

On the French side, the month of June was marked by as little activity as on the side of the Allies; but what was bad for the Allies was good for the French; because for Condé, who was weaker than his opponent, and had to wage the war defensively, every day that passed idly was a real advantage. The French king had written to his general to lay siege to one of the strongholds of the Spanish Netherlands, if it were practicable; wisely, however, Condé resolved not to launch such a siege as might easily bring about the uniting of the armies of the Allies, and involve the French general in a battle which was to be avoided as far as possible; for, nevertheless, the supremacy of the Allies made possible a defeat of the French army, and such a defeat, when the German armies appeared on the Rhine and when the coasts were threatened by a Dutch fleet, could have fatal consequences for France. Therefore Condé decided to confine himself to defense alone, to restrain the enemy by his positions and movements and to make him fearful of a siege, while not actually undertaking that siege, in order to always retain the free disposition of his army.

Until the 8th of June the French army had remained in the camp at Thiméon, near Charleroi; then it broke up to draw nearer to Mons, and to frighten the Spaniards before their strongholds in Hainault. On the 8th the army comes to Haine S. Pierre and Haine S. Paul; it stays there for two days and marches on the 11th on Ville sur Haine, an hour northeast of Mons. Here Condé remained until the last of June, his provisions and military supplies, moving partly from Charleroi, partly from Ath; its supply was constantly hampered by the raids of the partisans from the nearby Spanish strongholds, and repeated fighting over convoys took place. The escort and defense of convoys was, in the martial art of that century, a matter of the highest importance, much more so than in the wars of our time.

William of Orange and Count Monterrey, continually urging the Imperial general to unite with their armies, made him resolve to propose another meeting; that meeting took place on the 2nd of July, in the abbey of Heylisem, near Thienen; the Stadtholder and the Spanish Governor took part this time in person. Feasts and meals were then inseparable from all state or military assemblies; and they were not absent here either at that meeting of the chiefs of the Allies. "People drank," says Beaurain, "every health: that of the Emperor, of the King and Queen of Spain, of the Prince of Orange, of Monterey, of De Souches, &c.;" but the cup made De Souches nothing more flexible, the wine was unable to awaken in him the slightest spark of genius. To all speeches of the Dutch and Spanish chiefs of army - who forcefully pointed out that one could only hope to gain an advantage over France by uniting, and that it was irresponsible not to make use of the strong army forces in the Netherlands - De Souches answered, first with vain excuses, with objections about the supreme command, with complaints about the lack of money and of food; and when the vainness of these excuses was

convincingly demonstrated, he declared outright that he did not want to pass on the left bank of the Meuse, but to penetrate France, into Champagne. It was in vain that William III proposed to him that, if he did not want the entire Imperial army to cross the Meuse, at least part of that army should be added to the Dutch and Spanish armies; De Souches continued to refuse, and for his part proposed that, while the main force of the Dutch and Spaniards continued to keep an eye on Condé, another part of William III's army should join the Imperials and take part in the invasion of Champagne; — with good reason the Stadtholder refused to accede to such an act as would have deserved no better term than that of foolish and absurd. Some of De Souches' second-in-commands tried to persuade their general to comply with the sensible proposals of the Dutch army chief; but in vain. All that could be obtained from the German General was an undertaking that he would reconsider for another eight days or so, and meanwhile extend his army to the side of Namur and Dinant. Thus the court-martial was without effect. Old Homer! how right you were when you said: "Many-headed authority is harmful."

The Imperial army broke out from the camp of Andenne on the 5th of July, advanced in the direction of Dinant, and remained for some days in the vicinity of that town, which belonged to the neuter country of Liège. On the 11th the army moved again, moved up the Meuse, and on the 13th was in the vicinity of Givet. De Souches spread the rumor that, advancing ever southward, he intended to enter Champagne; he determined the day on which he was to take his midday meal in Sedan, and by promising to plunder the French territory he pleased his troops, who, moreover, were already practicing plundering in the Netherlands. But none of that boast came true; and the imperial army resolved to return to Dinant on the 17th of July, and to secure that small fortress on the 18th, and to place there a garrison of 1,800 men. This was a violation of neutrality, an act which, however, could not be regarded as a serious crime, and is not rare in war; but if one nevertheless wanted to violate neutrality, why not do so when there was more advantage in it? Why was Liège not taken? That was infinitely more important than occupying little Dinant.

During that march on the right bank of the Meuse, the German army, with regard to its food, proceeded in a different way than was then customary: there were no regular distributions, but they often made do with the aid available to them yielded by the land. Bread was baked in Namur and Givet, Spanish fortresses; also grains and flour from Liège; but this was not in sufficient quantity, and repeatedly the troops had to fend for themselves. The horses were fed with the fodder standing in the field; for the people, they cut the ripe grain, dried it, ground it by means of hand mills, of which a few hundred had been brought from Liège, and baked cakes or loaves of some sort on the spot.

Beaurain remarks here that, while such a mode of supply is much less good for an army than the regular distribution from storehouses, it may sometimes have its advantages, and an army must therefore be accustomed to sometimes seek its own supply. At that time (Beaurain wrote in the middle of the eighteenth century) there was already some idea of the great advantages which could result from the abandonment of the warehouse system; advantages to which the French armies, in the first years of the wars of revolution, largely owed their victories.

On the French side, meanwhile, some measures had been taken to counter the dreaded invasion of Champagne. Condé was instructed to draw closer to the Sambre, and to send a detachment below Luxembourg between that river and the Meuse, to keep an eye on the Imperial army. Another commander, Rochefort, after the conquest of Franche-Comté, had to advance with a force to occupy the frontiers of Lorraine and Champagne; this power of Rochefort was to consist of a few battalions of foot soldiers who were active in Franche-Comté, the guards (La Maison du Roi) and a few regiments which Turenne was to send; Rochefort, according to the movements of the Germans, had to remain in Lorraine, advance to Turenne's army, or join Condé with Luxembourg. Charleroi was provided with a strong garrison, estimated by one of our writers (new Mercurius) at 2,000 foot soldiers and 1,200 horsemen, led by Montal.

Condé had remained in his camp at Ville sur Haine until the 28th of June, and on the 29th had advanced in a northwesterly direction, to place his army between Mons and Ath, near the village of Brugelette; here he held his ground again for a few weeks, not immediately heeding his lord's exhortations to prevent De Souches from falling in France. Condé understood very well that this invasion was little to fear, and he would not allow his army to make one needless move; 'he had,' says Beaurain, 'that bold reassurance, peculiar to great generals, who do not tire their troops by useless marches, and who, regulating their movements with precision, are always sure to switch from the defensive to the offensive at the right time.' On the 13th of July he set out, but advanced no farther than Estinnes, near Binche; here he reckoned to be close enough to Charleroi to prevent a siege of that fortress. The strength of the position in which he placed his army also enabled the French general to reduce his power by sending a detachment to the country between Sambre and Meuse. Luxembourg was sent thither with about 8 to 9,000 men, arrived with it at Philippeville on the 15th of July, and made vain efforts to prevent the occupation of Dinant by the Imperials. The power of Rochefort first gathered in Lorraine during the month of July; in the first days it consisted only of cavalry and of the garrisons of the towns on the upper part of the Meuse; later, reinforced, Rochefort and Luxembourg must have been at the head of about 20,000 men; De Souches then had, according to Beaurain, well over 25,000 men; - but, if that

small number made one fear an invasion of the northern regions of France, that fear soon vanished, as the imperial general now made yet another decision.



*The French camp near Binche on the 13th of July.*

After the failed negotiations at Thienen, Orange and Monterey had been constantly on De Souches again, yet to join his army with their armies, but their efforts were in vain; he only promised that if his army were to be reinforced with 7 to 8,000 Dutch and Spanish troops, he would lay siege to Mézières, or to one of the other fortresses on the upper part of the Meuse. William III agreed to this proposal; not that he considered it good, but he judged it better to do that than to do nothing. But, when it was about to be carried out, the imperial general withdrew again, and came forward with another proposal, that William III should join the imperial army in person with about 15,000 men, take charge of that united power, and then lay siege to one of the northeastern fortresses of France. In this too the Stadtholder agreed, notwithstanding the risk of this act, the danger to which he exposed the Spanish Netherlands by subtracting with such a strong part of his power, and the uncertainty of being able to count on the constant free disposition of the German army. The Dutch army chief judged that this was the only way to take advantage of the Imperial army; and that once he got to that army, he might well direct it by his energy as he saw fit; yet he was opposed to the siege of Mézières, preferring to attack Rocroy and Philippeville, and even more Charleroi - a possible way to make the army of De Souches join the other armies.

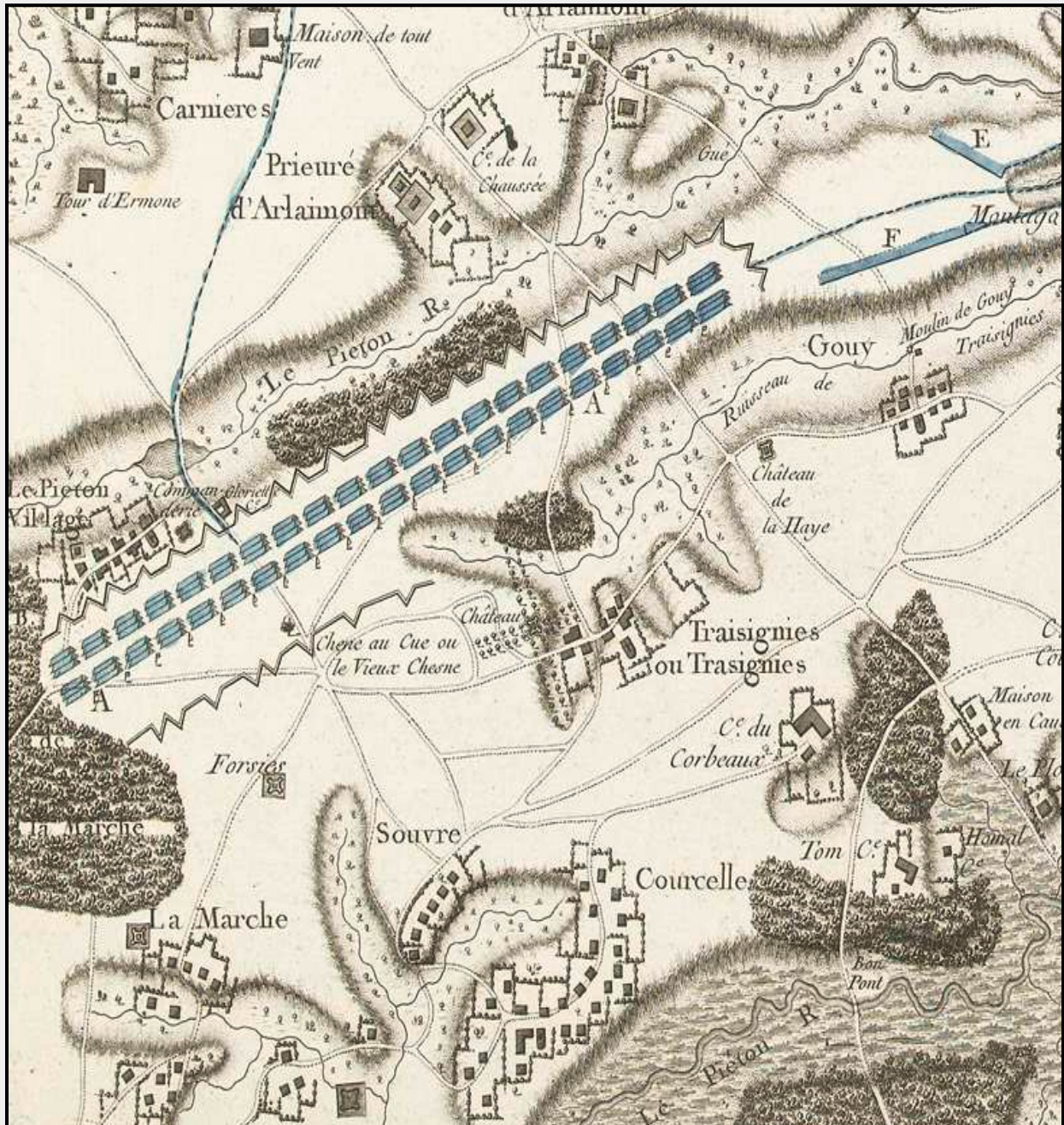
It was now agreed that, in order to favor this union of William III's army with the Imperial army, the Dutch and Spanish armies should approach the Meuse; De Souches, for his part, would march on Namur, and then a cavalry of 3,000 horses would cross on the other bank of the Meuse, thereby protecting the march of the army corps of the Stadtholders.

