

The Road to Madrid, July 1809 After Action Report LT. Gen. Arthur C. Wellesley defeats GdD Sebastiani



Sir Arthur Wellesley

Both Wellesley and Sebastiani had observed clouds of dust rolling forward from the horizon, and both generals rode forward to review the lay of the land. The terrain before them was gently rolling arable land, with three minor ridgelines, two of which were closer to the British approach. There were three built-up areas, the most prominent, Pueblo de la Carniceria, was centrally positioned close to the banks of the dry watercourse that divided the battlefield on a north south axis. The second village, know as Aldea de la Gloria, was to the north and west of the watercourse, closer to the British position. The third, to the east of Gloria, was known locally as Casa de Putas.

GdD Sebastiani ordered GdD Leval to occupy the right flank and take a defensive posture to await the British deployment. On the left, he ordered his first brigade to occupy Pueblo de la Carniceria, whilst his second brigade would maneuver to the south of the village and threaten to turn the British right flank.

LtGen Wellesley hastened MG Hill's two brigades to engage the French right flank, with the intent to turn their open flank before they had fully deployed. On his left, MG Sherbrooke deployed his four brigades in a defensive posture in two lines supported by Elliott and Sillery's brigades of artillery which occupied the prominent ridge line to the west of Pueblo de la Carniceria.

Hill's brigades struggled to maneuver across the dry watercourse, which separated them from the German positions of GdD Leval and this gave ample time for Leval to organize his defense and deploy his two batteries of Hessian and Baden artillery. The day would be marked by intensive counter battery fire, and Rettberg's KGL brigade was severely handled by the Hessian battery commanded by Kapt. Venator. During the course of forty-five minutes, the KGL lost three cannon dismounted. But Rettberg's crews were undaunted by the weight of fire, and held their positions manfully. So many targets presented themselves to the KGL artillerists that they were incapable of focusing on one target for more than a short period. Finally, with the Hessian fire slowing, MG Hill rode in amongst the battery's crews and lifted their spirits praising their endurance and gallantry.



GdD Sebastiani

In the center GdB Ligier occupied Carniceria with two battalions supported in rear and to the south with additional battalions in line. To the right rear of the town, the divisional battery was deployed on the ridgeline to offer support to both brigades, and in an attempt to emulate the successes of the Hessian battery they engaged in counter battery fire with the two British batteries on the opposing ridge line.

Both MG Hill and Sherbrooke sent forward their rifle companies to harass the German and French battalions, and these chosen men quickly started to take a toll of the officers and NCO's of the targeted battalions.

Whilst the majority of the Franco-German forces adopted a defensive posture, GdB Rey on the extreme left flank deployed his brigade into two successive lines. He sent forward one battalion in open order towards the British Guards Brigade deployed in front of their position. Crossing the watercourse and bypassing the KGL light battalion that was engaging her sister battalions, the French battalion advanced into effective musket range, and opened fire on the Guards brigade. A stunning opening volley from the two Guards battalions countered this fire, which resulted in the retirement of the French battalion upon their original positions, where GdB Rey met and rallied them.

On the far right of the French position, the British battalions of Hill's division were finally coming into position to engage in a firefight with the defending German battalions. Although outnumbered in individual numbers of battalions, the British were able to bring more musket's to bear in the firefight, due to the adoption of two-rank line by some battalions. The ensuing additional weight of fire caused enormous casualties in the German battalions. But the Germans were able to take advantage of their stationary opening volley, and both sides were reeling from the firefight. It seemed that neither Hill nor Leval had an advantage in this

section of the field. BG Stewart lost two horses beneath him, and Oberst von Porbeck was mortally wounded, losing an arm whilst GdD Leval suffered a minor wound, which required that he leave the field for attention. At this point GdB Grandjean saw a possible opportunity, the open flank of the 2/48th Northamptonshire regiment. He immediately led the Frankfurt battalion forward, but the angle of attack still gave the British an opportunity to defend themselves, and their defensive fire proved devastating, Grandjean fell severely wounded with a leg wound, and the Frankfurt battalion reeled back to their start positions. Only GM Chasse was left to direct the entire German division at this point, but Hill's division was a spent force itself, and a stalemate had been reached on this flank.

Meanwhile on the French far left, GdB Rey was advancing. He led two battalions forward, one in line, and one in column. As they approached the dry watercourse the commander of the Guards Brigade elected to counter charge before they could fully deploy. The 1/2nd Guards cheered three times and with fixed bayonets charged towards the surprised French. With little time to react, the French were able to loose one or two volleys at the charging guardsmen. Their attack slowed slightly but they still closed with the French line and head of column, in the ensuing combat the French defended themselves bravely, but the momentum of the Guards attack was too much to resist, and both battalions fell back on their supports.

