

Battle of Waterloo Weekender 17-18th April 2010

A walk- thro' guide to gaming with

*Republic to **Empire***

PART 1

The Scenario

The scenario was built around the attack of Marshal D'Erlon's I Corps at Waterloo on 18th June, 1815. D'Erlon's powerful corps was launched against Wellington's left-centre between 1200 and 1430 hours and encompassed assaults on the outpost of La Haie Sainte. The corps included 33 infantry battalions, a cavalry division and nearly 40 guns. It was of course unsuccessful and has been made famous through events such as the fight for the farm, the massed divisional columns and the celebrated charges by the British heavy cavalry.

I wanted the scenario to represent each unit on a 1:1 basis. I also wanted the units to be accurate in terms of their strengths relative to each other. The ground scales are exact when examining the distance between key features such as the ridges and the farm relative to La Belle Alliance. We placed a single building on the table to represent Papelotte but it is out of place. It should be two feet to the right of the table edge and is merely an aesthetic. The deployments are as accurate as they can be from available maps and accounts. Many of the models used are actually painted as the units they represent on the table. The troops came from the collections of Barry, Peter McCarroll, David Imrie, Peter Nicholson, Dave O'Brien and Ray King. We used between 2,700 and 3,000 models but nobody counted them!

The game was designed to allow the players to get a real feel for how Republic to Empire works and experience as many of the mechanisms as possible over two days of gaming. Each of the initial commands were infantry divisions with supporting artillery. As the game progressed we introduced cavalry reinforcements. By the end of the second day each player had commanded 2-3 divisions apiece and been involved in all aspects of the rules including the more unusual stuff such as fighting in built up areas, infantry v infantry, infantry v cavalry and cavalry v cavalry close combats, bombardments, exploitation, order changes, use of squares, deployment and recall of skirmishers, specialist light infantry, battery refits, flank charges, rear charges and numerous other little details.

We played 16 turns equating to 1140 -1640 hrs. We had 6, then 7 players and two umpires. We used an events system running parallel to the game turns which is a characteristic of League of Gentlemen games.

The objectives were very clear. The French had to capture La Haie Sainte, take control of the hedge lined road running east towards Ohain through the crossroads and finally capture the crossroads itself. These are marked on Game Set Up 1 as X, Y and Z. The Allies simply had to hold on to these objectives.

The very difficult obstacle created by the double hedge lined Ohain road was represented on the table but treated as a single linear obstacle simply because as depicted, it was far too significant and disproportionate a feature. Only one of the players had played Republic to Empire before and that was only once and for a short period of time!

The custom built 12 x 6 terrain constituting the West table took 3 weeks to build and cost about £600 in materials. The East table was built from customised TSS tiles. La Haie Sainte is a much doctored version of the Hovels model reduced in size to cover a ground area less than 50% of the original.

GAME SET UP 1

General layout of the table

WEST TABLE

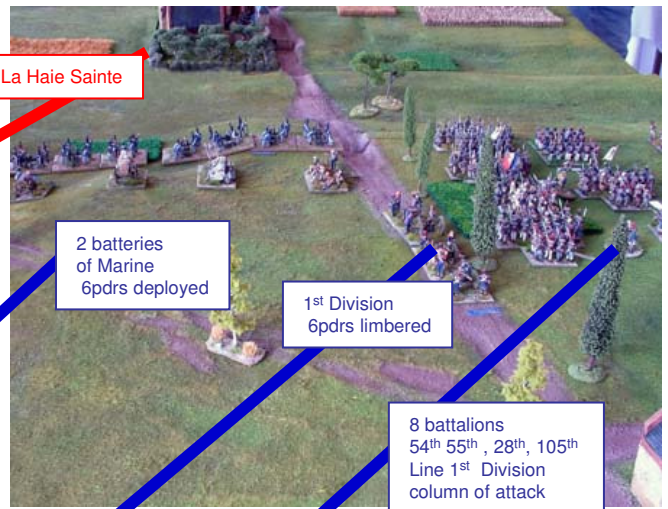
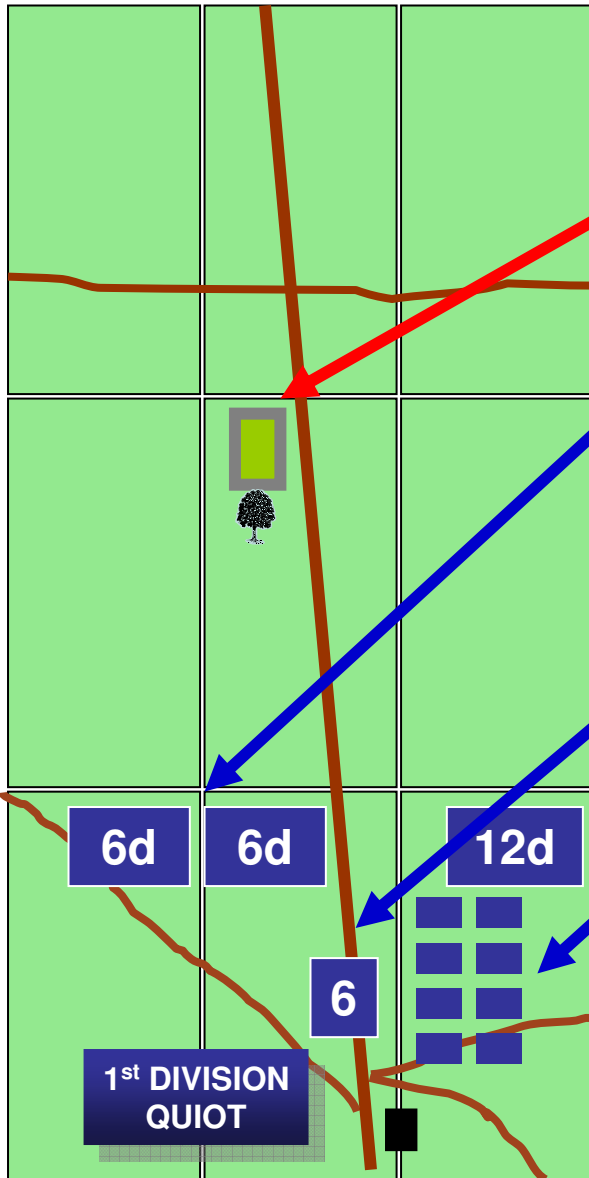
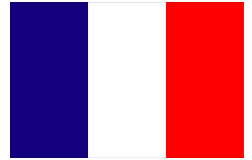
EAST TABLE