On the 16th of July, the foot soldiers of the Dutch army begin to move, breaking out from the vicinity of Vilvoorden to advance on Leuven, where they stationed themselves at the monastery of Beerthem - or van Bethlehem, as the name appears to our writers - half an hour west of Leuven; on the 17th, the cavalry is there also; the artillery is embarked at Willebroek, and thus carried back across the Dyle. On the 18th the army of the Stadholders crossed the Dijle and encamped between Louvain and the abbey of the park, southeast of that city. The Spanish troops, whose effectiveness was not much greater than that of the Imperials, arrived on the 19th, led by D'Assentar, on the left bank of the Dyle, at the monastery of Bethlehem. The son of De Souches then came to the Allies to determine once more the proposed union; and he promised that, instead of 3,000 horsemen, the Imperial army would send 5,000 to secure that union; he would even try to persuade his father to transfer still greater numbers, if possible, the whole

army to the left bank of the Meuse; On the 22nd, De Souches would be at Namur, and the Stadtholder would arrange his movements accordingly.

On the 22nd, therefore, the Dutch and Spanish cavalry broke up from the vicinity of Louvain, and advanced to the Geete, between Thienen and Guldenaken (Jodoigne); on the 23rd William III followed with the rest of the army; on the 24th the march was continued to the plain of Mierdorp, between the two Geetes and the Méhaigne. Here the union with the imperial cavalry took place. De Souches, first making a rearward movement towards Cineij, had advanced to Namur on the 22nd, leading 6,000 horsemen to cross the Meuse and to the Méhaigne on the 23rd, and followed the next day with another 2,000 horsemen; so that, on the 24th, he joined the Spanish and Dutch armies with 8,000 excellent cavalry.

Condé, informed of the march of the Imperials on Namur, and suspecting that it was their intention to cross the Meuse, resolved to approach Charleroi, to draw the armies of Luxembourg closer to itself, and to entrust Rochefort with the occupation of the region between the Sambre and the Meuse. On the 23rd, Condé breaks camp at Binche and advances towards the Piéton, a small river which flows into the Sambre near Charleroi; he occupies a strong position here, almost unassailable for the times. Luxembourg was ordered to rejoin the main force at Philippeville on the 23rd morning; he marches that day on Marchienne au pont, crosses the Sambre on the 24th and takes position at Fontaine l'Evêque; so that he is as good as united with Condé, whose right wing he protects. Rochefort, broken up from Sedan on the 25th, is at Philippeville on the 26th; the Maison du Roi does not stay there, but advances towards Condé's main army.



*The French camp behind the Pieton on the 23rd of July.*

Whether the movements of the French general really led Orange and Monterey to believe that the enemy intended to advance and attack them is uncertain; but at least they pretended to believe this; and they therefore urged De Souches once more for a whole union, outlining to him in full the dangers inevitably connected with a division of the forces, against an enterprising foe who kept his own united. After much discussion, deliberation and resistance, De Souches yielded and gave his consent to the transfer of

the whole Imperial army to the left bank of the Meuse. But, returning to his camp the next day, the imperial general again changed his mind, and reverted to his earlier proposals for an invasion of Lorraine and Champagne. Orange and Monterey, unwilling to lose the advantage they had gained, came back again with the arguments already used, and finally made De Souches, with whatever reluctance, order his army to cross the Meuse. The crossing took place with great slowness and lasted for the three days of the 25th, 26th and 27th of July; it was not until July 28 that the three armies of the Allies were united at Méhaigne.

To this end Orange might have had to employ as much skill as was necessary to win a splendid victory, and certainly much more patience; and yet, before that, the better part of the summer had already passed, so that there was but a small part of the year left for action against the enemy. This unfortunate situation should never be lost sight of when judging William III's strategic actions; he is not free in those actions; he is the genius, struggling against inertia, narrow-mindedness and ignorance, which in the most deeply thought-out, best-calculated designs leave nothing but an unwillingness and an inertia, which must sometimes make the most inexhaustible patience desperate.

Beaurain puts the strength of the allied armies, in all after their union, at 65 to 70,000 men, consisting of 30,000 Dutch troops, 12,000 Spaniards and 25,000 Germans. We believe that strength has been overstated, and that it cannot be estimated at more than 60,000 men. Beaurain's statements are, presumably, not inaccurate with regard to the Dutch and Spanish troops, the strength of which is, by our writers, almost equally stated; but the German army could not have numbered 25,000 men. That army, at the commencement of the campaign, numbered, according to the highest account, 27,000 men; on the right bank of the Meuse, near Ciney, under the Prince of Baden, there remained a detachment of about 6,000 men, who later, in August, moved to the Rhine and joined Bournonville; Dinant was occupied by 1800 men; the German army, according to Beaurain himself, was considerably weakened by frequent desertions; - the force with which De Souches allied himself with William III must therefore certainly have been less than 20,000 men, and therefore the total strength of the Allies must not have been more than 60,000.

The three armies were now united; yet a sharp division always existed between these powers, and unity of action was not much to be reckoned with; there was still the same division and disagreement among the commanders, and therefore the same wavering in their actions. De Souches was dissatisfied with William III and with Monterey, because they had led him, against his will, half by deception, to a union which he had not wanted, and which he wanted, at the first opportunity, to stop. This displeasure was known and communicated to the officers, to the soldiers; so that there was an almost

hostile attitude among the Imperial troops towards the other troops of the Allies. This was all the more regrettable, because the troops of De Souches were then reckoned to possess the most military value: the Spanish regiments, incomplete and poorly equipped, were at a lower stage, and the Dutch army, still under the impression of misfortunes of 1672, had not yet erased it, nor given convincing evidence of the excellent gallantry it has since displayed.

That army consisted of a right wing and a left wing, each composed of two brigades of cavalry and two brigades of foot soldiers. The right wing was under the command of old Count Maurice of Nassau, former governor of Brazil; the left wing under Waldeck, who later led the Dutch army in the battle of Fleurus. Each brigade of cavalry had 5 or 6 regiments, each brigade of foot soldiers 8 or 9 regiments; moreover, they had not yet been assigned the bodyguard under Ouwerkerk - the later head of the army from the War of the Spanish Succession - and the regiment of guard cavalry under Bentinck, the friend of the Stadholders..

The cavalry of the right wing was under the command of the Earl of Nassau. In the first line, in addition to Ouwerkerk's bodyguard and Bentinck's regiment, there was the first cavalry brigade under Ginkel, the later conqueror of Ireland; that brigade was composed of the 6 regiments of the Count of Nassau, Ginkel, Langerak, Obdam - on whose name the battle at Ekeren later cast a stain, but who before that time was a brave and good soldier, - the Prince of Courland, and Flodorp. The second line of cavalry was under Commissioner General De Mompouillan and was made up of the second brigade under the command of Herr Van der Leck and composed of the five regiments of Mompouillan, Van der Leck, 's Gravenmoer, Hoorenberg and Kroonenburg. The infantry of the right wing was commanded by general Aylva, the brave Frisian nobleman, who in 1672 had defended his province against the Munsters; he had under him Fariaux, who was in command in Maastricht when that fortress succumbed to the French arms in 1673. In the first line stood the first brigade, under Solms, consisting of the 9 regiments of the guard, of Vorst Maurits, Styrum, Solms, Vilaumaire, of the young Prince Maurits, Stokheim, Berkevelt and Turck. In the second line was the second brigade, under Wee, and consisting of the 8 regiments of Aylva, Fariaux, Wee, Thouars, Amema, Schwarzenberg, Mornout and Cassiopyn.

The cavalry of the left wing was led by General Steenhuyse. The first line was formed by the third brigade under Weybnum, and was composed of the 6 regiments of Waldeck, Steenhuyse, Weybnum, Sander van Welle, Eppe and Brederode. In the second line stood the fourth brigade, under Wittgenstein, counting the 5 regiments of Prince Hendrik Casimir van Friesland, Wittgenstein, Prince Frits van Nassau, Kingma and Schellaert. At the Infantry, the third brigade under Heeswijk was in the first line,

containing the 9 regiments of Waldeck, Heeswijk, Sedlenitzky, Mario, Brantswart, Burmania, the Prince of Holstein, Palm - the hero of Woerden and Naarden - and Polants. In the second line stood the fourth infantry brigade, under Erpach, consisting of the 8 regiments of Erpach, Eybergen - the surpriser of Coevorden - Gockinga, Leendorp, Veersse, Laverne and Cornaal.

The dragoons are not spoken of separately; they are, presumably, included with the foot soldiers or with the cavalry; it is known that in those days the dragoons belonged to both arms and fought even more on foot than on horseback. Today, in most European armies, this is the reverse.

On the 28th of July, united at the Méhaigne, near Perwese, the army of the Allies remained idle there for three more days; presumably to discuss the weighty questions of the high command and of the order in which the various armies would march. On the 1st of August the march begins in a westerly direction; that day they come to Couroy; the 2nd at Ottignies aan de Dyle; on the 3rd one crosses that river and reaches Génappe; on the 4th, a camp is set up near Nivelles. Those marches were not large, averaging only over two hours a day; and the movements of the Allies bear all the mark of the uncertainty which there is in the minds of the chiefs. Some of these leaders, especially William III, wanted to see Condé in his position behind the Piéton with the whole united army; others, including De Souches, thought such an act too dangerous, and therefore wished to advance between the French army and Flanders, and lay siege to one of the enemy's strongholds.



*The Allied camp near Nivelles on the 4th of July.*

There were reasons for and reasons against this attack on Condé's position. On the one hand, it was an undeniable truth that to obtain an important result, to give a decisive turn to the war, the fighting of a battle was necessary. William III had recognized this very correctly; and it may be remarked in other campaigns of this Prince, how much he strives to fight a battle, and cares little for the besieging and taking of a single stronghold, an action in which the military chiefs of that time often saw as the aim of the war. A victory over the French army could allow the Allies to penetrate into France, create decisive opportunities; and the ratio of the strength of the two sides - 60,000 men of the Allies against 45 to 50,000 men of Condé - may give some hope of victory.

But, if a victory won by the Allies could bring the war to France, a defeat could also place the Spanish Netherlands in grave danger; one outweighed the other. It has just been said that the supremacy of the Allies, in a battle, may make them somewhat count on victory; but, owing to other circumstances, that victory was again rendered less probable. The troops of the Allies were troops of different nations and, for that reason alone, were inferior to those of the French army. The leadership, on the side of the Allies, was also considered less good than on the French side; - if anyone contradicts this and asserts that, as a general, William III should not be put below Condé, then one can reply: that the later judge, that the descendants, very well and with good reason, can adhere to such a feeling, but that the contemporaries, in 1674, did not so judge; to them, William III was a young general, in whom seemed to be the seed of great qualities, but who could not be compared in the least with the old tried Condé, who had been the victorious head of the army for more than thirty years and, by battle upon battle and victory upon victory, had made himself famous and formidable. It is therefore not at all to be blamed on the chiefs of the Allies that, when comparing the two generals, they saw in this a minority on their side, which made a victory over the French army less likely.

Finally, what added to the uncertainty of such a victory was the strength of the position in which the French chief had placed himself. That position was located in the vicinity of the river Piéton. This small stream, which takes its source a quarter of an hour west of Fontaine l'Évêque, runs for about an hour and a half in a direction from south to north, then turns to the east and, after a little less than an hour having flowed in that direction, it turns south again, in a direction nearly parallel to that followed at first; only in the last part of its course does the brook turn more towards Charleroi and plunge into the Sambre near that city. Between these two parallel parts of the Piéton was the camp of Condé, leaning its back immediately on the westernmost part of the brook, and making

a front towards the eastern part, from which the camp was about three quarters of an hour away. Three quarters of an hour was also nearly the length of the front of the camp, which leaned to the left of the hamlet of Chaufour, to the right of the forest of Lamarche.

