

# The Battle Of La Coruña (Elviña)

16<sup>th</sup> January 1809

*A Grande Armée Scenario by Paul Murgatroyd & Eliseo Vilalta-Perdomo, from the Lincoln Miniature Warfare Society*

The battle of La Coruña (also known as battle of Elviña) is considered the most important conflict in Galicia during the Peninsula War<sup>1</sup>. In January 1808 the British army under Moore's command was retiring through the northwest of Spain in order to embark in La Coruña and escape to the French. On the 11<sup>th</sup> January, Moore's troops entered into the city via the O Burgo's bridge coming from Betanzos. Meanwhile, Soult's army looked for another pass. The British spent the next few days reorganizing their troops and embarking the cavalry, artillery and the sick.

On the afternoon of the 15<sup>th</sup>, the sound of the drums was heard in the direction of the Peñasquedo's heights. But it was not until the morning of the 16<sup>th</sup> that the French launched a decisive attack towards Elviña. Some British battalions led by Moore himself defended their ground. The fire was so furious that the French lines began to stagger and retreat. However, in the middle of the battle, Moore was mortally wounded by a cannon ball. Although this was an undoubted blow to the British, they continued to hold the vital ground around La Coruña and allowed the embarkation to continue without major interference.

During the night of the 17<sup>th</sup> and the morning of the 18<sup>th</sup> the last British troops embarked, with Beresford's division the last unit to retreat. General Alcedo (from the Spanish army) took command of the town and surrendered only when all the British fleet had sailed.

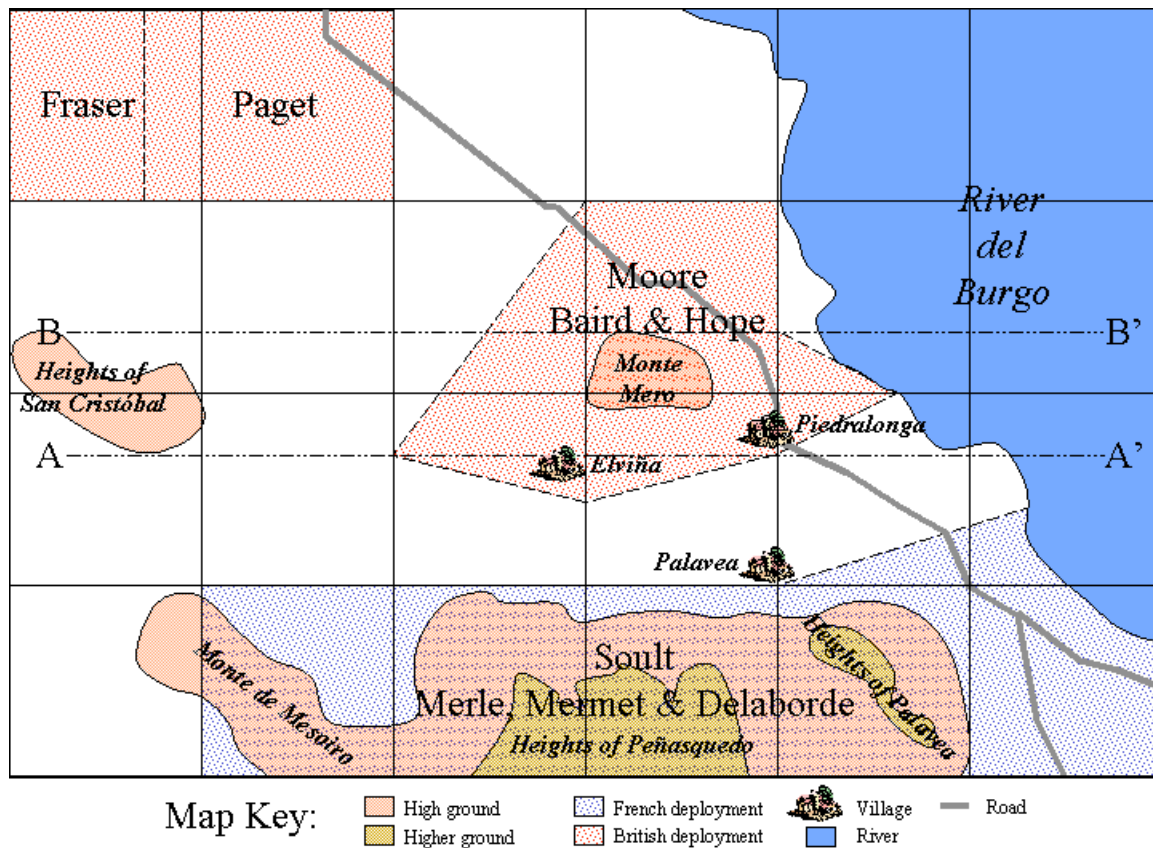
## The Scenario:

1. The game's Basic Length is 3 turns.
2. The weather is Normal, with no variation. The ground is Hard.
3. The river is unfordable.
4. Allies set up first, then the French. Both armies must set up according to their Force boundaries, as shown on the map.
5. French move first.
6. The morale of the British army is Shaky. Its Break Point is 4.
7. The morale of the French army is Confident. Its Break Point is 4.

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<sup>1</sup> In Spanish literature it is known as the Independence War

## The Battlefield of La Coruña:



## Roster for the British Army at La Coruña

Commander: Moore (*Great*)

Weather: Normal

Morale: Shaky

Army's Break Point: 4

This is a Traditional Army of 4 Forces.