Each table is 12 feet by 6 feet. The walkway between the tables is about 2 feet. This simple map shows the terrain lay out. The west – east road running through the cross roads is sunken for about 3 feet of its length. It is lined with a double hedge east of the crossroads. Papelette should not appear on the table as it was about a further 2 feet east of the eastern edge. We marked it simply for aesthetic reasons. The French position is higher than the Allied position with the highest ground near La Belle Alliance.

GAME SET UP 2

QUIOT'S 1st Infantry Division



Quiot's 1st Infantry Division comprised of 2 battalions each from the 54th & 55th Line (Charlet's Brigade) and 28th & 105th Line (Bourgeois's Brigade). The division's artillery was limbered and on the Brussels -Charleroi road.

The French team had chosen to deploy most of the Guard Artillery Reserve on this table. 2 x Marine 6pdr batteries west of the road and facing La Haie Sainte and 1 x 12pdr out of shot to the east of the road.

This deployment took 2 turns which happened before the game began but delayed the official start of the battle by 40 minutes till 1140.

Chris Stone commanded this division and as he was nearest to the enemy got into action first. The 54th & 55th were attacking La Haie Sainte by 1240 hours.

1st INFANTRY DIVISION (QUIOT)

1st Brigade (Charlet)
 54th Line (2 battalions)
 55th Line (2 battalions)

2nd Brigade (Bourgeois)
 28th Line (2 battalions)
 105th Line (2 battalions)

+ 6pdr battery

GAME SET UP 3

DONZELOT'S 2nd Infantry Division

Donzelot's 2nd Infantry Division comprised 3 battalions from the 13th Light & 2 bns 17th Line (Schmidt's Brigade) and 2 bns each from the 19th & 51st Line (Aulard's Brigade). This was the biggest and most powerful brigade on the table. The quality of the division was also high with the 13th Leger being the best formation in D'Erlon's entire Corps. They met a dramatic and bloody fate at the hands of Somerset's Household Brigade at the height of the action. Bob Thornton used the 13th as the 'point' unit of his attack.



