Chapter III
Oudinot’s Offensive

From July 26th to August 1st: The cautious march forward

After a day of march, Oudinot with 6th division Legrand and the cuirassiers of Doumerc, arrived in front of Polotsk in the evening of July 25th. He left temporarily the 8th division Verdier at Bezdediovitchi, halfway from Disna and Polotsk. His light cavalry stayed in Disna, waiting for the 9th division which came from Drissa.

On 26th, Oudinot made cross the Dwina by flatboat to the 3rd Chevau-legers Regiment, two infantry regiments of the 6th division, and two cannons: they had to scout the country beyond Polotsk. The scouts were negative: no enemies were detected in front of Polotsk.

Meanwhile, the French continued the reparation of the bridge of Polotsk (which had been started to repair by Ney) to allow the passage of the whole 6th division and the cuirassiers of Doumerc.

It was in the night of 26th to 27th that the bridge in Polotsk was achieved. The all 6th division crossed the Dwina during the 27th, and settled on the north-east of Polotsk, between Zakarhina and Iourovistchi. The cuirassiers followed and settled in Gamzelovo.

The order was also given to Verdier, who was at Benzenovitchi, to come to Polotsk and to cross the river there, and then to go straight ahead of Polotsk at the junction of the roads of Nevel and Disna, between Doumerc and Legrand.

Oudinot also ordered Merle and the light cavalry present at Disna to cross the river in this location, by the bridge he hoped will be finished: the 5th light cavalry brigade will have to go to Bieloe, the 6th to Lozovka and the 9th infantry division Merle (except one brigade) just in front of Disna.

On July 27th, Merle reported to Oudinot that the Russian had destroyed the warehouses in Drissa, sign that they had completely evacuated the camp. It was good news for the marshal because the risk of enemy incursions on his left was over. But, his scouts on the road to Nevel and on the road to Sebej don’t detect the Russian, and he don’t know where the enemy was. We see here the relatively bad ability of scouting of the French light cavalry, which be very problematic in the Campaign of 1813. Especially, the French Regiments of 6th light cavalry brigade (7th & 20th Chasseurs à cheval Regiments) was mainly formed with inexperienced men. The good quality of the 8th Chevau-légers regiment (ex-2nd regiment of lancers of the Vistula)
could restore a certain balance. But even this regiment, although of good behavior, did not have the experience of combat either.

To follow the orders of Napoleon (push a strong vanguard towards St. Petersburg), Oudinot had two options: take the road of Sebej on the right; or take the road of Osveia on the left. He decided however to march with all his Corps to St-Petersburg by the road of Sebej: the 5th light cavalry brigade had order to reach the ford of Siwochina; the 6th division will follow and take position in front of Bieloe; the 8th division in Bieloe; the 9th, from Disna, had to reach Lozovka, protected in its left by the 6th light cavalry brigade, which protect the road of Osveia in the same time; Cuirassiers with the artillery reserve had to stay behind Bieloe. A garrison of 300 men was left in Disna and the Portuguese Legion Regiment stayed in Polotsk to achieve a second bridge (according to Marbot, this regiment will be present at the battle of Kliastitzy).

On the 28th of July, the 5th cavalry brigade reached the ford of Siwochina, the 6th division settled in front of Bieloe; the 8th division in Bieloe; the 9th in Lozovka; the cuirassiers and the artillery reserve followed Verdier.

For his part, Wittgenstein stayed on his position from July 25th to 27th: main Russian force in Ratitzi, reserve in Baby, Helfreich in Pokajewski, Balk in Wolinizi. The vanguard of Kulniev, which were before in the left bank of the Dwina, united with Balk in Wolinizi. We can understand that French found no enemy on Polotsk because, the nearest locality of Polotsk where the French could have fallen on a consequent Russian force, was Wolinizi (or Valintsy), at about 30 miles from Polotsk.