Coming from the side of the Méhaigne, this camp was difficult to attack, for the army of the Allies would then have to cross the Piéton, not an hour from the enemy, and that crossing would be difficult, because the brook there was very swampy; moreover, if one crossed the brook, one always had the disadvantage of having a difficult terrain in the back of the army in a battle. The ground between the eastern part of the Piéton and the French camp was also anything but favorable to the attacker; it was covered and intersected, and there were woods and small streams, the village of Trasignies with the castle of that name, the village of Forsies and the castle of La Marche; such a battlefield was therefore very advantageous for the defense, and made the strong and overpowered cavalry of the Allies almost useless. The left wing of the French position was well protected by the small brook of Trasignies, which flows into the Piéton near Chaufour; the right wing was strong through the wood and the castle of La Marche, and through entrenchments that Condé had erected from the wood to where the brook of Trasignies begins. An outflank of the right wing was, moreover, prevented by the armies of Luxembourg, which closed off the space between the right side of the camp of Condé and the Sambre. Finally, when approaching the position of the French from the rear, from the side of Seneffe, the western part of the Piéton was encountered here, which protected the rear of the camp, and in whose immediate vicinity Condé had set up an entrenched line; on that side, to resist the attacking enemy, one could also use the villages and castles of Piéton and Arloimont, and the village of Gouy. The proximity of Charleroi always ensured the supply of provisions to the French camp.

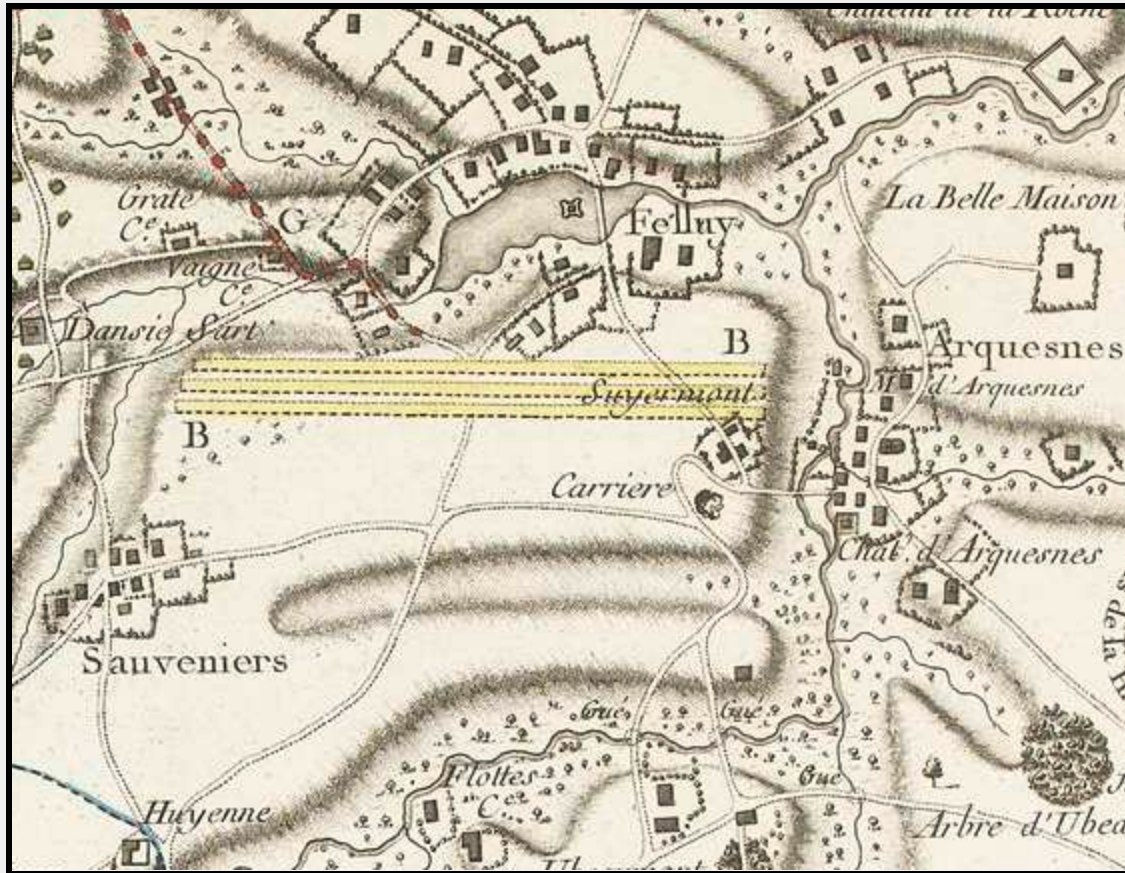
Such a position, even in the more recent wars, would be considered strong; at a time when the armies were so much less mobile, so much less artillery—and artillery of so much less value—carried with them, and therefore so much less fit for attack—at such a time a position as those here described, as exceedingly strong, are reckoned as nearly unassailable; and it is therefore not to be blamed in De Souches that he did not want to go on the attack.

The proposal for this attack, made by William III, was rejected in a court-martial of the chiefs of the Allies, and instead the rather indeterminate decision was taken to "advance between the French army and the fortresses of Flanders," threaten Conde's communications with France, and thus compel him to leave his position without a fight; then the French frontiers were exposed to an invasion, and from the Flemish fortresses behind one could choose which one to besiege. The proposal was so well received

precisely because it was so indefinite, was so inconclusive, because there was so little commitment, so little exposure to danger; for it is not a new, but still a true observation, which Beaurain makes here: that, in the courts-martial of Allies, that action is most always preferred, which is called the most prudent, but which is certainly certainly the slowest and least decisive.

Yet, much as it had been decided not to attack Condé, it was decided to advance to meet this general and approach his position, in order to convince themselves more of the great strength of that position. This decision must be regarded somewhat as a kind of leniency of the other chiefs of the Allies towards William III: determined not to comply with the wish of that Prince to attack Condé, they agreed to approach the French position, assuming the appearance that they were not unwilling to attack, but only refrained from it because of the great strength of the enemy's position.

On the 9th of August, the army of the Allies breaks camp at Nivelles and moves; it marches from the right flank, crosses the little river Senne, and sets up camp on the opposite side, the right wing near the village of Famille-a-Roeulx, the left wing near Arquennes; forward of the right wing was the village of Séneffe, with the woods and brooks present there. They were only an hour away from the French camp.



*The Allied camp near Arquesnes on the 9th of August.*

On the 10th of August they remained in that position. But the reconnaissance made of the enemy position gave the conviction that the position was too strong, and made any attack refrained. But now the question arose: what to do? - The prescients proposed the siege of Ath; the boldest remarked, that the siege of that fortress would lose time, because Ath was well occupied and well provided for, and that, had it been taken, there would have been but an insignificant advantage, that France would not be jeopardized in the slightest; they therefore proposed to continue the march to the French borders, to transfer the war into France itself, to lay siege to some great fortress there, or to penetrate to the Somme or Oise; such an action was much more decisive, and not dangerous, because the Spanish fortress of Cambrai had a strongpoint from which to draw supplies.

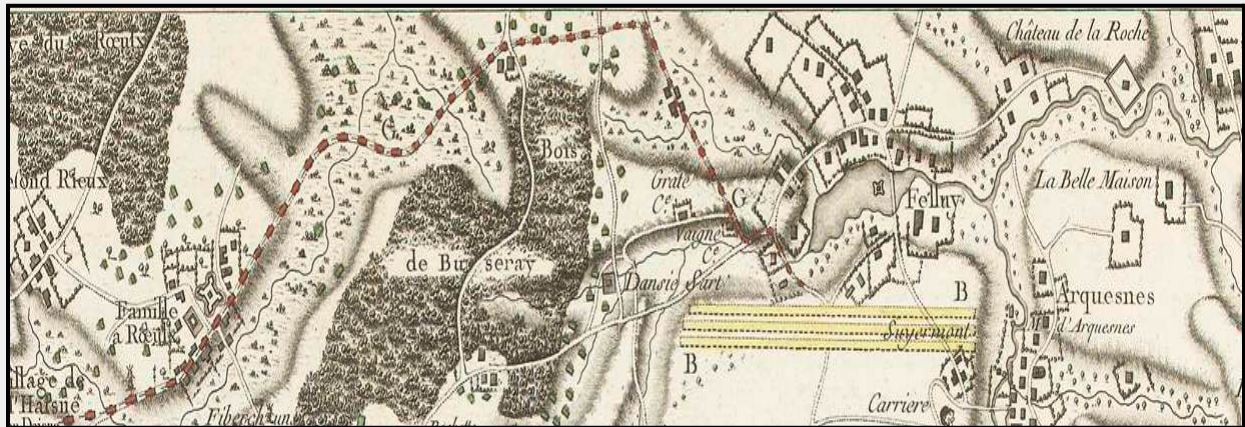
The boldest feeling, this time, prevailed; and it was decided to march on the 11th to Binche, and from thence to advance further into France. In this march one would, for quite some time, move within a short distance of the enemy army, which would then be on its left flank; some chiefs of the Allies, including the Spanish General D'Assentar,

considered this move too dangerous; but the majority--De Souches in particular--denied that danger, pointed out the remote probability of Condé attacking, and showed that if a flank march was to be made at all at close range to the enemy, one could still stand between the marching army and the enemy had a difficult terrain with brooks and woods, by means of which an enemy attack could be sufficiently repelled. This feeling prevailed, and in the early morning of the 11th of August the march commenced.

Three different roads were followed: the leftmost, which was closest to the enemy, served for the cavalry; the middle one for the infantry; the most right for artillery and luggage. The three different armies of the Allies marched separately: in front De Souches with the Imperials; in the middle the Dutch army; behind the Spaniards. To cover the march, a rearguard was posted at Seneffe, consisting of 4,000 horsemen and 7 to 800 dragoons drawn from the three different armies and united under the command of the Prince de Vaudemont.

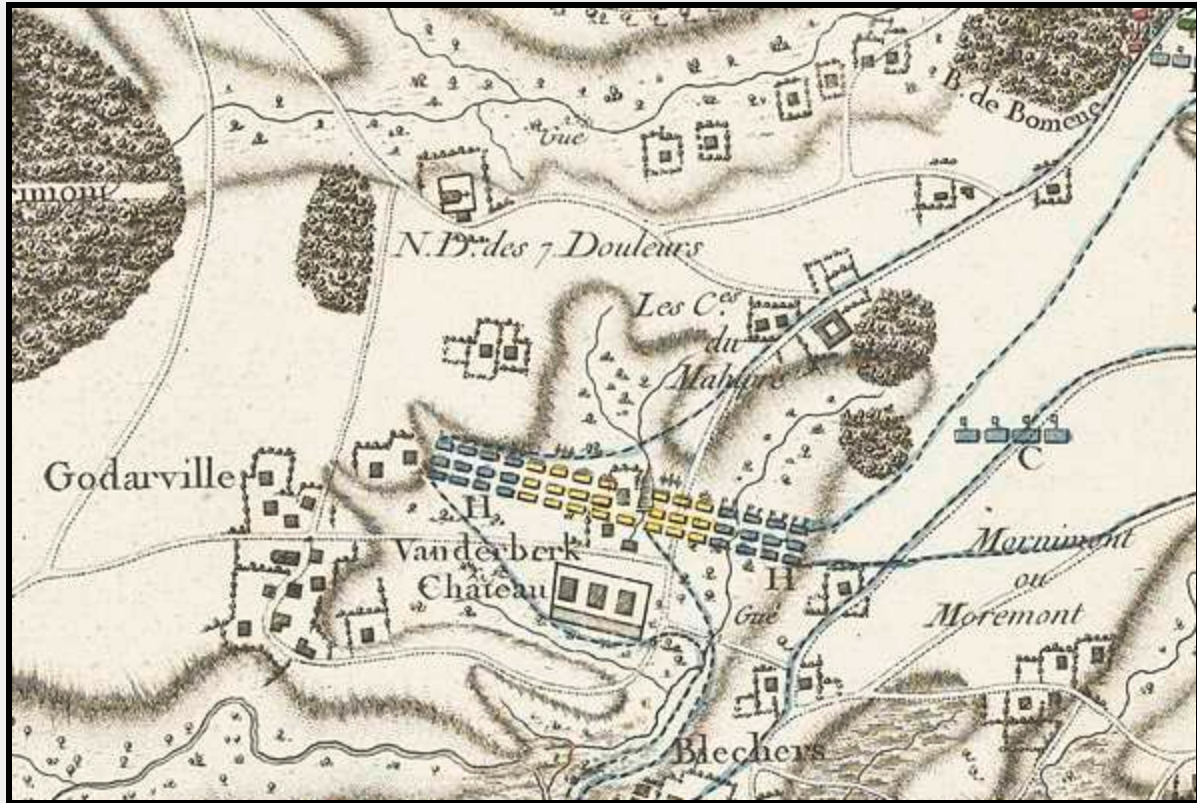
If one examines that march on the map, one sees that, although it was a flank march at a short distance from the enemy, the march in itself presented no danger, and the arrangements made during it were very good: the difficult terrain, the brooks and woods which were on the left flank during the march, made an attack on that side unlikely; and De Vaudemont's strong detachment of cavalry was to cover the back of the army if Condé wanted to attack on that side; that cavalry might delay the enemy long enough to give the army time to turn back and turn against the enemy. - That would also be true, if the march were well executed; but the troops of that time were not very trained in this; the covered, difficult terrain through which they passed, moreover, did not favor the march; and, most importantly, the little unity which existed between the various parts of the Allies' armies should have made it clear that the mutual support of those parts should not be counted too much on, and that, even if the chief of the army could arrive in good time in support of the attacked rearguard, there was no proof that he would actually do so.