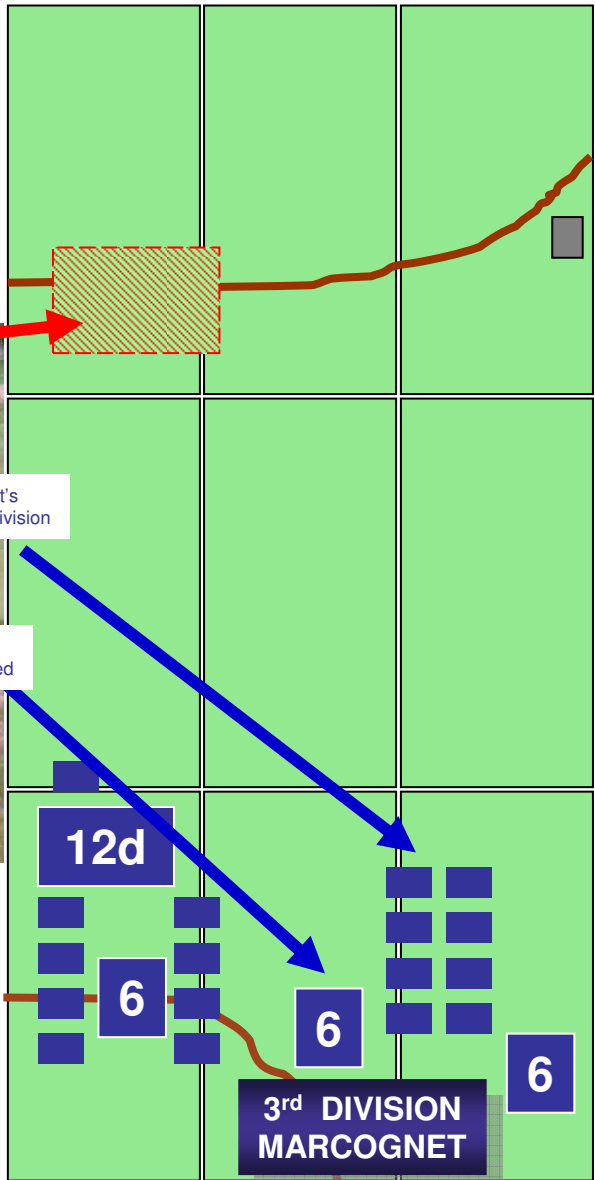
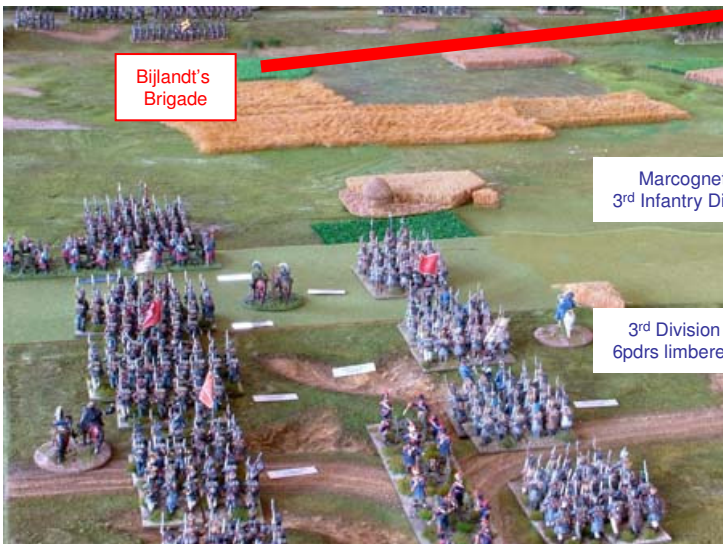
GAME SET UP 4

MARCOGNET'S 3rd Infantry Division

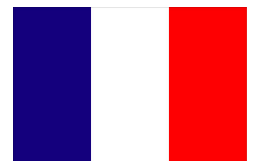
3rd INFANTRY DIVISION (MARCOGNET)

1st Brigade (Nogues)
 21st Line (2 battalions)
 46th Line (2 battalions)

2nd Brigade (Grenier)
 25th Line (2 battalions)
 46th Line (2 battalions) + 6pdr battery



Marcognet's 3rd Infantry Division comprised of 2 battalions each from the 21st & 46th Line (Nogue's Brigade) and 25th & 45th Line (Grenier's Brigade). The division's artillery was limbered and towards the rear east of the infantry. Jim O'Neill, commanding the division was very precise in his deployment and took great care to ensure his brigades were 'just so' before advancing. This resulted in an echelon advance by 1st, 2nd & 3rd Divisions with the 3rd being last to contact the enemy at around 1400 hours.



GAME SET UP 5

DURETTE'S 4th Infantry Division

4th INFANTRY DIVISION (DURETTE)

1st Brigade (Pegot)

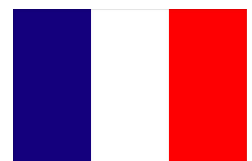
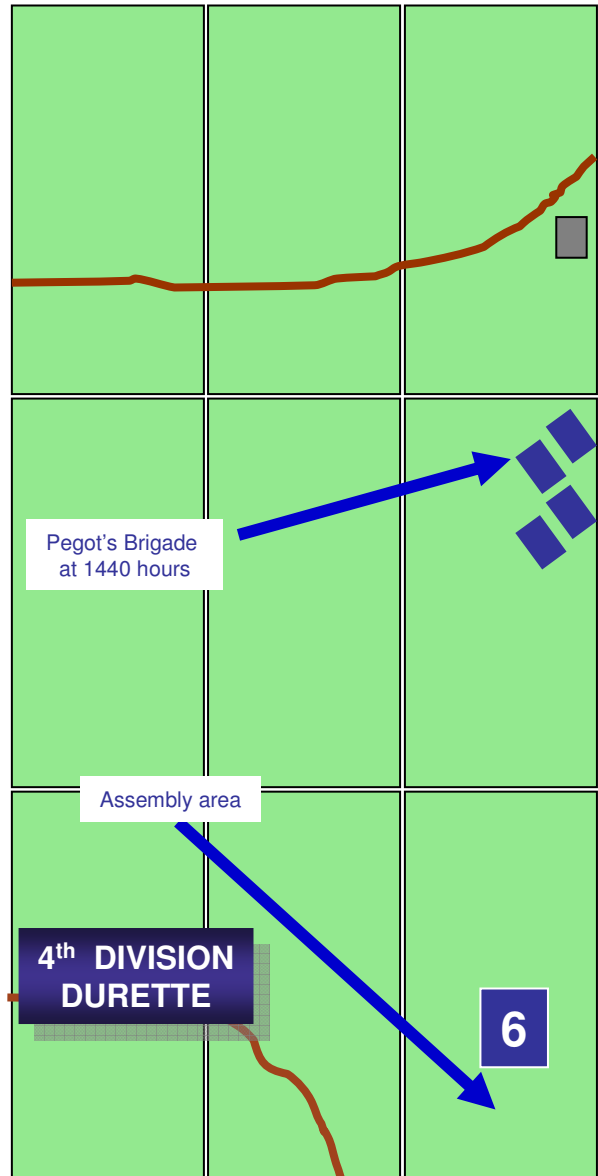
8th Line (2 battalions)
28th Line (2 battalions)