GdD Sebastiani, could see his right flank in tatters, his artillery exhausted, and his attack on the left stalled. He held Carniceria, but the British had three largely uncommitted brigades in the center ready to assault the position. The only sensible move on his part was to order a retreat. He had come very close to defeating the British under Wellesley, but Rey and Grandjean's stalled assaults had shown that victory was beyond his reach. GdD Sebastiani ordered his cavalry forward to cover his retreat, and supported by the Dutch horse artillery battery, these troops were able to hold off the British cavalry who had surged forward from the rear of the British position, in an attempt to disrupt the French withdrawal.

Wellesley was justifiably proud and relieved; his men had fought bravely and with great tenacity. The initiative had swung first one way and then the other, but the attack of the British Guards clearly swung the balance in the British favor. But the French and German battalions had performed well too. Venator's Hessian artillery had performed admirably, and losses amongst the German division were testament to the sacrifice that these men had been prepared to make whilst fighting in the service of the French.

Sebastiani had failed to halt Wellesley's advance to Madrid, and it was clear that King Joseph would need assistance from MdE Victor and perhaps MdE Soult to repel the British advance. King Joseph counseled with his chief of staff, MdE Jourdan, and ordered an immediate concentration on Talavera de la Reina.

Legend:

Units and Officers that are grayed out indicate that they are off table in reserve.

Units and Officers that are in red indicate that they have a compulsory movement restriction, or in the case of an officer, wounded or otherwise incapacitated [captured].

[W] denotes No Advance

[R] denotes Halt or Retire

[Y] denoted Routing

[D] denoted Dispersed or removed from the field

Corps Comte Sebastiani

[114] General de Division Comte Sebastiani - Active B [1200 paces]

Division Louis Liger-Belair

[115] General de Brigade Louis Liger-Belair - Active C+ [650 paces]

[141]	5/7me Artillerie a Pied	39/ 103	[6]	D+
[142]	1/58me Regt.de Ligne	0/ 566		C
[143]	2/58me Regt.de Ligne	0/ 579		B-
[144]	3/58me Regt.de Ligne	32/ 535		D+
[145]	1/75me Regt.de Ligne	17/ 474		C
[146]	2/75me Regt.de Ligne	32/ 449		C+
[147]	3/75me Regt.de Ligne	5/ 494		C-

Brigade Baron Jean-Pierre-Antoine Rey

[116] General de Brigade Baron Jean-Pierre-Antoine Rey - Active B+ [500 paces]

[148]	1/28me Regt.de Ligne	0/ 357		C-
[149]	2/28me Regt.de Ligne	24/ 345		B-
[R] [150]	3/28me Regt.de Ligne	12/ 363		B-
[R] [151]	1/32me Regt.de Ligne	22/ 643		D+ [Honors]
[D] [152]	2/32me Regt.de Ligne	155/ 454		C
[153]	3/32me Regt.de Ligne	0/ 650		C

Division Baron Jean-Francois Leval

[117] General de Division Baron Jean-Francois Leval - Dressing wound B- [875 paces]

Brigade Heinrich Freiherr von Porbeck

[118] Oberst Heinrich Freiherr von Porbeck - Mortally wounded B [400 paces]

[154]	III.Fuss Batterien Steinmetz	2/ 188	[8]	C+
[D] [155]	I.von Harrant Nr.4 [Baden]	170/ 514		C+
[156]	II.von Harrant Nr.4 [Baden]	6/ 675		C+
[D] [157]	I.Nassau IR Nr.2	150/ 323		D+
[D] [158]	II.Nassau IR Nr.2	167/ 291		C

Brigade David-Hendrik Chasse

[120] Generalmajor David-Hendrik Chasse - Active C [350 paces]

[162]	3me Artillerie a Cheval Trip	0/ 100	[4]	C
[R] [163]	I.2me Regt.Linie	96/ 417		B-
[164]	I.3me Regt.Linie	90/ 449		C

Brigade Balthazard Grandjean

[119] General de Brigade Balthazard Grandjean - Severely wounded C [350 paces]

[159]	III.Fuss Batterien Venator	6/ 200	[8]	C-
[R] [160]	I/Erbprinz Brigade	85/ 313		B-
[Y] [161]	Rheinbund Btnn von Frankfort	154/ 350		C

Division Christophe-Antoine Merlin

[122] General de Brigade Christophe-Antoine Merlin - Active C+ [650 paces]

Brigade Jean-Baptiste-Alexandre Strolz

[123] General de Brigade Jean-Baptiste-Alexandre Strolz - Active C+ [300 paces]

[167]	10me Chasseurs a Cheval	0/ 400		C-
[168]	26me Chasseurs a Cheval	0/ 346		D+

Brigade Ormancey

[124] Colonel Ormancey - Active C+ [500 paces]

[170]	Cheveau-Leger Regt. [Westphal]	0/ 487		B-
--------	--------------------------------	--------	--	----