Condé, expecting an attack from the enemy, took the greatest vigilance, and, on the 11th, at the crack of dawn, was on horseback to watch the movements of that enemy. Soon he receives word of the march of the Allies, and soon sees their columns advancing in the direction of Famille-a-Roeulx and Seneffe. At once the French general resolves to attack the enemy in his march, to throw himself upon the rearguard at Seneffe, and to beat it before the marching army can come to its aid; the great proliferation of the enemy columns, the difficulty of the roads they follow, and the speed and impetuosity with which his own troops know how to act, all make Condé count on victory.

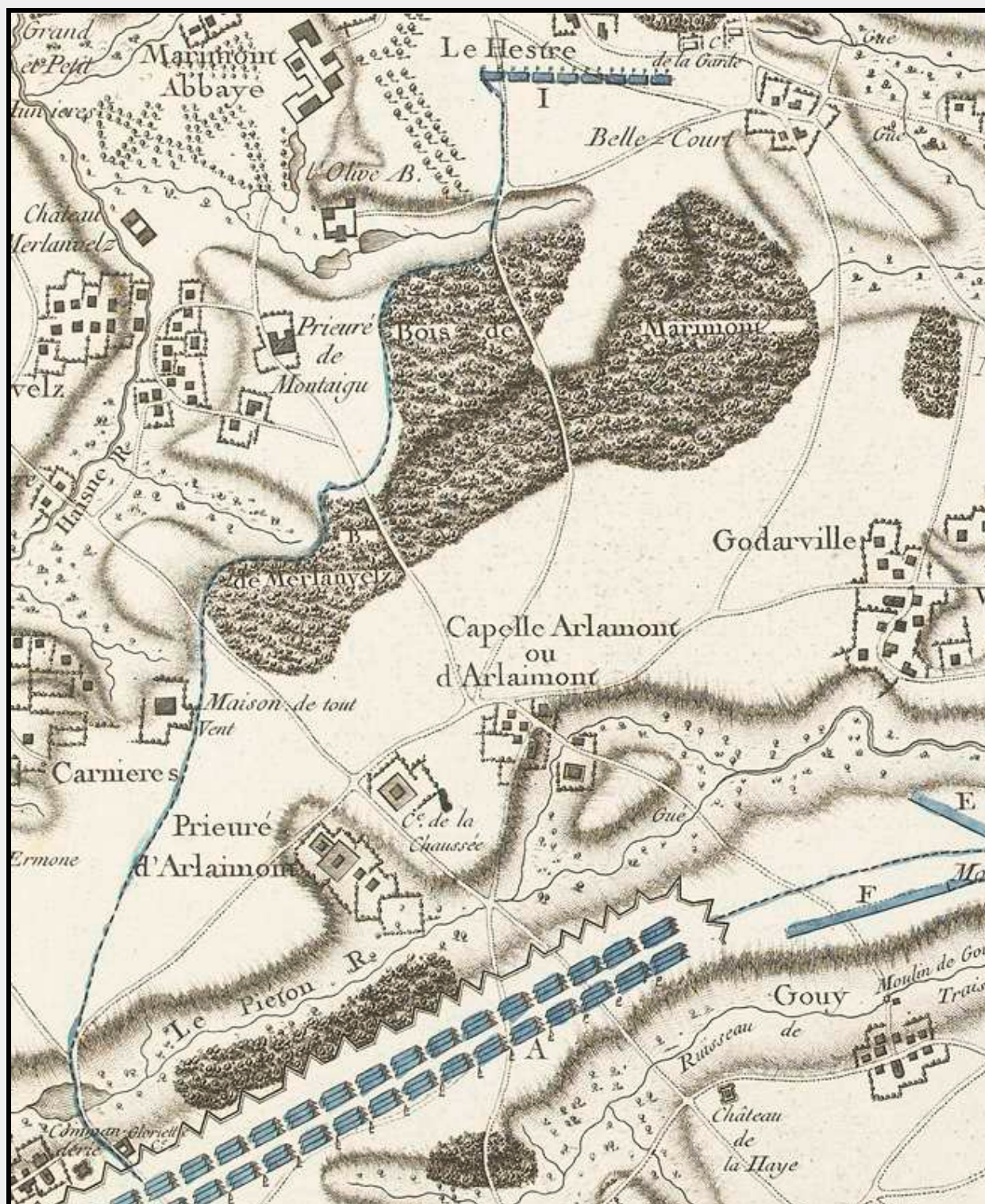


*The Allied flank march in the direction of Famille-a-Roeulx on the 11th of August.*

Decisions, orders and execution followed closely with that general; and instantaneously the orders for the intended attack are made. Already the day before, two regiments of foot soldiers and a brigade of cavalry had been stationed at Gouy, at a ford on the Piéton, to stop the Allies when they tried to cross the brook there; these troops cause Condé to cross the brook, and place themselves between the Piéton and the brook of Séneffe, covered behind a height on which the French have an advanced post. The regiment of Navarre and other infantry, with several regiments of cavalry and dragoons, follow this movement, pass through the Piéton near the village of Montago - near Gouy - and position themselves, also covered, behind the height on the right wing of the troops already there. The infantry has six artillery pieces with them. The whole French army is ordered to break up and move towards Gouy, in order to support, if necessary, the troops who will begin the attack; the Luxembourg section follows the movement, and that captain joins Condé in person. A detachment of 400 horsemen, under S. Clar, has been sent to alarm the chief of the allied columns, to threaten there with a serious attack, and thus to prevent the aid of the attacked rearguard.



*French attack preparations under Conde.*



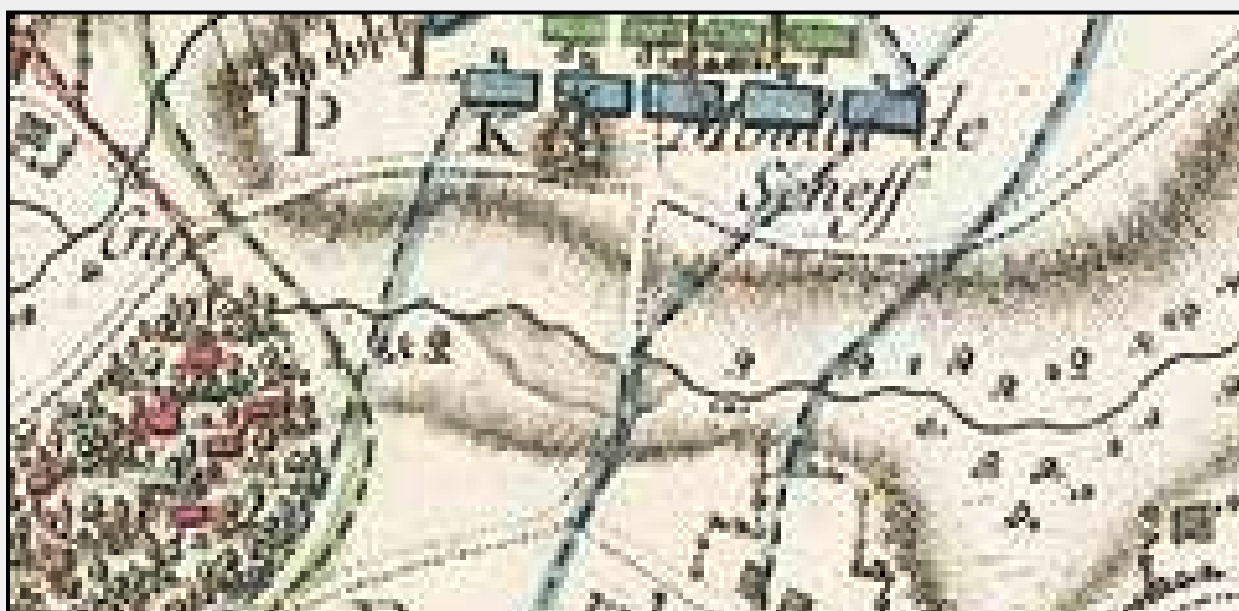
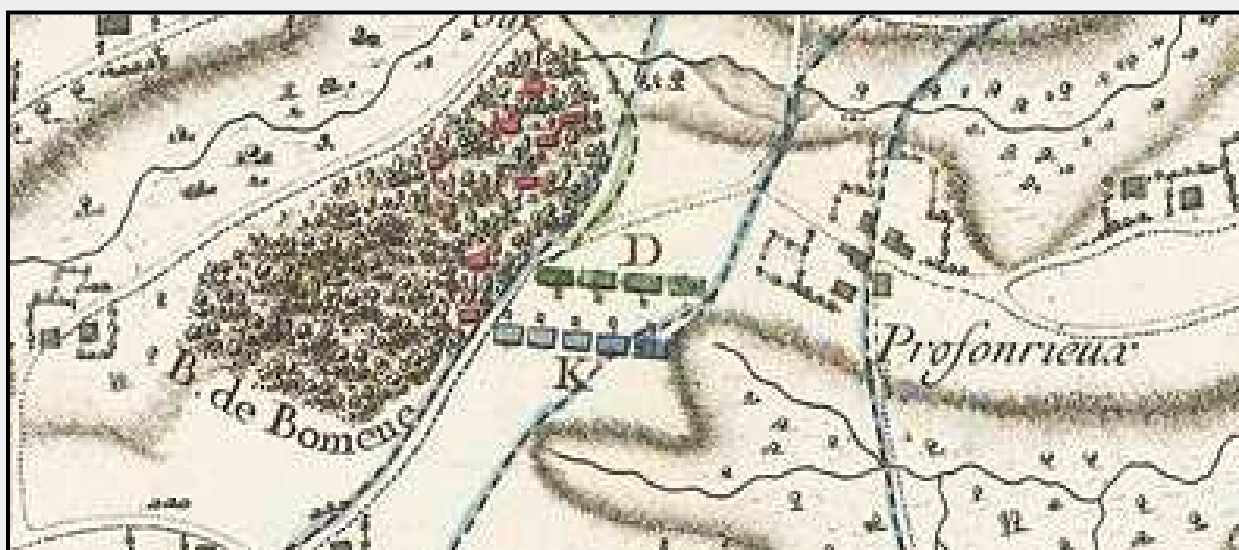
French feint under S. Clar.