2nd Brigade (Brue)

85th Line (combined battalions)
95th Line (2 battalions) + 6pdr battery

Durette's 4th Infantry Division was not available at the beginning of the battle. Some models were placed in an assembly area as shown but the players were not told when the division would be ready.

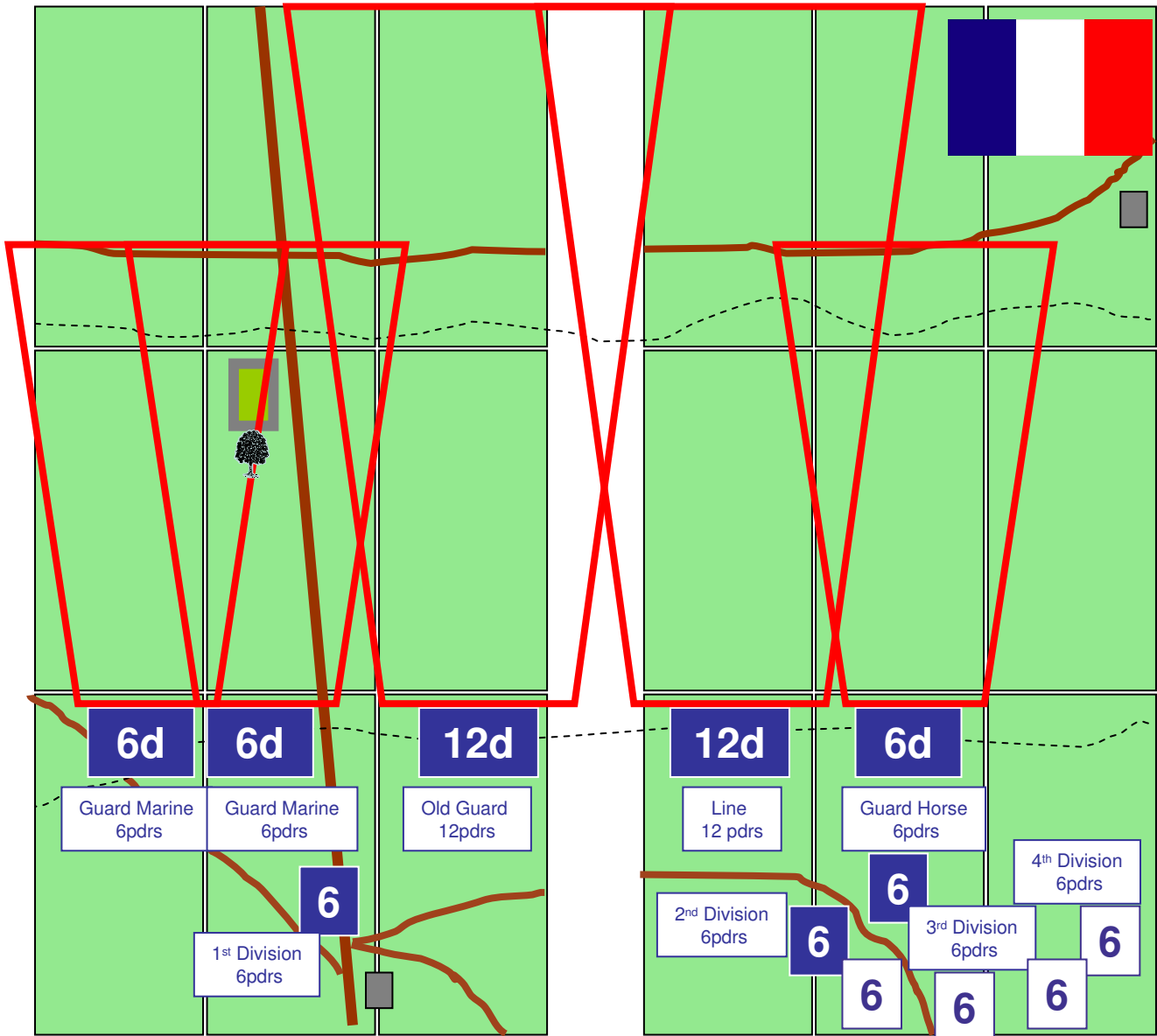
When the battle began Durette's were largely forgotten by the French until the umpire's placed Pegot's Brigade on the table where shown at 1440. This gave the French a lovely morale boost and the Allies got indigestion!



