

Forum: Joint Crisis Committee

Issue: the Waterloo Campaign

Character: Dominique Vandamme

the Waterloo Campaign

Following his return from exile, in the Mediterranean island of Elba, Napoleon arrived in Paris, on March 25th of 1815, once more crowning himself the *French Emperor*. Soon after, the other European powers, being Russia, the United Kingdom, Austria and Prussia, formed the “Seventh Coalition”, to attempt to overthrow Napoleon, once again. However, Russia’s long distance from the Rhine region, delayed the Coalition’s invasion of France, to early July, giving Napoleon enough to organise a defence, and begin forming an army. However, before the invasion was launched, Napoleon decided to attack the Prussian and English forces, gathering in Belgium, in order to defeat half of the Seventh Coalition, before the Austrians and the Russians were able to arrive. The sides began to clash, in June of 1815, as Napoleon’s Waterloo campaign began. In accordance with Napoleon’s previously employed tactics, the French army attempted, and succeeded somewhat, to divide the combined Prussian-English force. On June 16th, Marshal Ney defeated the Duke of Wellington in the Battle of Quatre Bras, while Napoleon Bonaparte defeated Prince Blücher, in the Battle of Ligny, on the 17th of June. As Napoleon took command of the French left wing, in the Battle of Waterloo, against the British, he left Marshal Grouchy in charge of the right wing, to engage the Prussians. While Grouchy won the following Battle of Wavre, he was unable to prevent the Prussians from linking with the English force in Waterloo, which was a significant factor to Napoleon’s ensuing defeat.

Dominique Vandamme

Dominique Vandamme was born in 1770, in France, and enrolled in the army, in 1786. In the French Revolutionary Wars, he served as a Brigadier General, later enrolling in Napoleon’s other campaigns. In the Waterloo Campaign, Vandamme was in command of the “III Corps”, under Marshal Grouchy, urging him to join Napoleon in Waterloo, rather than pursuing the Prussian force, which Grouchy elected to do so.