De Vaudemont and his cavalry had positioned themselves on a small plain, behind the Sèneffe, and, like that village, situated on the left bank of the brook, which there flows in a northerly direction and plunges further into the Senne. That cavalry had leaned its right wing on marshy ground, through which flowed a branch of the brook of Sèneffe; the left wing leaned against a wood west of Sèneffe. The limited space here had forced the cavalry to be arranged in three lines; 6 squadrons were stationed at the very extremity of the wood, to cover the road followed by the guns and the baggage; the dragoons held Seneffe, and had advanced posts on the height on the right bank of the brook, where the forward French posts also stood. Informed by these dragoons of the imminent movement of the enemy troops, Vaudemont reported it to the Stadtholder, requesting a few battalions of foot soldiers for reinforcements. The Stadtholder immediately ordered the young Count Maurice of Nassau to return to Sèneffe with his regiment and his father's, united in three battalions: the Dutch infantry was placed in a small wood, ahead of the village, on the right bank of the brook. The Stadtholder had rushed to the rear in person, and arrived there before the arrival of the three battalions.

It was then ten o'clock in the morning; the march of the Allies had already lasted several hours, and Condé judged that the enemy's columns were already far enough away that they could not soon support the rearguard, and that the advance of the French army was sufficiently advanced for the attack to take place, to be able to start. He orders De Rannes to advance with a regiment of dragoons, supported by a brigade of cavalry, and to drive off the enemy dragoons and infantry still standing in front of Sèneffe. De Rannes is closely followed by Montal and Moussy, at the head of 3 regiments of foot soldiers and 6 guns.

The chiefs of the Allies, seeing the march of their army far enough advanced, decided to send the rear guard to follow that movement; they therefore sent orders to the infantry and the dragoons, who still stood ahead of Seneffe on the right bank of the brook, to return to the left bank. These troops then joined the dragoons who were already in Sèneffe, in order to defend with them the village and the bridge which was there over the brook. According to the French reports, the houses, the church and the castle of Sèneffe were occupied by the Dutch infantry; this, however, must have been done in great haste, and many defensive measures were certainly not taken, as the attack immediately followed.

Condé's cavalry, therefore, encountered little or no opposition in the advance to Sèneffe; and if there was a further engagement with any of the Allies' dragoons, however, that combat must have been wholly insignificant. But now it was Sèneffe, and the battle for that village was more serious.

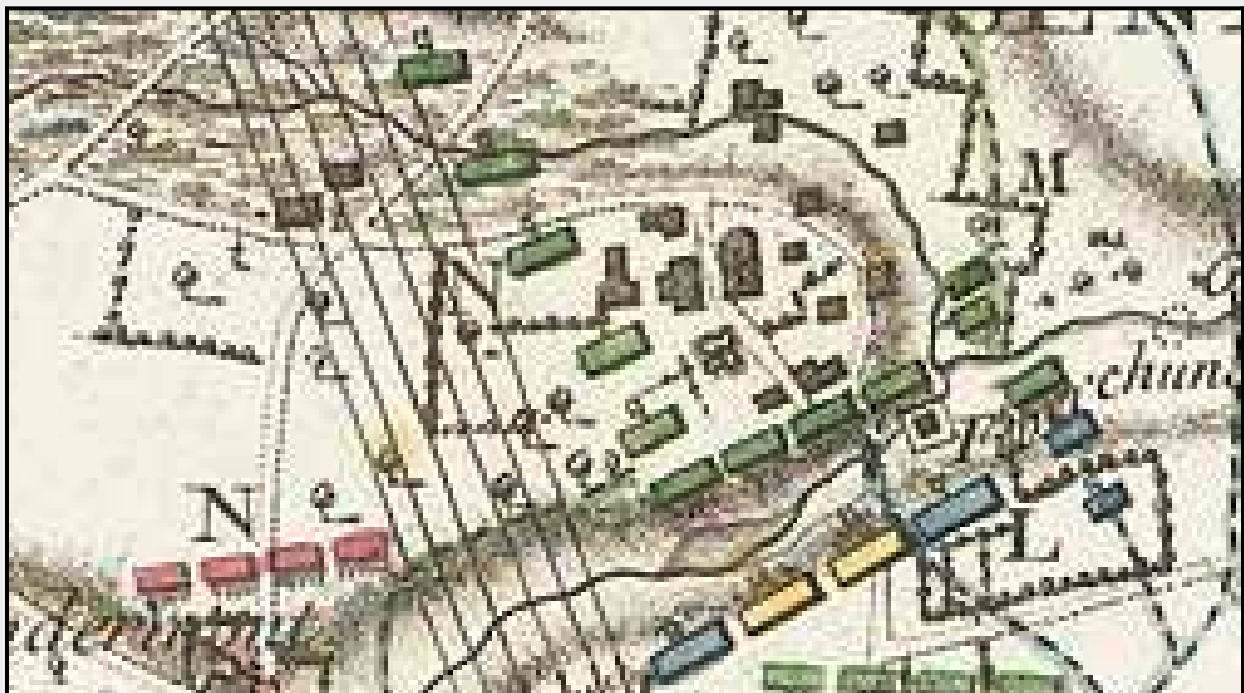


*French forces under De Rannes, Montal, and Moussy drive back the Allied dragoons and infantry detachments in front of Seneffe.*

Condé assigned Montal's dragoons and infantry to storm Séneffe. The six guns would prepare the storm by their fire; the French artillery was so placed near the brook, below the village, that it also fired on the flank of the cavalry of the Allies standing behind Séneffe. The French cavalry was divided; a part, below Fourilles, had to make a circumferential movement in a fairly wide circle, towards the side of the village of Renisart, and at the level of that village, less than half an hour below Séneffe, cross the brook and then turn against the left wing of the Allies; the other part of the French

cavalry was also to cross the brook below Sénéffe, but at a very short distance from the village; Condé led that equestrian division in person, and his son Enghien with Luxembourg and Navailles were with him.

Sénéffe, attacked with great impetuosity by Montal, is captured; with little loss to the attackers, says Beaurain; after a 'good resistance,' says William III, in his report to the States; — and the Stadtholder may be believed when he praises his soldiers, for he is also impartial enough to blame them where they behave badly. The old French infantry must have fought here with great gallantry, inspired as it was by the example of the brave Montal, who was badly wounded in this battle. The Dutch infantry, driven from the village, reassembled under the protection of the cavalry; but when, soon afterwards, it was beaten, the infantry seems to have suffered great casualties too, and the three battalions that had fought there seem to have been all but scattered. The leader, the young Count Maurits, fell into enemy hands.

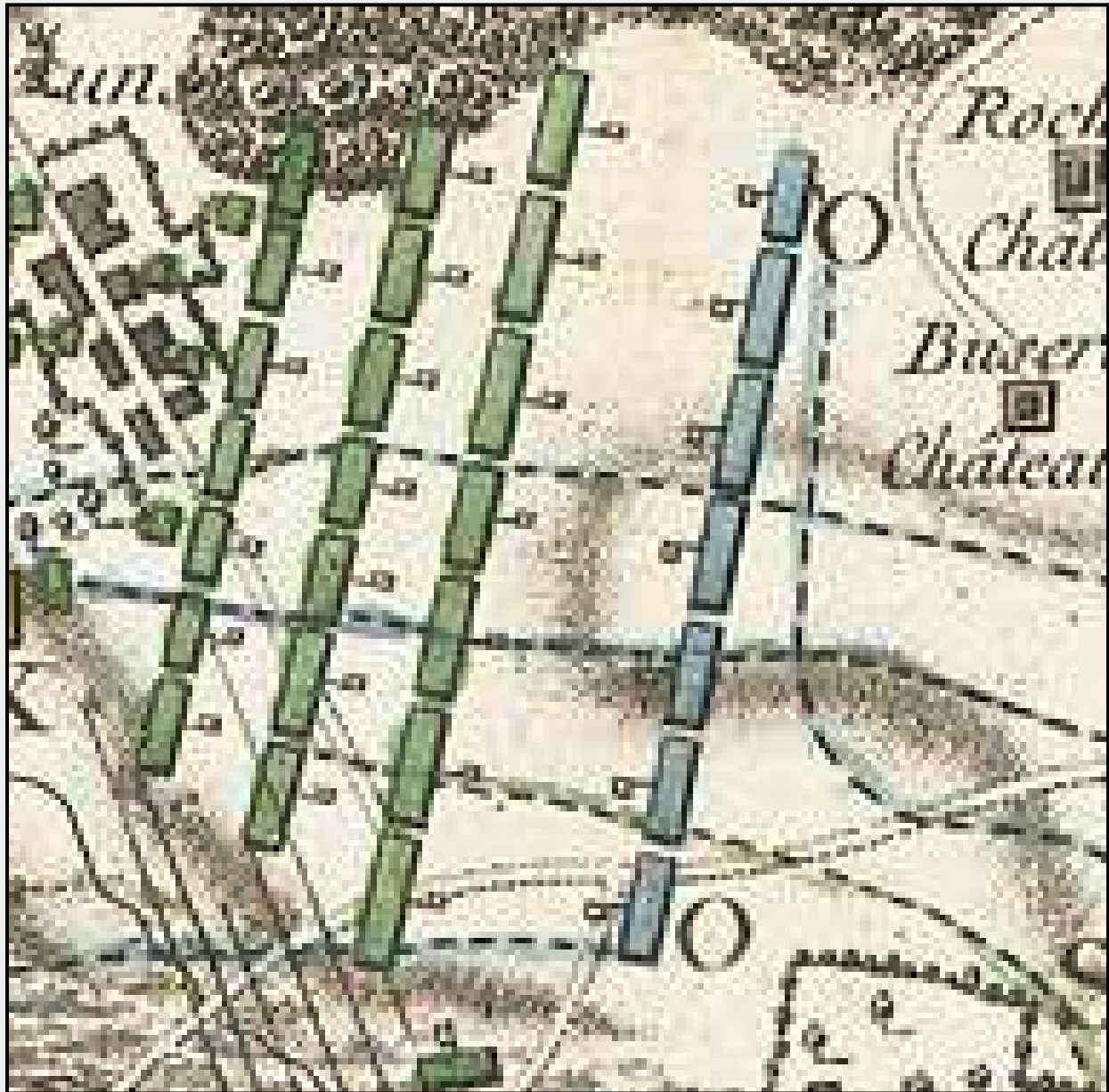


*French forces under Montal seize Seneffe, driving back the Allies there.*

Simultaneously with this attack, Condé had begun to cross the brook with his cavalry; how that crossing took place, over bridges or through fords, is not stated; the latter is the most probable, as it was an altogether insignificant brook. To prevent the crossing of the brook, some squadrons of the Allies advanced, but were beaten back by the French squadrons. William III says in his report that the cavalry of the Allies wanted to attack

the enemy, but were prevented from doing so by the difficulty of the terrain; - one might conclude from this that the cavalry was badly placed.

The French cavalry, having crossed the brook, are arrayed, the right wing leaning against the wood, the left wing of the Allies standing; and the left wing leaned to Sèneffe, who was then already captured. While the French infantry now debouches from the village and opens fire from behind the hedges on the cavalry of the Allies, Condé goes on the attack; placing himself at the head of the Maison du Roi, he therewith kept to the left and attacked the right wing of the Allies' cavalry. Two Dutch squadrons and a Spanish go to meet the French general, but are thrown over and beaten; several renowned commanders, Holstein, Langerak, Ginkel and Solms, are injured and captured in the process. The defeat of those first squadrons makes the most discouraging impression on the rest; four other squadrons, which were to be led against the enemy, turn back; the whole forward line flees, dragging the other two lines with them. It is in vain that William III and Vaudemont throw themselves, sword in hand, among the fugitives, and try to stop them by words and threats; blind fear has banished all sense of duty, and in haste and confusion the cavalry of the Allies leave the field of battle.