GAME SET UP 6

French Artillery

The French had three times more artillery than the Allies. Each infantry division had a 6 pdr Foot battery (4 models), each cavalry division had a 6pdr Horse battery (3 models) and they also had the army artillery reserve of 2 x 12pdr, 2 x 6pdr Foot and 1 x 6pdr Horse batteries. 44 gun models equivalent to 88 guns. None of it was deployed at 1100 hrs – the scheduled start time of the game. We gave the French team a command decision choice. If they agreed to postpone the start time of the battle for 1 hour (3 turns) we'd allow them to deploy ALL of their guns in a Grande Battery along the ridge. As they did not know how many turns were in the scenario and therefore how much time they were giving up, they chose a compromise – to depoly only the reserve batteries as shown. (d) means deployed.



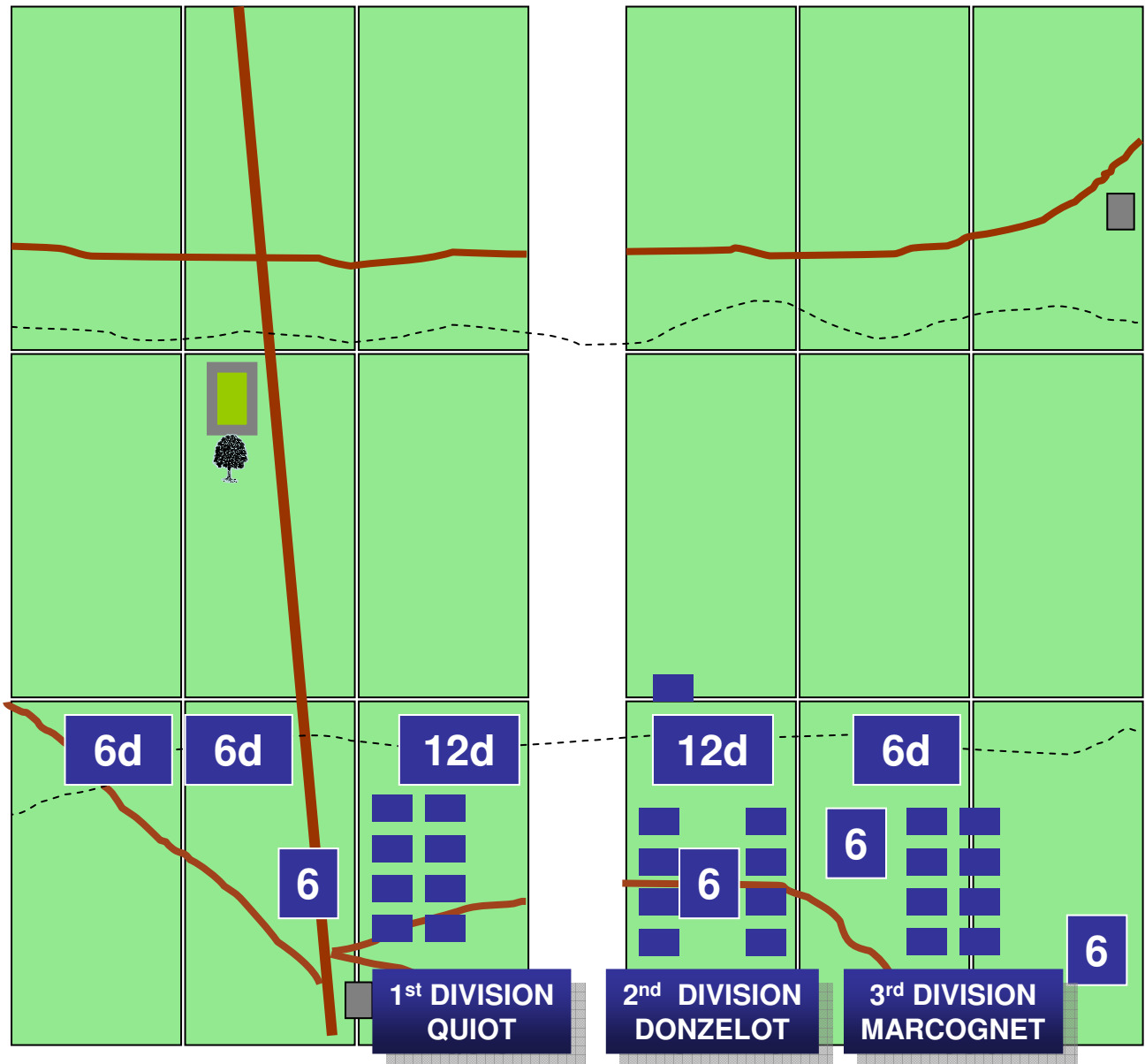
The red cones show the scaled range and arc of the 5 deployed batteries. 4 of these are Guard. This gives them an extra D3 number of shooting dice per Guard battery per turn. Each gun gets 3 x D6 as its unmodified capability. Gun ranges are scaled precisely with ground scale.

ARTILLERY MISUNDERSTANDING!!

The map shows 4 x 6pdr batteries marked in white squares. This is the artillery for the cavalry divisions and the battery for the yet unassembled 4th Infantry Division. Although the divisions were not available at the start of the game, the artillery was! In the briefing, the players seem to have failed to hear this and so the guns stood unused for nearly 8 turns!!!