On July 27th, Wittgenstein learned that the main force of Napoleon was at Ostrowno, near Witepsk; so, the only enemy force dangerous for him was the 2nd Corps of Oudinot. But he doesn’t know where this Corps was. So, the next day, he ordered Kulniev to move to Lozovka with the cavalry present at Wolinizi, for searching the enemy. At 4 pm, he met the 6th light brigade Corbineau at Philippovo. While advancing along the road to Osvéia, the French general obeyed Oudinot’s
orders, which were to cover the left flank of Merle, who was going on Lozovka from Disna. The clash will oppose the three cavalry regiments of Corbineau (7th & 20th Chasseurs a cheval Regiments & 8th Chevau-legers Regiment: 1,100 men) against Kulniev’s cavalrymen (4 sq. of the Grodno Hussar Regiment, the Platov #4 Don Cossack Regiment & Guard Hussars Depot sq.: 1,200 men). Several charges and counter-charges were conducting until the dawn. There was no real winner but the 8th Chevau-legers (ex-2nd Polish Vistula lancers) loss 167 men according to the Russian, 80 according to the French, while the Russian losses seemed small.

On the road to Sebej, the other light cavalry brigade under Castex, met two squadrons of the Riga Dragoons Regiment. Thanks to French prisoners that the Russians made, Wittgenstein was informed that Oudinot had taken the road to Sebej. At the same time, however, general Hamen, who was covering Dünaburg, sent him a despatch announcing that Macdonald had crossed the Dwina at Jakobstadt, and was advancing towards him. Fortunately for Wittgenstein, this movement of the French at Jakobstadt was a simple demonstration, Macdonald having the port of Riga as a priority.

However, the Russian general don’t panic and decided to move against the closest enemy, that is to say Oudinot. Orders were sent to Hamen in Dünaburg, with his weak forces (32nd division & a converged Hussars Regiment: 3,300 infantry & 450 cavalry) to hold Macdonald if he moved towards Polotsk.

Oudinot learned too, some news about Wittgenstein, thanks to prisoners made by Castex: Kulniev would be in Wolinizi with 6,000 men, and the rest of Russian forces would be between Osveia and Kochanowichi; informations closed to the truth. Oudinot thought that the position of the 1st Russian corps showed that Wittgenstein had only one aim: to let the French go deeper
The day after, July 29th, Kulniev and his cavalry, received order to march along the right bank of the Drissa up to Sokolichitchi. The main Corps and the reserve set off at noon from Ratitzi and Baby, and went up to Kliastitzy by Kochanowichi. The detachments of Balk and Helfreich have order to go up directly to Kliastitzy, from their outposts on the Swolna and the Drissa. Wittgenstein wanted to intercept Oudinot by moving on his left flank.

It was in the night of 29th to 30th that the Russian reached Kochanowichi.

Like we see, Oudinot, now knowing that the Russian was on the road to Osveia, decided to still continue on the road to Sebej. But he moved with caution, and sending into enemy territory and, taking Polotsk, cut them off from their rearward. Oudinot would not dare completely stop his offensive towards St. Petersburg because the order emanated from Napoleon himself, and he did not want to miss the confidence of the Emperor. But the wariness of Marshal Oudinot will force him to leave the division Merle and the brigade Corbineau behind, far from the combat zone of the following days.

On the evening of July 28th, the forces of Oudinot were distributed as follows: the 9th division Merle is at Lozovka, the 6th light cavalry Corbineau near Philippovo; the 5th light cavalry brigade Castex with one infantry battalion were at Siwochina; the 6th and 8th infantry divisions and the cuirassiers settled near Doretz, between Bieloe and Siwochina.
outposts of cavalry on his left. He used the day of the 29th to bring his artillery park closer and to continue his scouting. The brigade of light cavalry Castex crossed the Drissa and pushed as far as Sokolichtchi, while outposts of cavalry occupied even Kliastitz. His main force settled at Siwochina.

The Battle of Jakubowo-Kliastitz: July 30th-31st

On July 30th (map 3)
On the morning of the 30th, all the forces of Wittgenstein were gathered at Katerinovo, on the Swolna river. A council of war took place here and decided to continue towards the east and the road to Sebej. At 10 am, Kulniev with the vanguard (4 battalions, 8 squadrons & a Cossacks regiment, 12 guns of horse artillery: 3,700 men) went towards Kliastitz. He was followed by the main forces (22 battalions, 8 squadrons, 72 guns: 13,000 men). The Reserve under Sazonov (8 battalions: 4,600 men) and a detachment under the prince
Repnin (2 battalions, 8 squadrons, one Position Battery: 1,700 me) stayed at Katerinovo.