*Conde routs Vaudemont's cavalry despite the best efforts of William III and Vaudemont to rally the troops and prevent them from fleeing.*

Such an event is not rare in military history; and she teaches that even the best cavalry can have its moments of weakness. From Frederik's cavalry, who dragged their King in their wild flight at Molwitz, to Napoleon's cavalry, who left the battlefield without a fight at Arcis-sur Aube under the Emperor's eye, examples are manifold, which prove how easily one or the other circumstance may suddenly make such a deep impression on this weapon that it loses all courage, and goes back without a fight; in cavalry everything is on a grander scale, both its advance and its retreat. The hasty flight of the

Allies' cavalry, moreover, can be explained by several circumstances; the unexpectedness of the enemy's attack, the excellent gallantry of the French cavalry, the impression made by Condé's heroic name, the losses suffered by the enemy's artillery--all this had caused discouragement; and that discouragement became general, when the first squadrons were beaten; the front line went all the way back; and the poor manner in which Vaudemont had packed this cavalry into a small space made it almost inevitable that the two rear lines should share in the rout of the front. The swiftness of this cavalry, then, is not so strange—how much one must always condemn it; but our writers say that the Spanish and Imperial cavalry left the battlefield first, and the Dutch only later; but that assertion may be nothing more than an attempt to flatter the pride of the people; and if it were true, it would only prove that the Dutch cavalry had fled only later; it would by no means prove that she had done her duty.

Fourilles, having crossed the brook at Renisart, then attacked the six squadrons placed wholly on the left wing of the Allies at the far end of the forest, covered by the baggage followed. Those squadrons, wholly separated from the main body of cavalry, were discouraged by the defeat of that main force, and feared, if they held out any longer, that they would be cut off by the enemy debouching from Seneffe. So when Fourilles appeared, the squadrons of the Allies retreated in great haste, taking up the road followed by the baggage. The French commander did not take to pursuing the enemy, but rejoined Condé.



*Fourilles routs the Allied squadrons isolated from the whole of Vaudemont's rearguard, forcing them to withdraw together with their baggage train.*

That general had now already gained a splendid advantage, and had largely destroyed the rearguard of the Allies. But this advantage was not enough for Condé, and, on the contrary, only spurred him on to new ventures. While at first he may have had no other intention than to disturb the march of the Allies and inflict losses on the rear of the enemy by a rear attack, he now resolved to pursue his advantage and to inflict a complete defeat on the enemy's army. Such was Condé, that once he was engaged in battle, composure and foresight left him, and he listened only to the promptings of impetuous valour, which sometimes wins great victories, but often brings defeats; the years had not calmed him, and even at the end of his general career he still had all the fire and indecisiveness of a young man. He advances the troops already present south of Séneffe, and the remainder of the French army is ordered to cross the Piéton at Gouy, and to make haste for the battlefield.

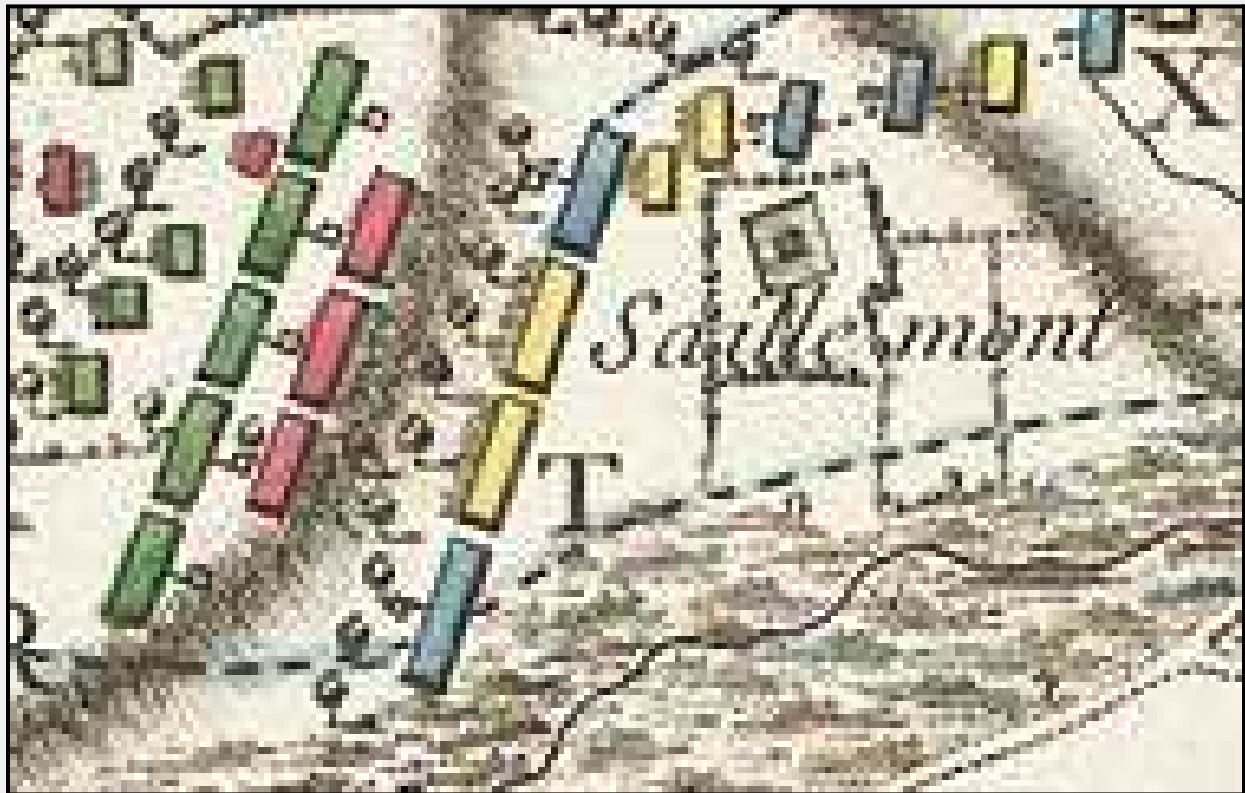
Orange, for his part, undeterred by the first misfortune, has gathered his fleeing troops, and has at once taken the most prudent measures to await the enemy's subsequent attacks in a good position. He takes that position at S. Nicolas-aux-bois, half an hour's walk south of Séneffe. S. Nicolas-aux-bois was then a small hamlet, consisting only of a priory and some houses belonging thereto; but, surrounded with orchards and hedges, it was very favorable to defense. Onward, north of the hamlet, on the side of Séneffe, was a small plain suitable for the placement of a detachment of cavalry; the approaches to that plain, from the side of Seneffe, were rendered difficult by the presence of hedges and orchards to the left, or west, of it; consequently, occupying that covered ground with infantry, one could already await the enemy in front of S. Nicolas in a position which was favorable, and difficult to overcome, because it leaned to the right of the brook of Séneffe and to the left of the intersected terrain.

With great skill, William III had at once taken advantage of the advantages which this position yielded. The first Dutch force he found at his disposal was the infantry brigade of Wee, from which, however, a few battalions were absent to cover the baggage. The Dutch infantry was immediately placed in and near the hamlet of S. Nicolas; the regiments of Aylva and Schwarzenberg, together with a battalion from that of Thouars, were ordered to occupy the hedgerows and orchards forward from S. Nicolas to the side of Séneffe. On the plain north of S. Nicolas stood Spanish cavalry, under Villa Hermosa and D'Assentar; the horsemen who had fled from Séneffe gathered at it, while what remained of the infantry joined the brigade of Wee. The Dutch brigades of Heeswijk, Erpach and Solms, together with the cavalry, had already received orders to turn back,

and then approached the village of Fay, a quarter of an hour south of S. Nicolas; as commander of the Solms brigade, of which some battalions had already fought at Sèneffe, Vilaumaire is mentioned after the capture of Solms. De Souches had already reached the Haine with the Imperial army, a few hours south of Sèneffe, when he received the first report of the battle being fought near that village; it was some time before the Imperial commander complied with the invitation of the Stadtholder to return in support of the attacked part of the army. The Spanish infantry is nowhere particularly mentioned; when it is noted that the whole Spanish force numbered only about 12,000 men, that perhaps half of it consisted of cavalry and dragoons, and that infantry would also have been present with the baggage, it is clear that on the site of the fight the Spanish infantry will have had but insignificant strength.

Condé's cavalry had pursued those of the Allies as far as the hedgerows and orchards north of S. Nicolas, then halted, and arrayed themselves within a musket-shot's distance from those hedgerows; here she waited for the infantry and dragoons coming from Sèneffe. When these had arrived, the cavalry divided on the two wings; the infantry positioned themselves in the center, and the six guns, stationed on the right wing, immediately began to open fire on the enemy's position. When this fire had been extinguished for a short time, Condé advanced the infantry and the dragoons to the hedgerows; the same gallantry as at Seneffe was shown here by the attackers, but they met still more vigorous resistance, as William III personally exhorted his soldiers to duty.

The fight for the hedges initially remained inconclusive; but Condé, impatient at this delay, now orders the cavalry to push through the roads into the midst of those hedges, and so attack the Dutch infantry in the rear. The Maison du Roi is there again to undertake that dangerous task; Fourilles puts himself at the head of two squadrons of excellent cavalry; Condé and Enghien follow with a third squadron; and, in spite of the difficulty of the roads and in spite of the gunfire of the Dutch, the French cavalry pushes through, throws back some enemy squadrons, which the enemy intends to use to prevent debouching, and now rushes upon the Dutch infantry, who are in confusion. The French infantry and dragoons, now less opposed, seize the orchards and hedgerows, and thereby, in their turn, make the rest of the French cavalry advance easily. That cavalry penetrates the plain between the Hedges and S. Nicolas, and is there arrayed against those of the Allies; a second time there is a cavalry battle, a second time to the detriment of the Allies, who have already been somewhat confused by the defeat of the regiments of Aylva, Schwarzenberg and Thouars, and of the first squadrons that wanted to stop the Maison du Roi. The Dutch and Spanish cavalry are thrown into confusion, and take refuge behind S. Nicolas; this hamlet, heavily manned with infantry, holds back the victorious French cavalry, and behind this strongpoint a strong line of the Allies and cavalry reassembles.



*Conde drives the Allies back from the hedges in front of S. Nicolas.*

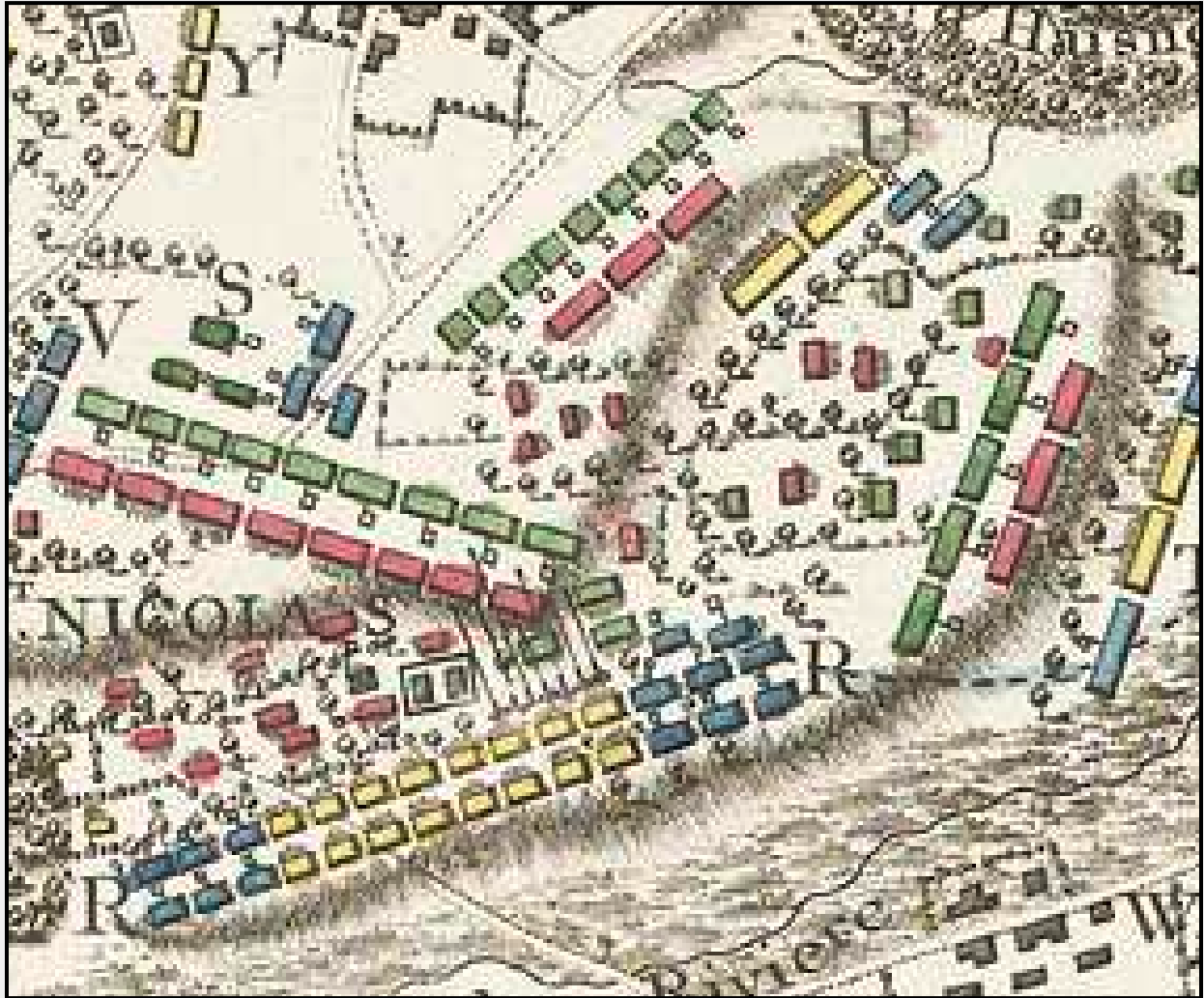
Condé now also orders the hamlet of S. Nicolas to be attacked; but one of his second-in-commands, Fourilles, ventures to point out to him that the enemy has a strong position there, which it may not be possible to gain, or only at the cost of great losses, especially as that enemy resists so vigorously. The general answers him angrily: "That he asks not advice, but obedience, and that he has long known him for one who is stronger in reasoning than in battle." , sentenced in Condé; on the other hand, however, it is also difficult to understand how, on a battlefield, a second-in-command objects when he is given the order to attack; if he was ordered not to attack, perhaps those objections might be useful; at the command of attack, never.