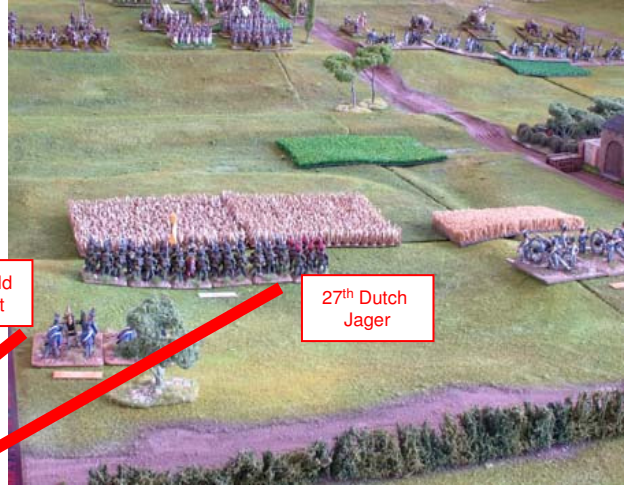
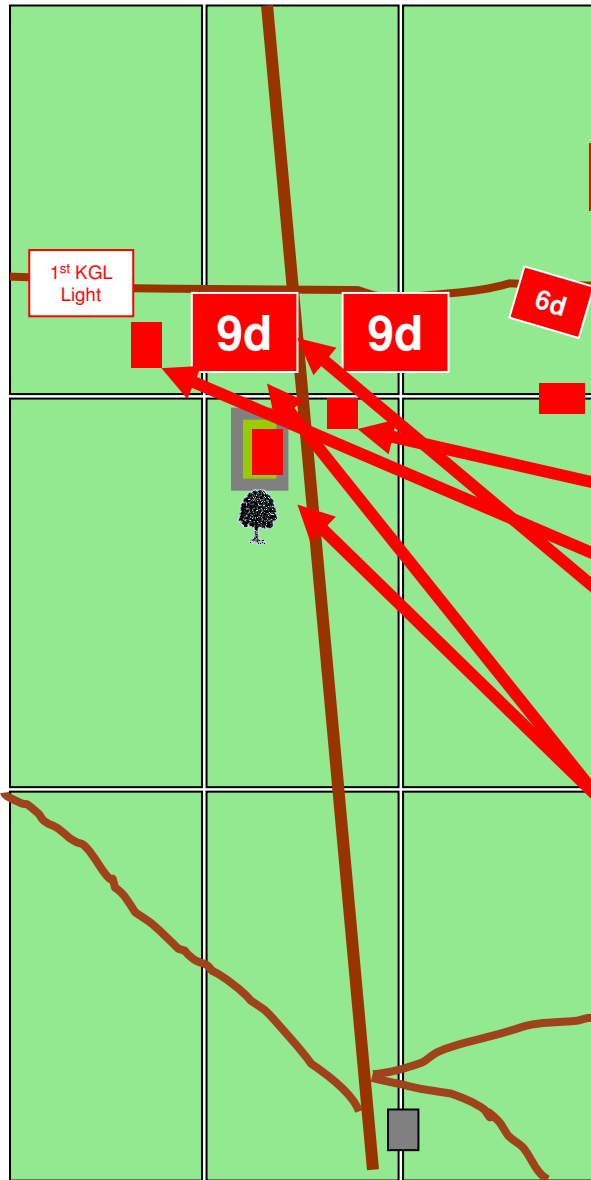
GAME SET UP 7

D'ERLON'S I CORPS



GAME SET UP 8

THE ALLIES – VISIBLE UNITS WEST TABLE



The Allies had very few units visible as the battle commenced. This map shows those visible to the enemy on the West table. Ompteda's units were under Ray King the 95th and Roger's battery under Paul McLauchlin and the Dutch units under Peter McCarroll,