Oudinot, who had left Siwochina on the morning of the 30th, arrived with the division Legrand and the light cavalry brigade Castex cavalry at Kliastitzy around 11 am. The divisions Verdier and Doumerc followed and took positions at Golovichtsia. At the same time, Merle, according to the orders received, moved from Lozovka to Siwochina to keep the ford, while Corbineau had to cover several fords on the Drissa (at Wolinizy and Danowicz for example).

According to Marbot, the Russians have surprised the rear-guard of the French columns towards Sokolichtchi, taking all the mobile forging equipment, which will penalize the cavalry of the 2nd Corps for the rest of the campaign. But this seems very strange, because of the location of the forces involved.

From Kliastirzy, Oudinot pushed forward scouting in the afternoon of the 30th: the 23rd Chasseurs à cheval advanced farther north, on the road to Sebej. In this movement, two Russian officers were captured and interrogated. They informed Oudinot that Wittgenstein was on his left flank. So, the Marshal sent immediately Legrand (26th Light Infantry Regiment, 56th Line Infantry Regiment & 24th Chasseurs a cheval) to take position at the Castle of Jakubowo in the West, where they would meet the Russian outposts.
Because of the movements of the two armies, the battle will be an encounter battle, where units will be engaged, step by step. The oppressive heat this afternoon will make the fighting difficult.

Like we see, Kulniev with the Russian vanguard, had moved from Katerinovo towards Kliaistitz. His march was difficult because it was a bad road, very sandy. He arrived at Olkhovka (about one mile before Jakubowo) at noon and two squadrons of the Grodno Hussars met and brought back light French troops that Legrand had sent from Jakubowo, to scout the road.

Seeing that the village and Jakubowo Castle were already occupied by the French, but not having other enemy troops nearby, Kulniev sent this information to Wittgenstein who then ordered him to attack, to repel the French of Jakubowo.

He sent the 23rd and 24th Jäger Regiments with the position Battery #14, to support Kulnev. The objective of the Russian general was to conquer the entire right bank of the Nitschtscha before the French reinforcements arrived.

At 5 pm, the Russians succeeded in pushing back all the French outposts of the woods next to Olkhovka. Kulniev then placed the battery (3 in the map) near the road, the 25th Jäger (2) to his right and the 26th (1) to his left; the Grodno Hussars (5) remained in reserve behind the battery; The Cossacks (4) were deployed forward.

General Legrand, when he saw the forces of Kulnev advancing, called the rest of his division (19th & 128th Line Regiments), which crossed the Nitschtscha and deployed behind Jakubowo (C on the map).

Having under his hand all his division (except the Portuguese, left in Polotsk), Legrand also decided to attack before the Russians could deploy wholly in the plain. The 56th Line Regiment advanced against the Russian right, supporting by the 26th Light Regiment (B on the map), and further, the 19th Line Regiment.

But it was the moment when Wittgenstein arrived with the reinforcements (6 on the map). He directed them to the right, supporting by the Grodno Hussar, and succeeded in repelling the French, who were returning to Jakubowo.

GL Berg then took the head of the 23rd and 24th Jäger Regiments,
deploying into the woods, on the French left. The 56th Line Regiments managed to hold these two Jäger regiments until the 19th Line Regiment (brigade Maison) arrived. Although Kulniev sent the 25th Jäger Regiment to supports the two others Jäger Regiments, the French succeeded in repelling the forces of Berg from the woods. But the French met the division Kazatchkowsky (Sievesk, Kalouga, Perm & Mohilev Infantry Regiments), which just arrived. These Russian reinforcements stopped the two French regiments.

As battle became more and more animated, Marshal Oudinot sent the division Verdier to form the reserve behind Legrand. The cuirassiers of Doumerc were left on the left bank of the Nitschtscha because of the impossibility of employing them on the wooded ground where the action is situated.

The French finally remained masters of the village and the fights turned in a reciprocal cannonade which will cease at about 11 pm.

**On July 31st (map 4)**

During the night of the 30th to 31st, Wittgenstein called his reserve and left only the Prince Repnin in Katerinovo. His plan is the same: drive back the French behind the Nitschtscha.

So, in the morning of the 31st, the Russians were deployed in a strong line in front of Jakubowo: from right to left, 24th, 25th, 23rd Jäger; position battery #5; Sievesk, Kalouga Infantry regiments, 26th Jäger; light battery #27, Perm & Mohilev Infantry regiments. Behind, in support, the Grodno hussar
and batteries #1 (horse), #9 (light), #14 (position). All the Russian battalion were in battalion column.

