

**Translated by Greg Gorsuch
Volume 2 Part 16**

**SIEGE
OF GIRONA,
BY THE FRENCH ARMY OF CATALONIA,
IN 1809.**

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END OF THE TABLE.



SIEGE OF GIRONA,

BY THE FRENCH ARMY OF CATALONIA,

IN 1809.

General Gouvion Saint-Cyr, commander of the Seventh Corps in Catalonia, was holding the remnants of Reding's army, defeated at Valls on February 5th, blockaded in Tarragona. Contagious diseases had broken out in the city and were wreaking terrible havoc. The French troops, by their mere presence, were causing great suffering to the Spaniards by keeping them confined in a city infected by the epidemic; but they soon exhausted all the resources of the Tarragona plain, and General Gouvion Saint-Cyr, in turn pressed by famine, had to consider withdrawing to move closer to Girona (Cat./Eng., Gerona, Sp.) whose siege was to be undertaken. This city, situated on the main road to France, intercepted his communications with Perpignan, and he had only been able to bypass it, after the siege of Roses, when he went to the aid of Barcelona, by making his way through the mountains without baggage or artillery. The capture of Girona was therefore essential for the continuation of operations. As early as January, General Reille, who had remained with a division in the rear to guard Roses and Figueres and cover the frontier, had received orders from the Emperor to make all the necessary preparations for the siege.

General Gouvion Saint-Cyr left the vicinity of Tarragona on 20 March. He stopped in Barcelona until 15 April to secure the defenses of that city, and on the 18th, he established himself in the small plain of Vic, with the Souham, Pino, Lechi Divisions and that of General Chabot, composed only of two Neapolitan battalions and a battalion of chasseurs from the Eastern Pyrenees. At the approach of the French army, all the inhabitants fled, as was their custom; and, during the three months that General Gouvion Saint-Cyr remained in Vic, more than fifty thousand individuals continued to wander in the high mountains of the surrounding area, preferring to die of hunger rather than remain with the French. A few days after his arrival in Vic, General Gouvion Saint-Cyr detached Lechi's division to establish contact with General Reille, whom he supposed was already before Girona, and to hand over prisoners who were to be taken to France.

General Reille had indeed assembled the artillery and engineering corps at Bàscara, a village situated on the Fluvià River, and fortified it to serve as a bridgehead; but it was only on 4 May, after being reinforced by a Westphalian division, that he was able to march on Girona. He arrived before the walls of the city with approximately ten thousand men of Westphalian, French, and Berg troops. The enemy was driven from its advanced positions, as well as from the villages of Sarria and Pont-Mayor, located on the main road to France, and did not have time to destroy the fine stone bridge that spans the Ter River between these two villages. Headquarters were established at Medina, a league and a half below Girona.

On 8 May, General Reille ordered the capture of the positions of San-Miguel, Campdorà, Côte Rouge, San-Medir, and Domeny, which the enemy defended for a long time. General Amey, commanding the Berg troops, took up a position on the left on the heights of Campdorà and San-Miguel, opposite Montjuïc. The Westphalian Division, under the command of General Morio (de Marienborn), occupied the mountains of San-Medir and Domeny on the right. General Joba, commanding the French troops, was placed in reserve in the center on the main road to France, occupying Pont-Mayor. General Reille moved his headquarters to San-Medir. The siege train, which had remained at Bàscara under the guard of an infantry brigade commanded by General Guillot, was taken to Medina, where the engineering equipment and provisions were already located. This train consisted of forty-nine heavy-caliber guns, fourteen mortars, six howitzers, and two stone-throwing cannons: a total of seventy-one pieces of artillery, with a supply of six hundred rounds per piece.

For a long time, the Spaniards had been preparing for the defense of Girona. Twice, this city had been attacked in 1808 by General Duhesme; and General Gouvion Saint-Cyr had threatened it a third time during his march on Barcelona. Don Mariano Alvarez, who commanded there, had already distinguished himself in 1808 by the firmness of his character when he refused General Duhesme entry to the Montjuïc fort in Barcelona. He had undertaken extensive defensive works in Girona. More than one hundred and fifty cannons were mounted on the ramparts. The magazines were well supplied with ammunition; however, they contained only a rather small quantity of provisions. The garrison, consisting of five thousand seven hundred and twenty-three men, was made up of the Ultonia (Irish) and Bourbon Regiments, several tercios or battalions from the province, and the San Narciso Hussar Regiment. The reinforcements it received on several occasions during the siege increased its strength to nine thousand three hundred and seventy-one men, in addition to three to four thousand peasant refugees who had taken up arms. Among the principal leaders were Brigadier Generals Don Julian Bolivar, the King's lieutenant, and Don Blas de Fournás, the artillery Colonel Don Isidro de Mata, Colonel Don Guillermo Minali, commander of the engineers, and the Intendant Don Carlos Beramendi. The city's population, including the refugees, amounted to twenty thousand souls. Soldiers and inhabitants alike had sworn to defend themselves to the last extremity. They had been hardened by the previous attacks, and they proudly remembered having repelled them, even though they had been less well prepared for the defense.

