>Unit</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Bases</i>	<i>Attributes</i>
Wellington	General		
<b>Right wing</b>			
Cooke	British Guards	4	V A D
Alten	KGL/Hanoverian	4	T
Halkett	British Line	3	T D
Clinton	Mixed infantry	5	T D
Grant	British Light Cav.	2	T
Dornberg	KGL Light Cavalry	2	V
Artillery	British Field	1	
<b>Left wing</b>			
Bijlandt	Netherlands Inf.	3	R
Picton	British Line	3	V D
Best	Hanoverian Ldw	3	R
Saxe-Weimar	Nassau infantry	3	T
Vandeleur	British Light Cav.	2	T
Vivian	British Light Cav.	2	T
Artillery	Netherlands Field	1	
<b>Reserves</b>			
Chassé	Netherlands Inf.	5	R
Brunswick	Infantry	4	R
Somerset	British Guard Cav.	2	V A
Ponsonby	British Heavy Cav.	2	T A
Trip	Neth. Heavy Cav.	2	R A
de Ghigny	Neth. Light Cav.	2	R
Artillery	British Horse	2	

The units are deployed as follows. The Right wing: front line, from right to left: Cook (holding Hougomont), Halkett, Alten (holding La Haye Sainte), with artillery forward. Behind them, from the right Grant, Dornberg. Clinton forms a third line. Left Wing, front line from the right: Bijlandt, Best, Vandeleur Vivian, with artillery in support. Picton is behind Bijlandt. Deploy the Reserves behind, with Chassé in Braine l'Alleud.

### 1.5 THE PRUSSIAN ARMY

This is much more conventional, and poses fewer challenges. Units composed mainly of landwehr are classed as Raw.

<i>Unit</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Bases</i>	<i>Attributes</i>
Blucher	General		
<b>I Corps</b>			
Ziethen	General		
Steinmetz	Infantry	3	T
Treskow	Cavalry	2	T
Artillery	Horse	1	
<b>II Corps</b>			
Pirch I	General		
Tippelkirch	Infantry	4	T
Krafft	Infantry	4	T
Sohr	Cavalry	2	
Artillery	Field	1	
<b>IV Corps</b>			
Bulow	General		
Hake	Infantry	5	R
Ryssel	Infantry	4	R
Losthin	Infantry	4	R
Hiller	Infantry	4	R
Schwerin	Cavalry	2	T
Sydow	Landw cav.	2	R
Artillery	Field	1	
Artillery	Horse	1	

All Prussians enter in march column. The entry point for IV Corps and II Corps is at Lasnes, on the east of the river.

The arrival schedule is as follows (in march order):

<i>Turn</i>	<i>Units</i>
3	Bulow, Schwerin, Losthin
4	Blucher, Hiller, Ryssel, Field Artillery
5	Hake, Sydow, Horse Artillery
6	Pirch, Sohr, Tippelkirch
7	Krafft, Field artillery

In addition on Turn 6 all of I Corps arrives at Ohain, north of the Ohain stream.