

The Battle Of Three Roads

(Hypothetical: June, 1815)

Scenario by Don Lowry, Map by Chuck Hamack

Once again Napoleon has gained the central position! Rather than attack Wellington's army head on at Mont St. Jean (Waterloo), he has maneuvered to interpose his Left Wing between Wellington's main force and the Allied supply line and garrisons. Moving with his old decisiveness and boldness, Napoleon has taken personal charge of the leading elements, leaving Ney to bring up the Reserve and Grouchy to keep an eye on the Prussians and Wellington.

Meanwhile an ad hoc Anglo-Allied corps of three divisions composed of garrisons at Hal and points west was ordered, under the command of the inexperienced Prince Frederick of the Netherlands, to reinforce Wellington's main army, marching to join it rather than get picked off in detail. (Not trusting the Hanoverian cavalry from Hal, Wellington has sent Dornberg's brigade of light dragoons to escort this corps to him.) However, this corps was delayed when rain caused a stream to rise and become unfordable. Frederick had to detour to find another crossing, and, by the time the head of the column got back to the right road, darkness had fallen, so the corps went into camp for the night.

Now it is the next morning, and cavalry scouts report that French forces are rapidly approaching from the east on three different roads, including the one the Allies were planning to take today. Should they go back the way they came the day before, stand and fight, or try to continue their march? Frederick's division commanders do not agree, nor do they trust their inexperienced commander.

(This scenario, although it uses situations, forces, and commanders from the 100 Days, is actually based on a real battle of a different era. Bragging rights, and perhaps a strategic advantage, go to whomever recognizes it.)

The Scenario:

The **Weather** is warm (late spring) and overcast, but variable. The **Ground** is soft. The game's **Basic Length** is 2 (+1d6) turns.

Terrain Notes: Each grid section on the map represents about one third of a mile, or 600 yards. In normal GA scale this would be six inches on the table. In 2/3 GA scale this would be four inches.

The major stream is unfordable at the start of the game, and it can only be crossed at the bridge, or by building a bridge at the southern road-crossing with engineers. If the weather never changes to precipitating (rain), the stream becomes fordable at the southern road-crossing on a die roll (1d6) of less than the current turn number. Add 1 to the die roll for each turn it rains. Only roll the first time a crossing is attempted (by either side) on any given turn. Do not roll before an attempt to cross is made. (In other words, you won't know until you try; and whatever result you get the first time you roll will hold good for the rest of that turn.) Units that rally must come back into the game on the same side of the larger stream as its sub-commander; if this is not possible (no room) they must wait off-table until there is room.

The minor streams are only and always obstacles, regardless of the weather (except when crossing via the bridge).

The road that runs diagonally from northeast to southwest (the Diagonal Road) is on high ground. The high hill near the northeast of the upper crossroads is the highest elevation on the table (thus a vantage point). Much of the land between the roads is heavily wooded; all woods are considered rough terrain.

Setup: Ideally, neither side should know exactly what forces and commanders the other side has or where they are located, but, of course this can only be true if (a.) the players haven't seen this scenario, and (b.) a third party acts as game-master for them, passing to them only so much of the following information as pertains to their own army. (If that is possible, go for it.)

The **French** commander must secretly write down which forces (including Napoleon and sub-commanders) will enter the board on each of the three roads coming in from the east edge (marked on the map by arrows), and in what order they will enter. (Call this their order of march.) Ideally, he should do this *before* he sees the table of any map of it. He must commit a minimum of 2 divisions of infantry (4 brigades) to each road. (Reveal the written order of march to the Allied player at the end of the game to insure that it was honestly carried out. If there is a game-master, reveal it to him before bringing the units on the table.)

The **Allies** then set up along the Diagonal Road, with one flank at the lower (southern) crossroads and the other at the upper (northern) crossroads. (This is the road along which they were marching the previous day, heading toward the southern crossroads. The unbridged crossing of the southern road is the point where they wanted to cross the stream the day before but were unable to do so and had to divert to the bridged crossing.) Cavalry and no more than one brigade of infantry may start as far east on the southern road as the bridge over the minor stream. One cavalry may start on the middle road, not more than 2" east of the upper crossroads. Prince Frederick may start anywhere along the Diagonal Road between the two crossroads, or west of that road and east of the major stream.