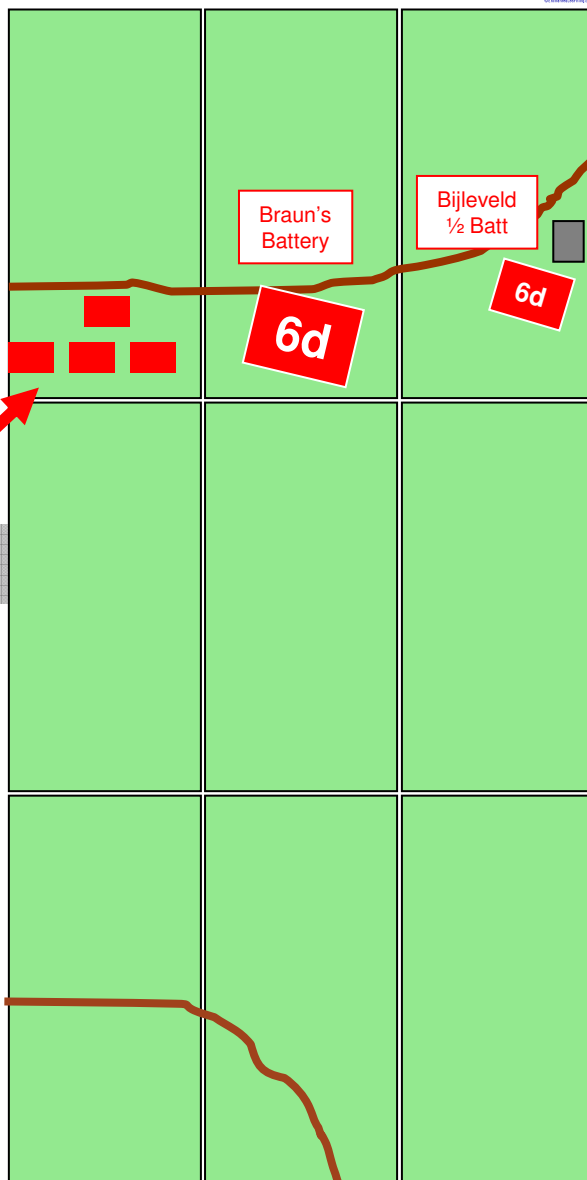
GAME SET UP 9

THE ALLIES – VISIBLE UNITS

EAST TABLE



The only completely visible Allied formation apart from the artillery was Bijlandt's Dutch-Belgian Brigade deployed in line on the front slope of the south facing ridge. One element (27th Dutch Jager) is actually on the West table. Also visible are Braun's Hanoverian battery and the other half of Bijleveld's Dutch battery. The Hanoverians's are under Paul's control and the Dutch-Belgians under Peter's.