The French, for their part, remained in the positions of the previous day at nightfall: Legrand was in fist line: 26th Light Regiment keeping Jakubowo and the woods on the left; 19th and 56th Line Regiments deployed on the right. The 5th Light Cavalry Brigade Castex was scattered all along the French line, while Cuirassiers de Doumerc were further in the rear at Kliastity (position D on the map). Verdier covered Kliastity on the right bank of the Nitschtscha (position E). Merle and Corbineau remained in the same location as the day before, along the Drissa.

As early as 3 am, the Russians went off again to attack against Jakubowo, with the 23rd Jäger Regiment. The attack failed, but generated fighting throughout the line.

Oudinot tried to take advantage of the failure of this first Russian attack but he also failed twice, despite a combined attack against the center and the Russian left. Both times it was the Russian artillery that stopped the attack.

Wittgenstein then renewed his attack and he took the way to succeed: Kazatchkowsky with the Sievesk and Kalouga regiments, supported by part of the Grodno Hussars, rushed against the French center, while the prince of Siberia, with Perm and Mohilev regiments (followed by the 26th Jäger regiment) advanced towards the French right. On their side, the 23rd, 24th and 25th Jäger regiments advanced towards the woods occupied by the French left. Finally, all the Russian...

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**Battle of Kliastity (Peter von Hess)**

We can see the Swiss (wrongly because absent) defending the bridge of Kliastity stormed by the Pavlov grenadiers.
second line followed to support this general attack.

It was on the centre that the decision was obtained, thanks to the Sievesk and Kalouga regiments. This success forced the entire French line to retreat to the sandy hills along the Nitschtscha (position E on the map). Here, it was the turn of the 8th division Verdier to hold these hills, supported by artillery. But, Oudinot, fearing for his artillery, decided to make it cross on the other bank of the Nitschtscha. To cover this withdrawal of the artillery, the French marshal launched the French centre forward, against the enemy.

Again, the Russian artillery stopped the French and Wittgenstein continued his movement towards. Finally, at 8 am, all the French forces have crossed the Nitschtscha, in good order. They quickly took a defensive position on the both sides of Kliastitzy (position F on the map). The artillery covered the only bridge on the Nitschtscha.

For a time, the fighting amounted to a firing of skirmishers on both sides of the river.

During these reciprocal shots, Wittgenstein sent his cavalry under Balk to Gvozdy to find a ford upstream of the Nitschtscha. He wanted to overflow the French on their right and pushed them back to the road of Siwochina. Informing of this movements of Balk, fearing that the Russians might discover a ford, Oudinot decided the retreat, and ordered to burn the bridge of Kliastitzy. Seeing the withdrawal movement of the French, Wittgenstein ordered the Pavlov Grenadier depot battalion to storm the bridge: this little battalion succeeded and was immediately followed by the Perm and Mohilev regiments. Despite effectiveness of the French horse artillery, the Russian infantry settled rapidly and strongly in the village of Kliastitzy. The rest of the infantry, artillery and cavalry followed and succeeded to shake up the French retreat, which had hitherto been conducted with calm.

It was Kulniev who was in charge of the pursuit. At the beginning, he had under his orders the Grodno Hussars, the Iambourg Dragoons, a part of the Riga Dragoons, the Cossacks, the 1st battalion of the converged Grenadiers from 14th division, the Perm and Mohilev regiments, some skirmishers from other regiments and the horse battery #1 (about 5,000 men & 12 guns).

The Russians claimed they had taken some baggage of generals Legrand and Verdier, and 900 prisoners.

The infantry (except the battalion of converged Grenadiers), exhausted, stopped at about 3 or 4 miles from Kliastitzy, but the rests of Kulniev’s forces continued forward.

Wittgenstein will send the still fresh Russian reserve to Kulniev, after the Kliastitzy bridge has been completely restored. Meanwhile, he reorganized his forces engaged since the morning and tired by two days of fighting and a day of harassing march.

The French crossed the Drissa ford at Siwochina, joined the division
Merle and settled at Oboïartschina, at two miles from Siwochina.

During this battle, colonel Metzinger, commander of the 128th Line infantry regiment was wounded.