The **French** then enter on the three eastern roads (by the arrows) according to their written order of march. If there is not room for all the French units committed to a particular road to enter on the first turn, enter as many as possible and the others will have to wait until there is room for them. The French have the initiative on the first pulse.

The **Allied** army is "Shaky." Its Break Point is: 4.

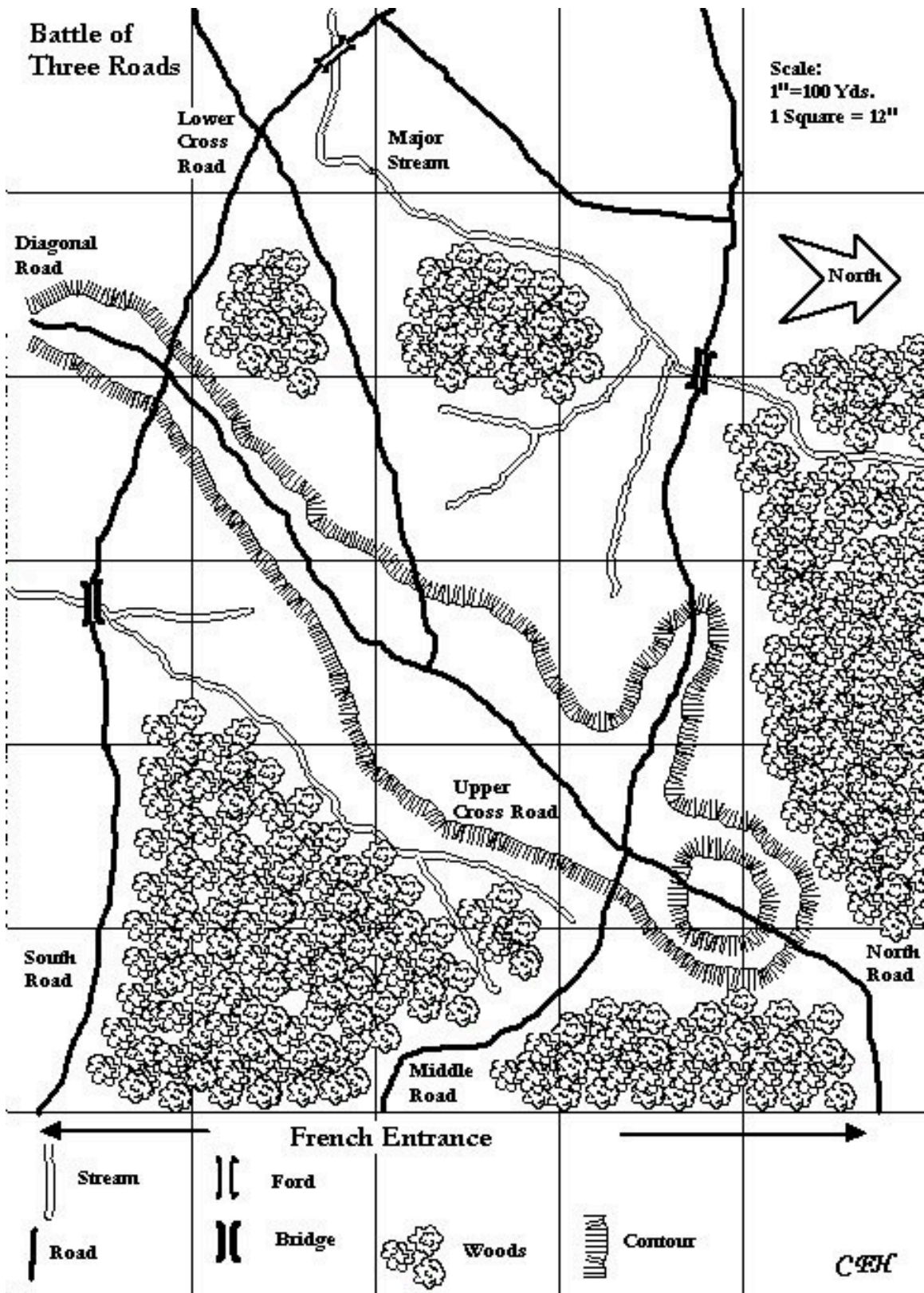
The **French** army is "Confident." Its Break Point is: 8.

