

THE OPERATIONS
OF THE
ARMÉE DU NORD

1815

VOLUME II
THE ORGANIZATION,

MAY 9 - JUNE 4

The Operations of the *Armée du Nord*: 1815 — Volume II, The Organization, May 9 – June 4

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DEDICATION



Ce projet est dédié aux soldats de l'Armée du Nord qui, en 1815, motivés par le simple principe qu'une nation a le droit de choisir son propre gouvernement, ont traversé des rivières pour attaquer deux armées qui se préparaient à envahir leur pays.

L'Armée du Nord était dirigée héroïquement, mais pas toujours avec compétence, et elle était trahie quotidiennement.

C'est seulement par un compte rendu complet des événements que nous puissions apprécier ce que les soldats de l'Armée du Nord ont accompli: grace à leur sacrifice, leur drapeau flotte encore aujourd'hui.



This project is dedicated to the soldiers of the *Armée du Nord*, who, in 1815, motivated by the simple premise that a nation has the right to choose its own government, crossed a river and attacked two armies that were preparing to invade their country.

The *Armée du Nord* was led heroically, though not always competently, and it was betrayed daily.

Only with a complete accounting of these events can we appreciate what the soldiers of the *Armée du Nord* accomplished: because of their sacrifice, their flag still flies.



INTRODUCTION



This is Volume II of the *Operations of the Armée du Nord : 1815*, a reference of correspondence produced by Napoleon's last army, chronicling its organization and movements, until its defeat at Waterloo.

OPERATIONS OF THE *ARMÉE DU NORD* : 1815 THE ANALYSIS

This volume introduces the series and provides useful tools. It includes:

- Acknowledgments of the many individuals who made this work possible.
- The principles which guided transcription.
- Chart of persons found in the Correspondence, including those who are not well represented, though should be.
- A master Chronological Summary of all the transcribed correspondence.
- A master index of persons and places mentioned across all 5 volumes.
- Analysis of key topics, such as, the organization of the *Postes*, key maneuvers, and the crucial decisions few are aware of, though they determined the outcome of the campaign.

OPERATIONS OF THE *ARMÉE DU NORD* : 1815 : VOLUME I THE REGISTRIES

This volume includes some of the key correspondence of Napoleon and Davout, but focuses on Registries of key officers. Highlights include:

- Bertrand's personal registry for the *cent-jours* which includes many important orders and dictations of Napoleon.
- Soult's *Registre de Correspondance & Rapports à l'Empereur*
- Soult's *Mouvement des Troupes* - essentially the initial order book which ends where the famous *Registre du Major-général* begins.
- D'Erlon's Registry of Correspondence
- Reille's Registry of Correspondence

**OPERATIONS OF THE *ARMÉE DU NORD* : 1815 : VOLUME 2
THE ORGANIZATION, MAY – JUNE 4**

This volume includes the key daily correspondence, from the moment Soult was appointed *major-général* of the *Armée du Nord*, until just before the concentration on the frontier began.

**OPERATIONS OF THE *ARMÉE DU NORD* : 1815 : VOLUME 3
THE CONCENTRATION, JUNE 5 – JUNE 11**

This volume includes the daily correspondence for the concentration of the *Armée du Nord*. The various corps were ordered to their initial staging area in preparation for the upcoming invasion.

**OPERATIONS OF THE *ARMÉE DU NORD* : 1815 : VOLUME 4
THE INVASION, JUNE 12 – JUNE 17**

This volume includes the daily correspondence during the week the *Armée du Nord* was given its final orders into position south of the Sambre, and then launched against the allies. It covers the battles of *Quatre-Bras* and *Ligny* and the pursuit the following day.



SOURCES

This reference was compiled from the sources listed below, with the exception of pieces from private collections, which will be individually notated. Each source is preceded by a code used to identify the source of items in the Chronological Summary.

If an item has a corresponding registry entry, the index of the registry entry will be indicated in the *Sender* column. Soult has three registries, thus the actual registry will be indicated, as well as, the item's index.

If an item has an original document, the source for this document will be indicated in the *Original* column using the source code.