Prince Repnin, who stayed at Katerinovo, received orders from Wittgenstein to join the Russian vanguard on a diagonal road Katerinovo-Sokolichtchi. But finding this road impassable, he finally followed the road to Kliastitzy.

On the evening of July 31st, Kulniev had reached Siwochina. He had now with him, the Grodno Hussars, the Iamburg Dragoons, part of the Riga Dragoons, the Cossacks, the 1st battalion of converged Grenadiers from the 14th division and two horse batteries #1 and #3. (about 500 infantry, 1,700 cavalry and 400 artillerymen with 24 guns).

The Russian reserve of Sazonov was between Sokolichtchi and Siwochina (Navajinsk, Tula, Estonia and Tenguinsk infantry regiments, Position battery #27: 4,400 infantry and 150 artillerymen with 12 guns). The rest of Wittgenstein's forces (except Repnin's forces, which were on the way) was still at Kliastitzy and in front of this village, with Wittgenstein himself.

Kulniev was ordered to stay on the left bank of the Drissa and

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**General-Major Jacob Kulniev**

*(1763-1812)*

*(George Dawe, Military Gallery of the Winter Palace)*

He received his baptism of fire during the Russo-Turkish war of 1787-1791. In 1794, he served in Poland under Suvorov and, appointed major, was transferred to the Sumskoy Hussars Regiment.

He participated in the campaign of Poland in 1807 in the Grodno Hussars Regiment. He served in Friedland and was appointed Colonel. He participated in the war against Sweden in Finland, where he distinguished himself as a brilliant cavalry officer. He gained the rank of Major-General. He then again fights the Turks on the Danube.

At the beginning of the campaign of 1812, at the head of the Grodno Hussars Regiment, he distinguished himself in various cavalry fights and captured an enemy brigadier-general (Général de Saint-Geniès). He participates brilliantly in the fighting of Kliastitzy but is very imprudent on August 1st during the pursuit and is mortally wounded by a cannonball. Dying, he exhorts his soldiers: "My friends, do not yield an inch from the holyland of Russia to the enemy. Victory awaits you!"

It was the first Russian general killed during the campaign. At the announcement of his death, Napoleon wrote in France: "General Kulnev, one of the best officers of Russian cavalry, has been killed."
not undertake any serious engagement before the arrival of the rest of the Russian troops. But these troops will be late to arrive: they won’t begin their movement forward to join the vanguard until the following day, August 1st at 8 am.

**Clash of Oboïartschina: August 1st**

Kulniev, “of an enterprising character up to temerity” said the diary of the Russian I Corps, crossed the Drissa at Siwochina at dawn of August 1st, without referring to Wittgenstein. He met the French rearguard in Moskolinki (or Moskalki) about three miles beyond the Drissa. Putting it to flight easily, the Russian general was carried by this success, and he reached Oboïartschina, believing that the enemy was still in retreat. But it was not the reality.

Oboïartschina presented itself as a corridor with woods on both sides of the road. Seeing that some pieces of 12 were bombarding him, Kulniev demanded guns of the same caliber to Sazonov, who arrived at that time in front of the ford of Siwochina. This general immediately sent the position battery #27 with the Tula infantry regiment. He followed with all the forces under his command.

Oudinot let Kulniev tie in knots in the pass of Oboïartschina before revealing his batteries, which were placed in amphitheatre. The Russian cavalry in the head was thrown into disorder, and in its retreat, carried the rest of the vanguard with it, and even the reserve of Sazonov which arrived. The whole Russian vanguard crossed the Drissa in great disorder, pursued by French infantry. The division Legrand leaded the charge and took revenge for the battle of the day before. He was followed by the Verdier division.

While Kulniev attempted to rally the Grodno hussars, he was hit by a cannon ball and died as a result of his wounds (Marbot, in his memoirs, wrote he was killed by one of his NCOs).
from 23rd Chasseurs à cheval regiment)

The Russians lost 6 guns of the position battery #27 and 3 from the horse battery #1.

But Oudinot made the same mistake that Kulniev a few hours before: he let crossing the Drissa by a part of his forces, without support. It was the division Verdier which received the order to follow the Russian.