Strengths:

losses/active

1217/	9241	Bayonets
0/	1233	Sabres
47/	591	Artillerists
0/	26	Cannon

1264/	11065	Total of all arms
	20	Standard present

Carnage&GloryII
Napoleonic Battle Scenario

Army Sir Arthur Coley Wellesley

[501] Lieutenant General Sir Arthur Coley Wellesley - Active B [1300 paces]

Brigade Howorth

[502] Major General Howorth - Active C- [350 paces]

Division Sir John Cope Sherbrooke

[503] Major General Sir John Cope Sherbrooke - Active C+ [875 paces]

[502] Elliott's Bde [1/2 RFA] 1/ 146 [6] C+

[503] Sillery's Bde [6/7 RFA] 0/ 149 [6] D+

Brigade Henry Fred Campbell

[504] Brigadier General Henry Fred Campbell - Active C- [350 paces]

[506] 1/2nd Foot Guards 115/ 883 C-

[507] 1/3rd Foot Guards 6/1041 C

[D] [508] I co. 5/60th Foot 30/ 29 B

Brigade Sir Alan Cameron of Erracht

[505] Brigadier General Sir Alan Cameron of Erracht - Active C+ [300 paces]

[509] 1/61st [South Gloucestershire] 0/ 804 C

[510] 2/83rd Foot 0/ 560 D+

[511] II co. 5/60th Foot 3/ 60 C+

Brigade Ernst E.K. Langwerth

[506] Brigadier General Ernst E.K. Langwerth - Active C- [300 paces]

[512] 1st KGL Battalion 36/ 621 C-

[W] [513] 2nd KGL Battalion 16/ 715 C+

[R] [514] 1st KGL Light Bttn [-] 19/ 87 B [Honors]

Brigade Sigismund von Lowe

[507] Brigadier General Sigismund von Lowe - Active B- [500 paces]

[515] 5th KGL Battalion 79/ 531 C+

[D] [516] 7th KGL Battalion 227/ 330 C

Division Sir Rowland Hill

[508] Major General Sir Rowland Hill - Active B [875 paces]

[R] [504] 1st KGL Foot Art. [Rettberg] 57/ 91 [3] C-[Honors - Day After]

Brigade Christopher Tilson

[509] Brigadier General Christopher Tilson - Active C [300 paces]

[517] 1/3rd [The Buffs] 38/ 726 C+

[Y] [518] 2/48th [Northamptonshire] 157/ 428 C

[D] [519] 2/66th [Berkshire] 206/ 327 D+

[D] [520] III co. 5/60th Foot 29/ 34 C

Brigade Richard Stewart

[510] Brigadier General Richard Stewart - Active C [300 paces]

[D] [521] 29th [Worcestershire] 201/ 397 D

[R] [522] 1/48th [Northamptonshire] 183/ 624 C-

[R] [523] 1st Battalion Detachments 77/ 532 C-

Division William Payne

[515] Lieutenant General William Payne - Active B [875 paces]

Brigade Sir Henry Fane

[516] Brigadier General Sir Henry Fane - Active B [500 paces]

[537] 3rd DG [Prince of Wales] 0/ 525 C

[538] 4th Dragoons [Queens Own] 0/ 545 D+

Brigade Sir Stapleton Cotton

[517] Brigadier General Sir Stapleton Cotton - Active B- [500 paces]

[539] 14th LD [Duchess of Yorks Own] 0/ 464 C+

Strengths:

losses/active

1422/ 8729 Bayonets

0/ 1534 Sabres

58/ 386 Artillerists

3/ 15 Cannon

1480/ 10649 Total of all arms

30 Standards present

The immediate post battle losses including dead, wounded and missing were:

Pyrrhic victory for the British Army

The French IV Corps d'Armee has suffered losses of:

[24%] 3196 men of all arms
incl.[1%] 174 prisoners of all arms

[30%] 3149 bayonets
[0%] 0 sabres
[5%] 47 artillerists

Honors: [151] 1/32me Regt.de Ligne

Losses include 3 General[s]:

[117] **Baron Jean-Francois Leval - Dressing wound**
[118] **Heinrich Freiherr von Porbeck - Mortally wounded**
[119] **Balthazard Grandjean - Severely wounded**

The British Army has suffered losses of:

[23%] 3025 men of all arms
incl.[1%] 189 prisoners of all arms

[29%] 2967 bayonets
[0%] 0 sabres
[8%] 58 artillerists
3 cannon[s] lost

Honors: [514] 1st KGL Light Bttm [-]

The following day, following return of dispersed and walking wounded, the results were:

Minor victory for the British Army

The French IV Corps d'Armee has suffered losses of:

[6%] 883 men of all arms
incl.[1%] 174 prisoners of all arms

[7%] 828 bayonets
[0%] 3 sabres
[6%] 52 artillerists

The British Army has suffered losses of:

[8%] 1089 men of all arms
incl.[1%] 189 prisoners of all arms

[10%] 1041 bayonets
[0%] 0 sabres
[7%] 48 artillerists
3 cannon[s] lost

Honors: [504] 1st KGL Foot Art. [Rettberg]