Some items have both a registry entry and an original document, and both will be indicated. Exceptions, such as, a registry entry indicating a single recipient, but matching originals for other recipients, will be notated when necessary.

Private

- Soult - *Mouvement* *Mouvement des troupes. Enregistrement de la correspondance, commencée le 11 Mai 1815, Collection François Gianadda, Martigny*

Archives Nationales

- Bertrand *Minutes de la correspondance de Bertrand pendant les Cent-Jours, 400 AP/109*
- d'Erlon *Fonds Drouet d'Erlon, 28 AP/4*
- 95 AP/11 *Fonds Caulaincourt, 95 AP/11*
- 137 AP *Papiers du maréchal Ney, 137 AP, 5, 15, & 18 as noted*
- AF IV 1936 *Gouvernement des Cent-Jours, AF/IV/1936*
- AF IV 1937 *Gouvernement des Cent-Jours, AF/IV/1937*
- AF IV 1938 *Gouvernement des Cent-Jours, AF/IV/1938*
- AF IV 1939 *Gouvernement des Cent-Jours, AF/IV/1939*
- 699 MI 2 *699 Mi 2, Dossier 5, Waterloo : lettres et ordres adressés au maréchal Grouchy*

Service Historique de la Défense

- SHD C15-2 *Armée du Nord - 1er au 20 mai - 1815, GR 15 C 2*
- SHD C15-3 *Armée du Nord - 21 au 31 mai - 1815, GR 15 C 3*

- SHD C15-4 *Armée du Nord - 1er au 10 juin - 1815*, GR 15 C 4
- SHD C15-5 *Armée du Nord - 11 au 21 juin - 1815*, GR 15 C 5
- SHD C15-11 *Armée de la Moselle et al, avril - juin 1815*, GR 15 C 11
- Reille *Régistre de Correspondance du Lt. Gal Reille*, GR 15 C 22
- SHD C15-23 *Copie des lettres adressées au général VANDAMME*, GR 15 C 23
- SHD C15-35 *Cent Jours Situations*, GR 15 C 35
- SHD C16-20 *Correspondance militaire générale - 1 au 7 juin 1815*, GR 16 C 20
- SHD C16-21 *Correspondance militaire générale - 8 au 18 juin 1815*, GR 16 C 21
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- SHD C17-193 *Correspondance de l'Empereur Napoléon et du Major Général*, GR 17 C 193
- SHD 1K-6 *Correspondance adressée au Lt. Gal Comte Gérard*, GR 1 K 6 1
- SHD 1K-282 *Campagne des Cent Jours 1815 - Bonnemains*, GR 1 K 282 1

Bibliothèque nationale de France

- Soult - *Registre* *Copie du registre d'ordre et de correspondance du major général, à partir du 13 juin jusqu'au 26 juin*, NAF 4366, Bibliothèque nationale de France

Bibliothèque municipale de Nantes

- Soult - *Rapports* *Régistre de correspondance et rapports du maréchal Soult à l'Empereur (9 mai - 6 juin 1815)*, Manuscrit 1201, Bibliothèque municipale de Nantes

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- Falck *Minutes/reports captured after Waterloo from Falck's Collection*, NL-HaNA, Falck, 2.21.006.48

Books

- Napoleon *Vol. 28 of Napoleon's correspondence*
- Napoleon *Correspondance générale, Tome quinzième, Les Chutes 1814-1821*, Fayard, 2018
- Davout *Correspondance du Maréchal Davout, Prince D'Eckmühl*, Volume 4, 1885
- Relation Succincte *Relation Succincte de la Campagne de 1815 en Belgique*, Emmanuel Grouchy, 1843
- Documents Inédits *Documents Inédits sur la Campagne de 1815 in Mélanges militaires: Spectateur, Sciences militaires*, 1840
- Portefeuille *Portefeuille de Buonaparte, pris à Charleroi le 18 juin 1815*, 1815
- Ordres et Apostilles *Ordres et Apostilles de Napoléon*, Arthur Chuquet, 1911
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