Wittgenstein, having left Kliastitzy at 8 am, was alerted of the fate of his vanguard. He then sent Generals Jachwill and Helfreich to restore order to the beaten troops, while he himself settled his forces near Golovichitsa: his first line with 16 battalions leaned to the right on the Nitschtscha and on the left in the village of Golovichitsa; 48 guns covered the front of this first line. Four battalions were placed on the flanks of this artillery. Two squadrons scouted the plain to the left of Golovichitsa. The second line was made up of nine battalions and the cavalry of Prince Repnin in reserve behind these battalions.

Helfreich and Jachwill succeeded in reorganizing what remained of the Russian vanguard and made it cross the Russian lines positioned at Golovichitsa. They took place behind the second line in the center, except 12 guns of horse artillery, and a squadron of the Riga Dragoons, which will support the two squadrons placed to the left.

As soon as he reached Golovichitsa, Verdier sent his skirmishers on his left against the buildings of Staroi Dvor: he succeeded in a first time to take them but were dislodged by the Russian skirmishers.

He then threw himself impetuously on the assault of the center and the right of Wittgenstein, between the main road and the Nitschttscha. But he was contained by the Russian artillery (like Legrand at Jakubowo).

Wittgenstein took the opportunity of his numerical superiority to push his line against the two wings of the French: on his right, Perm and Mohilev regiments, 23rd and 25th Jäger regiments under Berg; on his left, Kalouga and Sievesk regiments, 24th and 26th Jäger regiments under Kazatchkowsky, supported by three cavalry squadrons. As these movements let the Russian center...
exposed, the second line advanced to fill the gap.

It was the vigor of the attack of Kazatchkowsky which pushed back all the French forces. The French right tried a moment to lean on the woods which prolonged it, but the Sievesk regiments turned these woods while the 24th and 26th Jäger regiments attacked assaulted the woods directly, supported by the depot battalion of Arakcheyev Grenadiers. A column of French infantry, which had not retreated quickly, was cut into pieces

Clash at Golovichitsa (August 1st) (from Geschichte des Feldzuges im 1812, M. Bogdanovich)
and made prisoner by the Russian cavalry. Wittgenstein was injured in the head during the attack.

The Russians continued to push the enemy in retreat, and the 25th Jäger regiment, with two guns, even crossed the Nitschtscha to try to threaten the left French wing from the opposite bank.

Verdier succeeded to retreat in good order to the farm of Sokolichtchi. Here, he settled his forces behind a ravine that crossed the road. The only bridge over it was burnt by the French after having crossed it. One wing leaned on the woods and the other on the Nitschtscha.

Nevertheless, three battalions from the Sievesk and Mohilev regiments succeeded in a frontal assault against this position, thanks to the fire of position batteries #5 and #14. This attack was well assisted by the fire of the 24th and 25th Jäger regiments and two guns against the French left.

Thus threatened, the French resumed their retreat, covered by the cuirassiers of Doumerc, who arrived in the battlefield. Verdier and Doumerc crossed again the Drissa in Siwochina. Then all the forces of Oudinot retreated to Bieloe.

For the night, Wittgenstein settled his main forces between Sokolichtchi and Siwochina, while the Russian Jägers crossed the Drissa by ford and settled near Oboïartschina.

The behavior of Oudinot in the pursuit is hardly understandable, not having made Verdier supported, by the fresh division of Merle for example.

Result

On July 30th, Wittgenstein had under his orders: 18,200 infantry, 3,000 cavalry and 1,700 artillerymen (for 108 guns); a total of about 23,000 men.

Prince Repnin not participating in the fight, it’s 17,800 infantry, 2,000 cavalry and 1,500 artillerymen (for 96 guns) who participated in the battle: a little more than 21,000 men (annex 1).

A post-combat report sent by Wittgenstein to the Czar acknowledged the loss of 1,200 killed and 2,250 wounded. We can count on 1,000 to 1,500 prisoners, most of them made on August 1st. So, the Russian losses raised at 4,500 to 5,000 men for the three days of fights.
On the French side, we have the exact number of the losses, given by Oudinot himself; Indeed, with a dispatch dated on August 10th, sent to Marshal Berthier, Oudinot enclosed the statement of the losses of the days of July 30th-31st and August 1st (Table 1): 464 deaths, 2,925 wounded, 922 prisoners and 674 lost: this is the assessment given by Oudinot. We see, therefore, that the French losses for these three days of combat raised at about 4,500 men, of which a little more than 1,000 were prisoners (some of the lost had to be taken prisoner). This is approximatively equivalent to Russian losses.