All cavalry units on both sides are Light.

Analysis:

(If you're using a game-master, don't tell this to the players of either side.) The **French** have the advantages of morale, organization, numbers, quality of troops, quality of commanders, and the first pulse, but they are divided into three forces on three different roads with poor communications between them. The **Allies** have the advantage of the high ground and good lateral communications, but their backs are to an unfordable stream. Will that be enough?

The Battle of Three Roads Battlefield:



The French Army

Commander: Emperor Napoleon (Great)

This is a Napoleonic Army of 2 Forces. Napoleon has 1 ADC and 1 General.

I Corps: d'Erlon 3 / 9"

1st Division: Alix

I/1/1 Quiot (Line Inf.) Sk2 Trained 5SP _____
I/1/2 Bourgeois (Line Inf.) Sk2 Trained 5SP _____

2nd Division: Donzelot

I/2/1 Schmitz (Line & Light Inf.) Sk2 Trained 7SP _____
I/2/2 Aulard (Line Inf.) Sk2 Trained 5SP _____

3rd Division: Marcognet

I/3/1 Nogues (Line Inf.) Sk2 Trained 5SP _____
I/3/2 Grenier (Line Inf.) Sk2 Trained 5SP _____

4th Division: Durutte

I/4/1 Pegot (Line Inf.) Sk2 Trained 5SP _____
I/4/2 Brue (Line Inf.) Sk2 Trained 5SP _____

1st Cavalry: Jacquinot

I/C Jacquinot (Chass., Hussars & Lancers) Veteran 7SP _____
6-pdr Horse A _____

Corps Artillery:

12-pdr Foot A _____
Engineers

II Corps: Reille 2 / 9"

5th Division: Bachelu

II/5/1 Husson (Line & Light Inf.) Sk2 Trained 7SP _____
II/5/2 Campi (Line Inf.) Sk2 Trained 5SP _____

6th Division: Jerome

II/6/1 Boudouin (Line & Light Inf.) Sk2 Veteran 8SP _____
II/6/2 Soye (Line Inf.) Sk2 Trained 7SP _____

7th Division: Girard*

II/7/1 Villiers (Line & Light Inf.) Sk2 Trained 6SP _____
II/7/2 Piat (Line Inf.) Sk2 Trained 7SP _____

9th Division: Foy

II/9/1 Gauthier (Line Inf.) Sk2 Trained 4SP _____
II/9/2 Jamin (Line & Light Inf.) Sk2 Trained 6SP _____

2nd Cavalry: Pire'

II/C Pire' (Chasseurs & Lancers) Trained 6SP _____
6-pdr Horse A _____

Corps Artillery:

12-pdr Foot A _____
Engineers

* Actually Girard's division was with the Right Wing at Ligny and, having taken heavy losses there, was left to occupy that field after the battle. However, in order to match the "historical" situation, all four divisions are needed here. We can say that Napoleon has defeated Blucher at Ligny without detaching this division, perhaps by getting the I Corps to attack the Prussian rear, as he had wanted it to, historically.

The Allied Army

Commander: Prince Frederick of the Netherlands (Poor)

This is a Traditional Army of 4 Forces. It has 1 unit of Engineers.