The monks and priests, in particular, fueled the enthusiasm with their fanaticism. San Narciso, the city's patron saint, already renowned for the numerous miracles he had performed in previous sieges to save Girona, had been appointed commander-in-chief and invested with great pomp with a golden sword and the other insignia of command. The citizens who wished to take an active part in the defense formed a reserve of eight companies under the name of the *Crusaders of Girona*. They were decorated with the cross, and promised rewards for their service to the country. A large number of monks and priests joined this troop to defend a cause that all considered national and sacred.

Animated by the same spirit, the women chose two hundred of their number, all young, robust, and possessing masculine courage, to form a company that was organized under the name of Santa Barbara. They were tasked with transporting the wounded and ammunition to the parts of the city exposed to attack; the illustrious Luce Fitz-Gerald, Artigas, and Vivern were appointed

to command them. Alvarez himself, determined to be buried beneath the walls of Girona, if necessary, issued a proclamation on 5 May, stating that anyone, of whatever class or condition, who uttered the word capitulation or any equivalent, would be immediately shot. This act, moreover, stemmed less from his supreme will than from the unanimous and spontaneous wish of the inhabitants; consequently, it was received with enthusiasm by the entire population.

While the Governor was organizing his means of defense, the besieging army remained inactive, awaiting reinforcements to complete the investment and begin the siege. General Reille had requested five thousand men from General Gouvion Saint-Cyr, whose army remained inactive at Vic. He wrote to him on 12 May, warning him not to count on the reinforcements he had requested to undertake the siege of Girona, and that he should begin the siege with the resources the government had allocated¹.

On 12 May, General Verdier replaced General Reille in command of the siege troops. He immediately replied to the Commander-in-chief: that, being unable to besiege a place as extensive as Girona and its forts with fewer than ten thousand men, he had decided to take no risks and even suspend the transport of supplies until the Seventh Corps provided him with reinforcements, or until the Emperor, to whom he was reporting his situation, gave him explicit orders regarding such an important operation; that the Emperor wanted the siege of Girona to be carried out; that he could only want it to be carried out with the means and troops available in Catalonia; that it was therefore up to the person in command of everything in that province to direct everything, as much in his own interest as in that of the success of the undertaking².

The Commander-in-chief yielded to these arguments; but he was piqued at being forced to do so by General Verdier, and especially because the latter had written directly to the Emperor. This was the origin of the disagreement that prevailed between these two generals throughout the siege, and whose effect was ultimately very detrimental to the operations, keeping the two armies, which should have provided mutual support, separated from each other. The Commander-in-chief sent General Verdier the artillery horses at his disposal, as well as gunners and sappers, and on 22 May, he placed the Lechi Division, consisting of three thousand infantrymen and five hundred cavalymen, at his disposal. The Army of Observation was thus reduced to fifteen thousand combatants, and the besieging army was increased to fourteen thousand men, not including the artillery and sappers.

These reinforcements led General Verdier to begin the siege operations. On 24 May, the Lechi Division established itself in the Plain of Salt, resting its right flank on the road to Barcelona, with a battalion on the heights of Palau, and its left flank on the Ter River, where a pontoon bridge was constructed to facilitate communication between the quarters. Another bridge was built a few days later across the Ter, below Saint-Julien, between the artillery park located on the left bank and Campdorà³.

¹ See supporting documents, No. 1.

² See supporting documents, Nos. 2 and 3.

³ This bridge was constructed with timbers that had been stored in the church of Sarria for the repair of the building's roof. They were floated down the Ter River, which carried them an hour later to the very site of the bridge. Soldiers stationed along the banks pushed back into the current any pieces of timber that ran aground on the sand.

On 30 May, the Italian Division captured the village of Santa Eugenia, located about nine hundred meters from the fortress. This village was fortified, and a dam was built on the canal of the same name to intercept the waters that powered the city's mills and which could be diverted into the ditches of the fortress. The French brigade of General Guillot, which had remained behind to cover the artillery transports, arrived the same day near Girona. It crossed the Ter River at the Salt bridge and established itself on Mount Llivia, opposite the Capuchin fort.

Finally, to complete the encirclement east of the city and to monitor the roads to Sant Feliu de Guíxols and Palamós, through which the garrison could still communicate with the sea, a Spanish camp located on the crest of the heights opposite San Miguel was attacked on the 1st of June. The enemy was forced to retreat; and our troops established themselves at the convent of Our Lady of the Angels (Mare de Déu dels Àngels), an important position east of the city, on a mountain that dominates the surrounding area, where two roads leading from Girona to Sant Feliu converge, and from which it was possible to descend into the plain on the right bank of the Ter River and make forays as far as La Bisbal to obtain provisions. As a result of these dispositions, the enemy was left with only very narrow paths that the lack of troops prevented us from intercepting.