But the question arises about the forces of Oudinot before the battle.

August 4th, the call sheet of the forces, wanted by Napoleon, gave 25,713 men under arms for the French II Corps; 3,689 detached to the convoys; 1,810 to the depots; 685 detached to other tasks and 3,202 remained behind (Table 2).

The 6th division (without the Portuguese) had 6,689 men under arms on August 4th. This division lost 2,866 men in the three days of fighting. So, on July 29th, it strength was about 9,500 men (including 500 artillerymen).

The 8th division had 7,243 men under arms on August 4th. It lost 1,686 men in the three days of fighting. So, on July 29th, its strength was about 9,000 men (including 450 artillerymen).

The 9th division had 5,983 men under arms on August 4th. Merle did not participate in the fighting and lost only 83 men during the three days. So, on July 29th, the strength of this division was about 6,100 men (including 350 artillerymen).

The cuirassiers division had 2,518 men under arms on August 4th (including 350 artillerymen), but only 2,179 horses (of which 343 were used for artillery). It also did not participate in the fighting and lost only 28 men.

11th Bulletin of the Grande Armée

“Witepsk, August 4th, 1812: On the 30th, the Marshal Duke of Reggio marched from Polotsk to Sebej. He met with General Wittgenstein, whose Corps had been reinforced by that of Prince Repnin. A battle was fought near the castle of Jacubowo. The twenty-sixth regiment of light infantry was covered with glory. The division Legrand gloriously supported the fire of the whole enemy corps.

On the 31st, the enemy advanced on the Drissa to attack the Duke of Reggio on his flank, during his march. The Marshal took position behind the Drissa.

On the 1st of August, the enemy made the foolish remark of passing the Drissa, and of placing himself in battle in front of second corps. The Duke of Reggio let half of the enemy corps crossing the river, and when he saw about fifteen thousand men and fourteen pieces of cannon beyond the river, he unmasked a battery of forty pieces of cannon, which have fired for half an hour within the range of grape-shot.

At the same time, the divisions Legrand and Verdier marched at double-quick, with bayonet, and threw the fifteen thousand Russians into the river. All the guns and caissons taken, three thousand prisoners, among them many officers, and an aide-de-camp of General Wittgenstein, and three thousand five hundred men killed or drowned, are the result of this affair.”
during the three days. So, on July 29th, it had the same strength.

The light cavalry had 2,337 cavalry under arms on August 4th, but for 1,973 horses only. 359 men were lost during the three days. So, the strength of the light cavalry was about 2,700 cavalry (for 2,300 horses) on July 29th.

The various services necessary for the good march of an army corps of the Napoleonic period (engineering, ambulance, train, etc.) occupied 1,456 men.

Thus the total strength of Oudinot on July 29 was a little more than 31,000 men. At the same date, Wittgenstein had 23,000 men under his command.

Oudinot opposed to Wittgenstein for the three days, the 6th division (less the Portuguese, but already deducted), the 8th division, the cuirassiers (even if they have not fought) and the Castex brigade: 17,500 infantry, 3,000 cavalry and about 2,000 artillerymen (for 70 guns, without the regimental guns).

The fighting thus opposed about 22,000 men under Oudinot (including nearly 2,000 cuirassiers who will not participate) to 21,500 Russians under Wittgenstein.

If Wittgenstein succeeded in pushing back the French, his success is dearly paid, especially because he can’t hope enormous reinforcements. Moreover, he lost an excellent general of cavalry in the person of Kulniev and himself was wounded.

After the battle, on August 4th, Oudinot had nearly 26,000 men under his command, while the strength of Wittgenstein had fallen to around 18,000 to 18,500 men.

Wittgenstein could count on the arrival of the garrison of Dünaburg as reinforcements, but it’s few: about 3,000 men, which would bring his troops up to 21,000 or 22,000 men.

Marshal Oudinot obtained from Napoleon the reinforcement of the 6th Bavarian Corps under the command of General Gouvion St Cyr. This Corps will arrive in mid-August but Oudinot will not benefit from the enormous numerical superiority that this arrival will give him.
Map 5: Main area of military operations on the left wing of the Grande Armée in July and August 1812