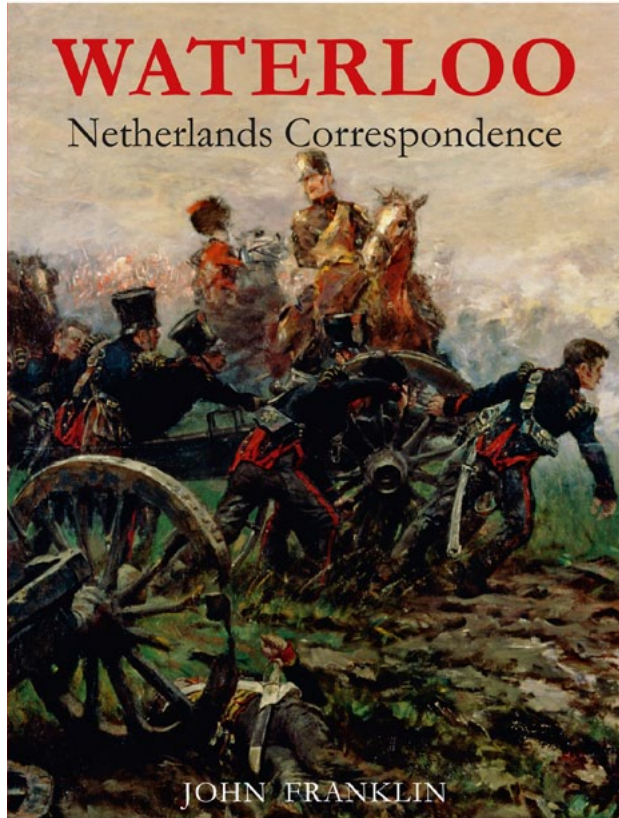


John Franklin, (March 2010) *Waterloo: Netherlands Correspondence, Volume One – Letters and Reports from Manuscript Sources, 1815 Limited*, 176 pages with 4 colour maps and 10 colour plates by Gerry Embleton. ISBN: 978-0-9563393-2-4. Price £20 for Paperback



There has been over the last decade an increase in the memoirs and letters published upon the Waterloo campaign. This is a very welcome addition and wonderfully translated letters and reports from the Netherlands Army that fought so well during the Waterloo Campaign. Their gallantry and courage has been much overlooked especially in English. The inclusion of accounts from the technical services is especially welcome. It clears up finally the misinterpretation that the Netherlands Artillery was equipped by British Guns by the nomenclature used and retained their French organisation.

This fascinating and invaluable paperback book is printed on high quality paper. I am reliably informed by a colleague that selected volumes will be available in hardback at a cost £25 which I would suggest is great value for a book that will be heavily used as a reference in the future. This volume includes a comprehensive index, ten evocative paintings of scenes described in the correspondence by Gerry Embleton who

has illustrated over 40 Osprey books amongst his distinguished career and four clear colour contour maps.

The latter is such a boon to the wargamer and military historian alike that has spent like me many hours puzzling over Victorian maps especially at Quatre Bras and very few go out as far as Brain l'Alleud or Smohain where there was interesting possibilities of a turning of the position by the French. These have been drawn from contemporary surveys by the Netherlands Army that used from 1816–64, to 1820 so the measurements are probably in Dutch feet (Rinjland Voet=31.4 cm) and yards (Metric El=1.00 m). Therefore the contours approximate 5 m contours.

- The Main Theatre of War Map showing clearly the lack of a road between Waterloo and Wavre, the large forest behind the Waterloo position, and the alternative routes to Brussels.
- Quatre Bras where the Netherlands Army fought with distinction long enough for support from the rest of the Allied Army.
- Brain l'Alleud where 3rd Netherlands Division was stationed on the right of the Waterloo position until Wellington realised that Napoleon was attacking his centre.
- Smohain where the Nassau troops were stationed on the left where they linked up with the Prussians.

Communication was an interesting problem for the Allied Army and the 2nd Netherlands Division was no exception with French, Dutch and German having to be used. It is often forgotten that French was the only common language for both sides certainly among the court and the General Staff. John Franklin for the French translation ably assisted by Erwin Muilwik and Pierre de Wit for the Dutch

translations should be commended for their readability and clarity. I understand only too well the problems of translation.

The core of the book relies upon the letters to Captain Ernst van Löben Sels 1841 who was investigating the role of the Netherlands Army in the Waterloo campaign. These letters contain a tremendous amount of information and facts. The after action reports are very useful clearing up a great deal of the position of the units and their strengths at different parts of the engagement.

Captain William Siborne started interviewing survivors of the Battle of Waterloo in 1830. Alas the resource and information of these letters were not available to him. These were only published by his son after his death and that of the Duke of Wellington. Our perceptions upon the battles may have been so much different. When the other volumes become available from this publisher and other sources in the next few years, it will be interesting to see books that will revisit the battle of Waterloo to the standard of Mike Robinson's (2009) *The Battle of Quatre Bras 1815* as well as a much needed technical thesis to do such an important series of battles justice.