1st Netherlands Division: Stedmann 3 / 5"

1/1 Hauw (D-B Line, Lt. & Militia) Sk1 Conscript 6SP _____

1/2 Berens (D-B Line, Lt. & Militia) Sk1 Conscript 6SP _____

1/3 Anthing (Dutch East Indian) Sk2 Trained 6SP _____

1: 6-pdr Foot (D-B) ____

4th British Division: Colville 2 / 3"

4/1 Johnstone (Lt. Inf., Fuziliers and Line) Sk2 Elite 7SP _____

4/2 Lyon (Hanoverian Line and Lt. Inf.) Sk2 Trained 6SP _____

4: 9-pdr Foot (Hanover) ____

Hanoverian Reserve: von der Decken 3 / 4"

H/1 Bennigsen (Hanoverian Landwehr) Sk1 Conscript 4SP _____

H/2 Beaulieu (Hanoverian Landwehr) Sk1 Conscript 4SP _____

H/3 Bodecken (Hanoverian Landwehr) Sk1 Conscript 4SP _____

H/4 Wissel (Hanoverian Landwehr) Sk1 Conscript 4SP _____

H: 6-pdr Foot (KGL) ____

Cavalry: Dornberg 1 / 3"

C/1 Dornberg (Lt Drag) Veteran 6SP _____

C/2 Erstoff (Hanoverian Hussars) Conscript 3SP _____

Alternatives, Play-Balancing, and What-Ifs:

1. Supply Trains: It would be more realistic if both armies were provided with a train of supply wagons (these are full of ammunition, food, forage, and, most important of all, the officers' personal baggage!). If this can be done, use the following rules:

- a. Each side gets 4 wagons. Base them like artillery units. They move like foot artillery.
- b. The French must account for their wagons in their written order of march, and must start with at least 1 wagon on each of the 3 roads along which they will enter. (The extra wagon goes on the road that has the most French infantry units.)
- c. The Allies must start with all 4 of their wagons together, on the road between the northern crossroads and the northern crossing (bridge) over the major stream, facing east. (They were at the tail of the previous day's column of march.)
- d. Wagons have no SP value and can be overrun. When a wagon is overrun the overrunning player must decide whether to capture it or destroy it. (Some kind of marker will be needed to indicate that a wagon has been captured, i.e. changed sides.) Of course, wagons could be recaptured by the original side, and could keep changing hands indefinitely, if not destroyed. In order to destroy a wagon, the overrunning unit must stop where contact is made and not move beyond the wagon. If the wagon is merely captured the overrunning unit can keep going, and the wagon can be moved that pulse by the capturing player.
- e. Each wagon destroyed counts against the original owning army's morale the same as a unit destroyed (but it is not factored into the army's breakpoint to start with).
- f. Each captured wagon counts against the original owning army's morale the same as a wagon destroyed, plus it also adds +1 to the capturing army's break point number (but only so long as the capturing army retains possession of it).
- g. For each wagon a player controls at the end of the game he gets one real-life snack item of his choice (out of what's available). How's that for an incentive?
- h. If at the end of any turn an army does not control any wagons, it immediately loses the battle and the game (and the snacks).

2. Additional Allied Forces: If the Allies seem to need help winning this scenario (which they probably will), there were other "Allied" garrison forces that could have reinforced "Frederick's" force. (In the historical situation of another era, upon which this scenario was based, they were left behind in garrison, but the "French" commander could not have been certain of this. This rule adds that uncertainty to the situation.) At the beginning of each Allied pulse, the Allied player rolls 1d6, and if he rolls lower than the current turn number the following forces enter the western edge of the table along the road leading to the upper crossing (bridge) of the larger stream (the 7th British Division first). If you are also using Option 1, bring a fifth wagon on with these forces. When they arrive, increase the Allied army's break point to 5; the Allied army is then a traditional army of 6 forces:

7th British Division: MacKenzie 2 / 3"

7/7 (Highlanders & Line Inf.) Sk 2 Veteran 4SP _____
7/G (Garrison, Foreign & Veteran btns.) Sk2 Trained 4SP _____
7: 6-pdr Foot (KGL) ____

5th Netherlands Division: van Dyke* 3 / 3"