Fourilles puts himself at the head of a part of the infantry, and makes a vigorous attack on the enemy's position; but the resistance he meets there is too great; his attack is repulsed, and he himself, leading his soldiers with great gallantry, is struck by a musket-ball which ends his life. Condé learns of the death of this valiant, and wishes to avenge him by victory; he must drive the enemy here, do as he commanded Fourilles, or erase by a glorious death his injustice to that leader. He puts himself at the head of infantry and dragoons, and charges with them at the abbey of S. Nicolas; valiant

resistance he meets there; but what can stop the formidable French general, who, furious, like the true image of the god of war, plunges into the thick throngs of the enemies, and by his example raises the valor of his men to the highest! The Dutch troops cannot withstand this terrible shock for long; they are thrown out of the abbey of S. Nicolas, and, which escapes the steel of the French elites, are driven back to the cavalry behind the abbey.

Condé's foot soldiers and dragoons now positioned themselves in the houses, hedges and orchards; under its protection, the French cavalry advanced at various points, and arrayed themselves on the south side of S. Nicolas. Here the cavalry of the Allies are met, and a cavalry battle takes place for the third time; the details of that battle, muddled up as usually a cavalry battle is, cannot here be given; but so much seems to be evident from this, that here too the valor of the Dutch and Spanish squadrons was not equal to that of the enemy. The Allies, however, did not lack excellent and courageous commanders: William III and Hendrik Casimir, the young Stadtholder of Friesland, were everywhere in the thick of the battle; Waldeck, leading his squadrons against the enemy, was wounded and with difficulty escaped captivity; Villa Hermosa boldly led his cavalry; and of particular distinction was the Spaniard D'Assentar, who, fighting valiantly, was wounded seven times and, having fallen into the enemy's hands, shortly afterwards gave up the heroic spirit. But all the valor of the captains could not bring victory to the cavalry of the Allies; that cavalry was still too much impressed by the two previous defeats; she was at last overthrown and driven fleeing back to the village of Fay.

After the capture of S. Nicolas-aux-bois, the French army also succeeded in reaching the baggage of the Allies; Luxembourg threw himself upon it, dispelling the covering, took and plundered or burned a number of chariots, while the rest were scattered in all directions. This disadvantage only affected the Spanish and Dutch troops, as De Souches had already sent back the baggage of the Imperials in good time.



*Conde seizes S. Nicolas, driving the Allies back once more. However, whether or not he realizes it, his impetuous nature shall snatch a bloody draw from the jaws of victory.*

It was then two o'clock in the afternoon. The battle had lasted nearly four hours, and had been decidedly in favor of the French army; thrice, at Seneffe, forward of S. Nicolas, and finally at S. Nicolas, it had driven the Allies from their positions; and, though it had suffered considerable casualties from the ever-increasing resistance of the enemy, yet that enemy had suffered greater losses; and a number of prisoners, banners taken, and baggage seized, would have given Condé every right to claim victory, had he then ended the battle. But such a prudent act was entirely contrary to the character of the French general, for whom the advantages gained served only as a spur to new ventures; he would do all that was possible, complete the defeat of the enemy, and decide, by one blow, the outcome of the campaign, possibly of the whole war. Bringing forward his troops with speed, he prepared himself to attack the enemy once more, leaving no time for him to take up a new defensive position. This daring advance

of the French general—which, had he faced a lesser army, might easily have brought about a glorious victory—resulted here in a disastrous battle, almost equivalent to defeat; because one had to deal with valiant troops, and with an army chief who knew how to make use of that valor with excellent skill.

Orange, not in the least beaten down by the disadvantages experienced, and, on the contrary, growing in boldness of spirit the more formidable his enemy proved himself, had, immediately after the loss of S. Nicolas-aux-bois, taken up a new position at Fay, which was very strong. Fay was a large village, with houses quite scattered, but connected by fields of hops, surrounded by strong hedges, so that each of the fields could be individually defended; in the vicinity of the village there were similar fields surrounded by hedges. A church and a castle at Fay were very favorable for defense. The village itself was, in relation to the rest of the position, a point of prominence; as a bastion in respect of the courtines, to use that oft-used comparison here. The right side of the position extended north of Le Hestre, a hamlet about fifteen minutes southeast of Fay. That right side was made up of orchards surrounded by hedges; forward and to the right was a swamp; - these obstacles did not completely close off the entrance, and there were some open areas through which the cavalry could penetrate; but this always had to be done under the fire of the infantry, who were placed in the hedges and orchards. At the very extremity of the right wing there were woods and swamps, from which one of the tributaries of the brook of Sèneffe springs. - The left side of the position was formed by a ravine or small valley chasm, beginning behind the village of Fay, and through which flowed a small, quite insignificant brook; that gorge of the valley stretched almost to the great forest of Roeulx, which began a quarter of an hour west of Fay. Behind Fay, or to the south, was a vast open plain, well suited to cavalry, and rising slowly so as to dominate the terrain ahead.

William III took up position here, with the infantry brigades of Heeswijk, Erpach and Solms, of which some battalions had already been fighting at Sèneffe; with the cavalry, and with the Imperial army, which, returning from the Haine, reached Fay about one o'clock in the afternoon. No mention is made of the Spanish troops other than that some Spanish infantry, under De Grana, took part in the defense of Fay; - it is probable that the greater part of the Spanish army had already lost all fighting ability through the earlier fighting. The artillery seems to have arrived in part then, too, and was at once placed at the roads and entrances of Fay, and employed in the defense of the valley gorge; the infantry, in great numbers, were stationed at Fay, behind the hedges and in the orchards, and at the valley cleft of the left wing; even the eastern edge of the forest of Roeulx was occupied with infantry. Strong reserves were placed on the open plain behind Fay, consisting mainly of the cavalry, to which the already beaten had also joined. All indications agree that this position was chosen with great prudence in Fay's

case, and must have had very great strength. The Imperial troops made up mainly the left wing, however a few battalions of them must have been in Fay; the Dutch occupied this village and the right part of the position.

Condé, as far as possible, hastened the march of his regiments, which came in pursuit, over Gouy and Séneffe, on the field of battle. With the corps already present, the French general wanted to attack the village of Fay in person; Luxembourg was to attack the left wing of the Allies, the gorge of the valley, using in part for this purpose the troops which had taken the baggage of the Allies; Navailles was to attack the enemy's right wing. The nature of the terrain meant that these attacks could mainly be made by infantry only; and that the cavalry, placed in the rear, should wait until some hedges and orchards had been seized, and, between them, penetrated the plain beyond Fay. An outflank of the enemy position was impracticable; and the front attacks could also be little prepared by artillery fire, as a good part of the French artillery was still behind, and the Allies were superior in this weapon. But Condé counted on the valor of his soldiers, and on the discouragement which three successive disastrous engagements would have brought upon the enemy.

Now a battle begins, which lasts all day long, and even by the moonlight, is carried on well into the evening; a battle in which both sides display a valor bordering on bitterness, and in which the glory must be as much the part of him that attacked as of him that defended; of him that was conquered, as of him that prevailed victoriously. Fay is attacked at three different points: on the left by the regiments of Enghien, Condé, Conti and Auvergne; in front by the King's regiment, that of Royal des Vaisseaux, of Navarre, and that of the Queen; directly by the French and Swiss Guards, and by the Swiss regiments of Stoupa, Erlach, Pfeiffer and Salis. Of course, that those regiments should not attack simultaneously, but relieve themselves successively in that fierce and prolonged battle; even some of these corps, at the beginning of the battle, were not yet on the battlefield; some were, later on, also used against the other parts of the Allies' position.

Condé and his son Enghien led these troops against the enemy in person, and threw those regiments with impetuosity against the Hollanders, who received them with artillery and musket fire, and at last took up arms. Orange, present wherever there was fighting, was everywhere the soul of defense; and his soldiers, enthralled by the example of their general, fought with as much valor as those old tried French regiments, which were radiant with the glory of twenty victories. However fiercely the attack was made, it was always repulsed; some of the outer hedges and orchards may have been seized by Condé's troops, but the village proper remained in constant possession of the Dutch and Imperial battalions; on the right attack the French regiments succeeded once

in penetrating the village and capturing three artillery pieces; but William III, advancing at once with a reserve, threw back the enemy and recovered the lost pieces. When, in the evening, the battle ended here, the Hollanders, undivided, were in Fay's possession; and Condé's troops, from attackers, had become defenders.

To the left of the Allies' position, Luxembourg's attack had been equally unlucky. The commander's troops had been somewhat disarrayed by the plunder of the Allies' baggage, and it was some time before they could be united for the attack; "Then," says Beaurain, "the discipline of the French troops was not equal to their bravery."

Luxembourg attacks the eastern edge of the forest of Roeulx; but the infantry of the Allies stationed there repels that attack; - still the French commander positioned himself in battle array between Fay and that bush, holding back the defenders of the bush by some infantry and dragoons. He advances the rest to the assault on the gorge of the valley; and Condé supports that attack with a part of the troops intended against Fay.