GAME SET UP 10

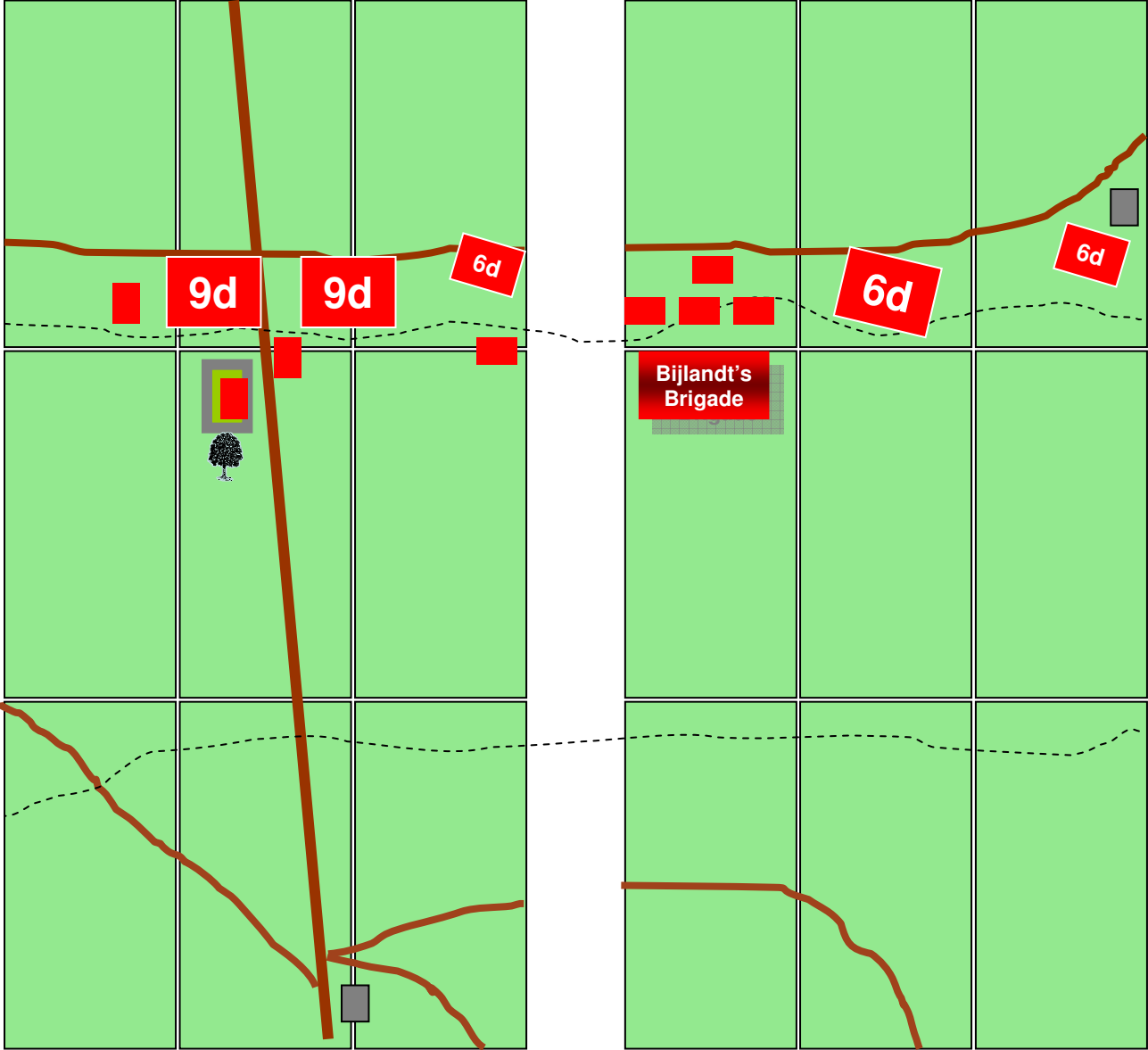
Allied Artillery

The Allies were greatly outnumbered in artillery with only 14 guns deployed as the game started. Their 9pdrs have a maximum range of 72 inches and the 6pdrs 60 inches. Behind the ridge was one further RHA battery – Whinyates attached to the Household Brigade. The red cones show range and approximated arcs of fire. Use of artillery in Republic to Empire is much more discriminate than most Napoleonic games. All batteries are allowed only 4 rounds of fire before having to pull out of the line for up to D3 turns to refit. All batteries throw 3 x D6 before the game to determine total amount of ammunition allowed during the game. This combination makes extreme range shooting costly and foolish and so it is rarely done.



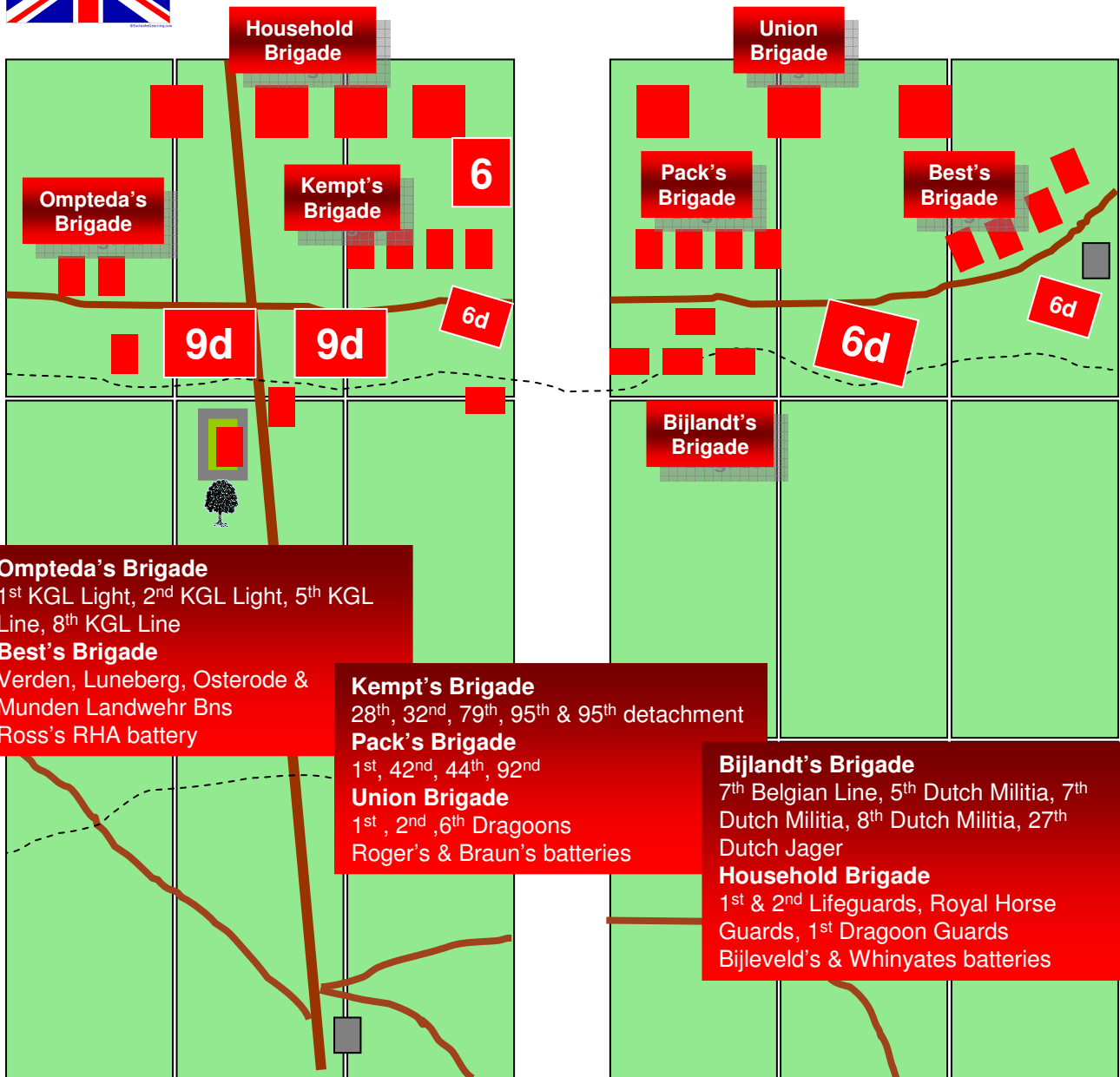
GAME SET UP 11

THE ALLIES – VISIBLE UNITS



GAME SET UP 12

THE ALLIES



The 3 initial Allied commands are shown in total here with the hidden troops also marked. Hidden movement, formation and order changes were handled by the umpires in coordination with the owning player.