### 1st Division: Baird 3 / 4"

1/1 Warde (Guards) Guard 6 SP \_\_\_\_\_

1/2 Bentick Veteran 5 SP \_\_\_\_\_

1/3 Manningham Veteran 5 SP \_\_\_\_\_

1: 6-pdr Foot BTY \_\_\_\_\_

### 2nd Division: Hope (V) 1 / 6"

2/1 Leith Veteran 5 SP \_\_\_\_\_

2/2 Hill Veteran 6 SP \_\_\_\_\_

2/3 Crawford Veteran 5 SP \_\_\_\_\_

2: 3-pdr Horse BTY \_\_\_\_\_

### Reserve Division: Paget 1 / 3"

R/1 Anstruther Veteran 5 SP \_\_\_\_\_

R/2 Disney Veteran 3 SP \_\_\_\_\_

### Access to La Coruña: Fraser 3 / 4"

A/1 Beresford Veteran 6 SP \_\_\_\_\_

A/2 Banes Veteran 5 SP \_\_\_\_\_

A/3 Portuguese Volunteers Conscript 4 SP \_\_\_\_\_

A/4 Fane (Hvy. Dragoons) Trained 4 SP \_\_\_\_\_

### Notes:

- 1) *Paget enters in action on turn 2 or on the next pulse after any French cavalry unit touches or crosses the line A-A', whatever is first.*
- 2) *Fraser enters in action on turn 3 or on the next pulse after any French cavalry unit touches or crosses the line B-B', whatever is first.*
- 3) *If a referee is present, these restrictions should not be known by the French player(s).*

## Roster for the French Army at La Coruña

Commander: Marshal Soult (*Good*)

Weather: Normal

Morale: Confident

Army's Break Point: 4

This is a Traditional Army of 4 Forces.

### I Division: Merle 4 / 3" Aggressive

I/1 Légère Veteran 7 SP \_\_\_\_\_

I/2 Ligne Veteran 6 SP \_\_\_\_\_

I: 8-pdr Foot BTY \_\_\_\_

### II Division: Mermet 3 / 4"

II/1/1 31<sup>st</sup> Ligne Veteran 4 SP \_\_\_\_\_

II/1/2 47<sup>th</sup> Ligne Veteran 4 SP \_\_\_\_\_

II/2 French & Swiss Veteran 7 SP \_\_\_\_\_

II: 8-pdr Foot BTY \_\_\_\_

### III Division: Delaborde (V) 2 / 3"

III/1 Ligne Veteran 7 SP \_\_\_\_\_

III/2 86<sup>th</sup> Ligne Veteran 4 SP \_\_\_\_\_

III: 8-pdr Foot BTY \_\_\_\_

### Cavalry Division: *Under Soult command*

C/1 Lahoussaye (Dragoons) Veteran 6 SP \_\_\_\_\_

C/2 Lorge (Dragoons) Veteran 6 SP \_\_\_\_\_

C/3 Lorge (Hussars/Chass.) Veteran 5 SP \_\_\_\_\_

C: 4-pdr Horse BTY \_\_\_\_

**Labels for the Coruña Scenario:****Soult (Good)****I: Merle 4 / 3" Agg**

I/1 Légère SK2

I/2 Ligne SK2

**I:** 8-pdr Foot**II: Mermet 3 / 4"**II/1/1 31<sup>st</sup> Regiment SK2II/1/2 47<sup>th</sup> Regiment SK2

II/2 French &amp; Swiss SK2

**II:** 8-pdr Foot**III: Delaborde (V) 2 / 3"**

III/1 Ligne SK2

III/2 86<sup>th</sup> Ligne SK2**III:** 8-pdr Foot**Cavalry Reserve:**

C/1 Lahoussaye (Dragoons)

C/2 Lorge (Dragoons)

C/3 Lorge (Hussars/Chass.)

**C:** 8-pdr Horse**Moore (Great)****1: Baird 3 / 4"**

1/1 Warde (Guards) SK2

1/2 Bentick SK2

1/3 Manningham SK2

**1:** 6-pdr Foot**2: Hope (V) 1 / 6"**

2/1 Leith SK2

2/2 Hill SK2

2/3 Crawford SK2

**2:** 3-pdr Horse**R: Paget 1 / 3"**

R/1 Anstruther SK2

R/2 Disney SK2

**A: Fraser 3 / 4"**

A/1 Beresford SK2

A/2 Banes SK2

A/3 Portuguese Volunteer

A/4 Fane (Hvy. Dragoons)

**Additional information and references:**

This scenario has been extensively adapted from historical events in order to provide a balanced game. If you are interested on experiencing the game with a “more historical” taste then remove Fraser’s division, as it did not participate in the battle. This unit was defending the accesses to La Coruña. Additionally, the British cavalry had been embarked previously to the confrontation.

**Orders of Battle:**

- Smith, D. (1998) “The Greenhill Napoleonic Wars Data Book: Actions and losses in personnel, colours, standards and artillery, 1792-1815”. Greenhill Books, London. ISBN: 1-85367-276-9

**Map:**

- Based on a map from Fortescue, 1:24,500, available at [http://www.napoleonseries.org/reference/images\\_ref/maps/peninsula/coruna.jpg](http://www.napoleonseries.org/reference/images_ref/maps/peninsula/coruna.jpg),

For more information about the Lincoln Miniature Warfare Society, visit our webpage at <http://homepage.ntlworld.com/neil.houlty/index.html>