5/1 (D-B Inf.) Conscript 6SP _____
5/2 (D-B Inf.) Conscript 6SP _____
5: 6-pdr Foot (D-B) ____

3. Better Allied Scouting: Another way to help the Allies is to force the French to use the “historical” order of march: Napoleon and the II Corps enter the table along the most northern of the three roads coming in from the east edge, the cavalry in the lead. D’Erlon, two of his infantry divisions, his foot artillery, and his engineers enter on the middle road. His cavalry, horse artillery, and his other two divisions of infantry enter on the most southern of the three roads coming in from the east, the cavalry in the lead. The Allied player is informed of these dispositions before setting up, and, after he has set up, the French come on the table as outlined here. If there are two French players, one should be Napoleon and the other should be d’Erlon.

4. Additional French Forces: If the French seem to need help, six more brigades were available to the “French” commander but did not actually arrive in time to take part in the battle. (However, the “Allied” commander could not have known that they couldn’t make it in time, and so he would have had to worry about them showing up.) At the beginning of each French pulse, the French player rolls 1d6, and if he rolls lower than the current turn number the following forces enter the eastern edge of the table along the most northern of the three roads coming in from that edge, in any order he likes. If you are also using Option 1, bring on a fifth wagon with this corps. When they arrive, increase the French army’s break point to 9; the French army is then a Napoleonic army of 3 forces:

VI Corps: Lobau (V) 2/6"

19th Division: Simmer

VI/19/1 Bellair, (Line Inf.)	Sk2	Trained 5SP	_____
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VI/19/2 Thevenet (line Inf.)	Sk2	Trained 6SP	_____
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20th Division: Jeannin

VI/20/1 Bony (Line and Lt. Inf.)	Sk2	Trained 6SP	_____
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VI/20/2 Tromelin (Line Inf.)	Sk2	Trained 3SP	_____
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21st Division: Teste

VI/21/1 Lafitte (Line & Lt. Inf.)	Sk2	Veteran 3SP	_____
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VI/21/2 Penne (Line Inf.)	Sk2	Trained 4SP	_____
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Corps Artillery:

VI/A – 12-pdr Foot ____

VI/E – Engineers

5. Better French Scouting: Another way to help the French is to force the Allies to use the “historical” set-up: The French do not have to write marching orders. Most of the Allied infantry and artillery still must start along the diagonal road between the two crossroads. The Hanoverian Reserve must set up at the northern end of this line, most of the 1st Netherlands Division at the southern end, and the 4th British Division between them. The Dutch East Indian Brigade and Dornberg’s cavalry brigade start on the southern road on the west side of the crossing of the minor stream, the infantry behind (west of) the cavalry. The Hanoverian cavalry brigade starts on the middle road, not more than 2 inches east of the northern crossroads. The French are allowed to see the Allied set-up and then may divide their forces as they wish, but still must bring at least 2 divisions (4 brigades) of infantry in on each of the three roads coming in from the east. If there are two Allied players, one should be Frederick and the other should be Stedmann.

6. More “Historical” Battle: To more accurately simulate the actual historical battle of another era upon which this scenario is based (so far as forces and locations are concerned), use both Option 3 and Option 5. Also use Option 1 if possible, but none of the others. This, however, gives both commanders knowledge of their opponents that the real generals did not have. Also, it would be more historical (for both the real battle of another era and for the 100 Days situation) for the most experienced player(s) to take the French side.

7. Larger Battle: If you just want a larger battle, bring all the additional Allied and French forces on the table (from Options 2 and 4) on their first respective impulses of the first turn without worrying about dice rolls. However, this will be less “historically accurate,” since these forces, while theoretically available (and something for the opposing commanders to worry about) never actually arrived in time to take part in the battle.

8. More Than 2 Players: If there are more than two players it would probably be best for a third player to take a French Corps that is not with Napoleon at the start of the game (per the order of march). A fourth player should take an Allied division on one flank or the other, or, if playing Option 7, he could take the two divisions just coming on the table. Fifth and sixth players could take the other French corps and another Allied division. More than six players would probably be too many, especially if not using Option 7.