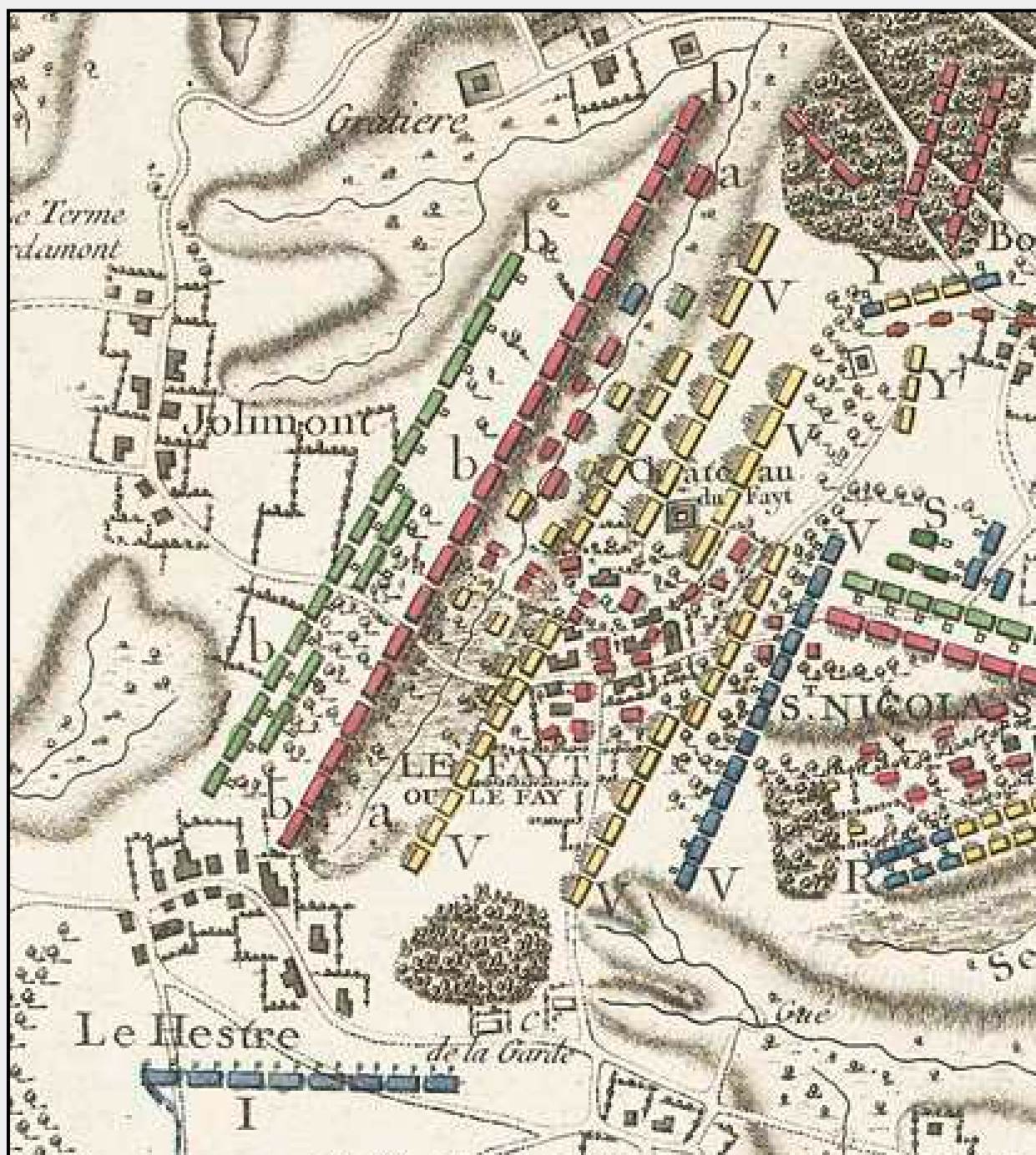
It is clear that the capture of the valley gorge was of the utmost importance to the French troops; for when this was done their cavalry could come into action, attack the Allies' cavalry on the other side of the valley gorge, attack Fay at the rear, and so end the opposition of that village, and destroy the troops stationed there. Orange, recognizing the great importance of that valley gorge, had therefore heavily occupied it with infantry and artillery; while Imperial cavalry, under Chavagnac, was placed in support thereof.

The valley gorge, deep and steep on the whole, was, however, passable for the cavalry at some points, especially at the beginning, near Fay. In one of the attacks made by Condé's troops here with the usual gallantry, they succeeded, near Fay, in passing through the gorge of the valley, throwing back the Imperials, and capturing artillery; some French squadrons then penetrated the plain on the south side of the valley gorge; but William III, giving the enemy no time to expand, made those squadrons charge at once through Chavagnac's cavalry. The French cavalry was thrown to pieces, and fled behind the valley gorge; the French foot soldiers who had penetrated there were driven back; and the Allies recovered the lost guns. The Imperial cavalry now, in turn, charged north of the ravine, but were thrown back by Condé's.

Condé wanted, at about 5 o'clock in the afternoon, two battalions of the Gardes Suisses to resume the attack on the valley gorge; but those battalions which had already been fighting at Fay had suffered so much there that they had little or no fighting ability; this dissuaded the French general from his intention, and he contented himself to leave that infantry in array north of the valley gorge. There the infantry, as well as the cavalry, had been exposed for a few hours to the artillery fire which Chavagnac directed on it, of six

pieces, - of four, says William III's report -, placed behind the valley gorge; these pieces must have been very close to the French troops, since, according to Chavagnac's statements, the two sides even got into an altercation. Chavagnac, who formerly, during the disturbances of the Fronde, had fought under the banners of Condé, and may therefore have some affection for the French troops, praises the admirable fortitude with which those troops withstood the fire of his artillery; with every bullet that hit the French squadrons, 'I never heard anything else;' he says, 'but: it's nothing, children, plug in; - and in an instant, their ranks which had been cut down by the cannon was replenished. I shouted out to them that it was something after all; - one answered me that he would take revenge by tonight; - and I answered them that they should take this fire while waiting in anticipation. Judge for yourself whether we were close!"

This holding of the French cavalry under the artillery fire directed at it from behind the valley gorge was necessary to protect Condé's right wing against the undertakings of the Allies in its attacks on Fay. William III made an attacking movement here, towards the side of the forest of Roeulx. A strong detachment of cavalry and foot soldiers advanced from behind the left wing of the Allies through the forest of Roeulx to attack the enemy on the right flank; the eastern edge of that forest, which had remained in the possession of the Allies, seemed likely to favor the debouching of that encircling division. Opposite this edge of the wood, Luxembourg had left behind the brigade of foot soldiers of Picardy with a few squadrons of dragoons; perceiving this outflanking movement of the Allies, Luxembourg in person, with the brigade gens d'armes, proceeded to that extreme right wing. The French commander, placing his troops at the edge of the wood and at an open part of the wood, thereby restrained the Allies and prevented them from debouching from the wood. Luxembourg, thinking himself strong enough here, even sent a squadron of gendarmerie back to the side of the valley gorge.



*The French launch repeated attacks against Fay and the valley gorge behind it. However, all of them are repulsed by the stalwart defense of the Allies.*

On the left wing of the French, Navailles had fought with equal valor, but with no success. The repeated attacks of his infantry on the hedgerows and orchards occupied by the Dutch were all repulsed; and the Dutch cavalry, from time to time making

offensive movements through the open parts of the terrain, engaged with Condé's cavalry in battles, not advantageous, not unfavorable, but indecisive for either side.

Only towards 7 o'clock in the evening did the chance of war seem to have turned slightly in favor of Navailles. Two battalions of William III were stationed on a single meadow, surrounded by a strong hedge; to the rear they were supported by 12 cavalry squadrons. Navailles advanced against this part of the position, with infantry and cavalry; the infantry, led by De Moussy, consisted of the regiment Royal des Vaisseaux and parts of other regiments; among the cavalry, the renowned Maison du Roi is mentioned.

While the French infantry now takes up a covered position in the vicinity of the meadow, the cavalry advances to attack the hedge position in the rear. Five Dutch squadrons meet that cavalry, but are beaten, mainly by the effect of the fire of the French infantry. The seven other Dutch squadrons now advance and in their turn throw Navailles' cavalry into disarray; but they one receive reinforcements, attack again, and after a fierce and long fight in the immediate vicinity of the hedges occupied by the Dutch infantry, the cavalry of the stadtholder is beaten and thrown to pieces. De Moussy's infantry closely followed the victorious cavalry; plunging impetuously into the hedgerows, penetrating them and defeating the two Dutch battalions, the greater part of whom were killed or taken prisoner.

This action might, perhaps, have threatened the Allies with a predicament, had not vigorous measures been taken at once to counter the enemy's penetration. William III and the gray Count Maurice of Nassau immediately rush with cavalry to the right wing, collect the beaten squadrons and attack Navailles, which has meanwhile also been reinforced by new troops. A battle takes place, which remains undecided for a long time, but in which the Dutch eventually succeed in throwing back their opponent. The gallantry of a number of commanders contributed most to that victory; and among these captains the young Stadtholder himself and the seventy-six-year-old Count Maurits, who, like another Blucher, notwithstanding his old age and the serious illness from which he had not yet fully recovered, distinguished himself here by heroism, "without yielding to the youngest," noted William III.

The hours, meanwhile, had passed, the day was drawing to a close, and the gathering darkness seemed to put an end to the battle. Except for a few regiments from Luxembourg, all the corps of the French army had arrived on the field of battle, and fought on some part of the Allies' position, and there had seen their ranks thinned by the enemy's steel and fire. The assailant, exhausted with fatigue, weakened by the terrible casualties he suffered, was at last almost deprived of all fighting ability; at the end of the

day it was mostly only Condé who wanted to continue the fight. That general saw at last that he could not impart his tireless temper to all, and that, valiant and excellent as his soldiers were, there were limits to their efforts. Gradually, therefore, he broke off the battle: the cavalry moved back a little at first; but the infantry continued, in the moonlight, from 10 or 11 o'clock to continue the musket fire against the covered infantry of the Stadtholders, and a number of French soldiers were killed in those last moments of the battle. Condé, intending to resume the battle the next day, ordered his troops to remain on the battlefield, and to rest, arms in hand, among the dying and wounded; he himself, wrapping himself in a cloak, threw himself down behind a hedge, impatiently longing for the dawn, which must be the sign for him of a new battle, of a new victory.

The Allies had also remained in their positions; and both armies now rested there, unmoving and silent, when suddenly, around midnight, a loud gunfire was heard, probably caused by the premature firing of a sentry, or by some other fortuitous circumstance. A number of men on both sides were killed as a result, and great confusion arose in the French army. The cavalry, which had camped a little to the rear, disintegrated completely, and some time elapsed before they could be reassembled. This confusion, and the reports coming in of the great losses suffered by the French army, finally made Condé decide to abandon his first intention, and not to start a new battle, which was likely to lead to the complete destruction of the French army and pave the way to France for the enemy. He ordered the retreat; — and that retreat must have been a necessity, that such an order came from such a general. The cavalry began to pull off first; the infantry followed them at the end of the night, and day was already breaking, when the last troops of the rearguard left the field of battle. In the morning between 8 and 9 o'clock the French army was again in the camp near the Piéton.

This retreat, at first unnoticed by the Allies, was later not hindered by them either; for they too were considerably weakened by the bloody battle. Orange was in favor of continuing this struggle; but other commanders, especially De Souches, strongly opposed it, and their sentiments prevailed; two hours after the French army had left the battlefield, the Allies also began their retreat. That retreat took place first to Haine St. Pierre and Haine St. Paul, where they halted, allowed themselves to rest for a few hours, and celebrated the victory achieved at Seneffe by a triple salvo. The wounded and the remains of the baggage had meanwhile been sent to Mons; the army then marched thither also, and, on the evening of the 12th of August, encamped near that stronghold.

As in almost every battle, the accounts of the losses of the two sides in that battle of Seneffe are varied and conflicting. Beaurain claims that the French army lost at least 7 to 8,000 men killed and wounded, but the Allies lost 10 to 12,000 men, including,

however, the wounded, who were among the 3,500 prisoners whom Condé took to his camp; on the French side the number of prisoners must have been less. Of course, according to our writers, the losses of the French army have been greater, those of the Allies less. It may be assumed most likely that each of the two armies suffered nearly the same loss; but that, by the very nature of the combat, the French army must have suffered more in dead and wounded, the Allies more in prisoners.

Among the Allies, it was the Dutch army that had contributed the most to the battle and suffered the greatest losses; then followed the Spanish army; while the Imperial troops had lost the least. Notable commanders on either side had been killed or wounded. Among the former, the French mention Fourilles; among the second, Luxembourg, Montal, Rochefort, Feuquières, and Enghien son of Condé. Among the Allies, d'Assentar, Wee and Palm, the brave captain of the naval soldiers, had fallen, and Waldeck, Erpach, Solms, Aylva, Ginkel, Ouwerkerk and a number of other commanders had been wounded. The French had captured but few artillery; according to their own figures only 2 guns and 2 mortars; but they boast of the capture of 107 banners and of the taking or destruction of a few thousand chariots. There may be exaggeration in those statements; so the reports from our side say that the wagon-train only broke up and afterwards largely returned to the army, so that only about fifty wagons were taken by the enemy. The latter, however, does not seem correct; on the contrary, it must be inferred from various circumstances that a great deal of the baggage of the Dutch and Spanish armies was lost here at Seneffe; and that the necessity of restoring that lost has been a chief cause of the inaction of the Allies after the battle of Seneffe.