This book and the forthcoming series appears to be a great addition to the literature on the Waterloo Campaign that will shed more light upon this battle and the importance of the Netherlands Army to its ultimate victory. A second volume of Netherlands Correspondence and upon the Nassau contingent is eagerly awaited to answer further questions especially in the link up with the Prussians near Smohain. The introduction clearly states that the illustrations by Gerry Emberton are based upon the current understanding of the uniform of the Netherlands Army. So there is a hint that there may be a much needed study upon the uniforms and equipment in the future.

Reviewed by Dr Stephen Summerfield,
 Loughborough University
 10 April 2010

APPENDIX: Letters and reports contained in this volume.

Letters and Reports made in 1815

General Staff

- MG Constant-Rebecque, Chief of Staff (15-19 June 1815) [17 pages]
- MG van der Capellen, Secretary of State for Southern Provinces (15 June 1815) [3 pages]
- MG van Reede, Military Commissioner to British HQ (15 June 1815) [2 pages]
- MG van Panhuys, Military Commissioner to Prussian HQ (15 & 17 June 1815) [3 pages]
- Major Bassle, Military Police at Charleroi (16 June 1815) [2 pages]
- Major Bausch, Adjutant to Adjutant-General (17 June 1815) [2 pages]
- Adjutant and Captain de Ceva (17 June 1815) [2 pages]
- Adjutant and Captain de Pestre (17 June 1815) [2 pages]

2nd Netherlands Infantry Division

- Colonel van Zuijlen van Nyevelt, Chief of Staff (25 Oct 1815) [19 pages]
- Major van Opstall, artillery commander (7 Aug 1815) [3 pages]

3rd Netherlands Infantry Division

- Lt-Gen Chasse, divisional commander (4, 5 & 11 July 1815) [5 pages]
- Lt-Col van Delen, Chief of Staff (11 Nov 1815) [5 pages]
- Captain van Omphal of the 6th Dutch Hussars (unknown date) [8 pages]
- Colonel Detmers, 1st Brigade commander (c1815) [3 pages]

- 2nd Lt Holle of 6th Dutch Militia Bn (20 June & 12 July 1815) [5 pages]
- Private Munter of 4th Militia Bn (22 July 1815) [2 pages]
- Captain Rochell of 19th Militia Bn (unknown date) [10 pages]
- 1st Lt Kikkert of the artillery train (26 July 1815) [2 pages]

Colonel Charles Neprvue collection (1836)

2nd Netherlands Infantry Division

- Lt-Col Grunbosch, commander of 27th Dutch Jäger Bn (17 April 1836) [5 pages]
- Lt-Col Westenberg, commander of 5th Dutch Militia Bn (27 April 1836) [1 page]

3rd Netherlands Infantry Division

- Lt-Gen Chasse, divisional commander (27 April 1836) [4 pages]

Captain Ernst van Löben Sels collection (1841)

General Staff

- MG van Limburg Stirun, ADC to Prince of Orange (c1841) [3 pages]
- Captain Osten, Adjoint on the artillery staff (24 July 1841) [6 pages]
- Lieutenant Klijsma, Engineer Bn (11 & 27 Dec 1841) [3 pages]

2nd Netherlands Infantry Division

- Major von Gagern, Adjoint (23 May & 14 December 1841) [5 pages]
- MG van Bijlandt, 1st Brigade commander (31 May 1841) [5 pages]
- Colonel von Saxe-Weimar, 2nd Brigade commander (29 Aug 1841) [10 pages]
- Lt-Col Grunbosch, commander of 27th Dutch Jäger Battalion (17 Dec 1841) [5 pages]
- Captain Mollinger of 5th Dutch Militia Battalion (19 Aug 1841) [2 pages]
- Lt Barre of 5th Dutch Militia Battalion (22 Sept 1841) [3 pages]
- Major van Opstall, artillery commander (17 July 1841) [2 pages]
- Captain Bijleveld, commander of Dutch horse battery (4 Aug 1841) [3 pages]
- 2nd Lt Koopman of Dutch Horse Artillery (11 Sept 1841) [8 pages]
- Lt van der Wall of Belgian Foot Battery (27 May 1841) [3 pages]

3rd Netherlands Infantry Division

- 1st Lt of Belgian Foot Artillery (30 Nov 1841) [3 pages]

Netherlands Cavalry Division

- Lt-Col van Heerdt, staff officer (19 Sept 1841) [5 pages]
- 1st Lt Morbotter of the Light Cavalry Brigade (21 July 1841) [3 pages]
- Brevet Serjeant de Grave of 8th Belgian Hussars (7 Aug 1841) [2 pages]
- Brevet Major van Balveren of 6th Dutch Hussars (25 May 1841) [3 pages]
- Captain Petter of Dutch Horse Artillery (18 May 1841) [4 pages]
- Captain Gey of Dutch Horse Artillery (27 May 1841) [2 pages]
- 2nd Lt van Wassenaar of Dutch Horse Artillery (30 April 1841) [4 pages]

Letter to Wopke Eekhof in 1865 who was author of *Friesland in 1815*

- Corporal of Dutch 2nd Line Infantry Bn [16 Oct 1865]