* There was no 5th Netherlands Division (or 4th either), but there were more than enough Dutch-Belgian troops in garrisons to constitute one (or both). No names of officers in these units being known to the scenario designer, one was invented.

Ready-Made Labels for the *Battle of Three Roads* Scenario:

FRENCH:

Napoleon (Great)

I Corps: d'Erlon 3 / 9"

I/1/1 Quiot (Line) Trained 5SP, Sk2
I/1/2 Bourgeois (Line) Trained 5SP, Sk2
I/2/1 Schmitz (Line&Lt.) Trained 7SP, Sk2
I/2/2 Aulard (Line) Trained 5SP, Sk2
I/3/1 Nogues (Line) Trained 5SP, Sk2
I/3/2 Grenier (Line) Trained 5SP, Sk2
I/4/1 Pegot (Line) Trained 5SP, Sk2
I/4/2 Brue (Line) Trained 5SP, Sk2
I/C Jacquinot (Lt. Cav.) Veteran 7SP
I:6-pdr HA

I:12-pdr FA

I:Engineers

II Corps: Reille 2 / 9"

II/5/1 Husson (Line&Lt.) Trained 7SP, Sk2
II/5/2 Campi (Line) Trained 5SP, Sk2
II/6/1 Boudouin (Line&Lt.) Veteran 8SP, Sk2
II/6/2 Soye (Line) Trained 7SP, Sk2
II/7/1 Villiers (Line&Lt.) Trained 6SP, Sk2
II/7/2 Piat (Line) Trained 7SP, Sk2
II/9/1 Gauthier (Line) Trained 4SP, Sk2
II/9/2 Jamin (Line&Lt.) Trained 6SP, Sk2
II/C Pire' (Lt. Cav.) Trained 6SP

II:6-pdr HA

II:12-pdr FA

II:Engineers

Units for Options 4 and 7:

VI Corps: Lobau (V) 2/6"

VI/19/1 Bellair, (Line) Trained 5SP, Sk2
VI/19/2 Thevenet (Line) Trained 6SP, Sk2
VI/20/1 Bony (Line&Lt.) Trained 6SP, Sk2
VI/20/2 Tromelin (Line) Trained 3SP, Sk2
VI/21/1 Lafitte (Line&Lt) Veteran 3SP, Sk2
VI/21/2 Penne (Line Inf.) Trained 4SP, Sk2

VI:12-pdr FA

VI:Engineers

ALLIED:

Frederick (Poor)

Engineers

1N Div: Stedmann 3 / 5"

1/1 Hauw (D-B) Conscript 6SP, Sk1
1/2 Berens (D-B) Conscript 6SP, Sk1
1/3 Anthing (East Ind.) Trained 6SP, Sk2
1: 6-pdr FA

4B Div: Colville 2 / 3"

4/1 Johnstone (British) Elite 7SP, Sk2
4/2 Lyon (Hanover) Trained 6SP, Sk2
4: 9-pdr FA

HanRes: Decken 3 / 4"

H/1 Bennigsen (Han. LW) Conscript 4SP, Sk1
H/2 Beaulieu (Han. LW) Conscript 4SP, Sk1
H/3 Bodecken (Han. LW) Conscript 4SP, Sk1
H/4 Wissel (Han. LW) Conscript 4SP, Sk1
H: 6-pdr FA

Cav: Dornberg 1 / 3"

C/1 Dornberg (Lt. Dragoons) Veteran 6SP
C/2 Erstoff (Han. Hussars) Conscript 3SP

Units for Options 2 and 7:

7B Div: MacKenzie 2 / 3"

7/7 (Hlndr&Line) Veteran 4SP, Sk 2
7/G (mx. d. btns.) Trained 4SP, Sk2
7: 6-pdr FA

5N Div: Dyke 3 / 3"

5/1 (D-B) Conscript 6SP
5/2 (D-B) Conscript 6SP
5: 6-pdr FA