Upon his arrival before Girona, General Verdier had sent a summons to the Governor urging him to surrender. But the proud Alvarez, who had already made known in his proclamation of 5 May his resolution to defend himself to the last extremity, replied that, not wishing to have any dealings or contact with the enemies of his country, he would henceforth receive emissaries only with cannon fire. Verdier, irritated, no less by this resolution than by the attempts made by a Spanish officer to induce our troops to desert, wrote a very strongly worded letter to the Governor and had it thrown to the Spanish outposts on the road to Pont-Mayor⁴.

The region of Empordà, which had been quite peaceful as long as it was occupied by the French troops, rose up in revolt immediately after their departure for Girona. The insurgents, incited by the presence of the English fleet in the Gulf of Rosas (Roses), formed bands that began to operate on the army's rear, and General Verdier found himself almost blockaded in his camps⁵. He nevertheless continued the preparations for the siege. General Sanson, commanding the engineers, and the officers under his command carried out the necessary reconnaissance to choose the front of attack.

Girona is built on the right bank of the Ter River, and on the slope of the Capuchin Mountain, which is connected by a low pass to a spur of the Mountain of Our Lady of the Angels, situated between the Oñar (Roña, Eng.) Valley and the Galligansa (Galligan, Eng.) Valley.

The upper town is enclosed only by an old wall, generally terraced, eleven to twelve meters high, and flanked by towers and the two bastions of Gracias and Santa-Maria.

The Mercadal, or lower town, serves as a bridgehead on the Oñar River. Its enclosure is terraced and bastioned, but without ravelins, covered ways, or counterscarps capable of forming an obstacle. Its escarpments, only six to seven meters high, are completely exposed to the plain of

⁴ See supporting documents, No. 4.

⁵ See supporting documents, No. 5.

Santa-Eugenia, which itself presents sunken roads favorable to attacks, and deep soil where trenches can be easily dug. The Oñar River, which flows through the gorge of the Mercadal, is fordable, except during floods; its bed was not blocked by any obstacle, either at its entry into the town or at its exit. The wall of the upper town, which formerly continued along the right bank, opposite the Mercadal, had been partly replaced by private houses with windows and doors opening onto the river. On this side, the upper town was therefore not entirely safe from a surprise attack, especially after the capture of the Mercadal, which was incapable of offering much resistance, as has just been seen.

The crest of the Capuchin mountain is occupied by the forts known as the Capuchin, Queen Anne, Constable, and Calvary forts, whose communications with the town are protected by two redoubts, that of the Town and that of the Chapter. The slopes of this mountain are steep on the opposite side and present only bare rock. These forts, because of their elevated position, cannot be counter-battered from any surrounding point, except for the Capuchin fort which, viewed from Mount Llívia, nevertheless only presents escarpments carved into the rock.

The Montjuïc (Monjuich, Eng.) plateau overlooks the city to the north and is separated from it by the Galligan valley. The fort situated on this plateau is a square bastioned structure two hundred meters on each side, containing bomb-proof casemates, a cistern, and magazines. It was defended by nine hundred men and armed with numerous artillery pieces. The two fronts AB and BC, the only ones exposed to attack, are fortified with earthworks, protected by a ravelin, and preceded by a ditch with a covered way. The other two fronts have only a crenellated wall, but are protected from any assault. The San Juan Tower, which is vaulted and crenellated, protects the fort's communication with the city.

The three redoubts of San Luis, San Narciso, and San Daniel occupy the crest of the plateau in front of the fort and command the ravines through which an enemy might approach. These are masonry towers, approximately thirty meters in diameter, surrounded by a ditch cut into the rock, and capable of accommodating one hundred men each, along with several pieces of artillery.

Like the Capuchin Mountain, Montjuïc offers only bare rock, forcing the besieging army to bring all the necessary materials for constructing fortifications.

Based on this reconnaissance, the forts on the Capuchin mountain were deemed inaccessible, and it was believed that a direct attack on the city from the plain of Santa-Eugenia was impossible without risking a frontal assault and being subjected to heavy fire from the more than thirty cannons with which these forts were armed. There was concern that the garrison, after fighting street by street through the various districts of the city in a house-to-house battle similar to that of Zaragoza, might find refuge in the forts, particularly in the Montjuïc fort. Furthermore, the plain of Santa-Eugenia could be flooded during the siege, as it sometimes was during the floods of the Ter River. But the main reason for rejecting an attack from this plain was the weakness of the siege division, which an army of observation covered only from a distance and from only one side; there was a fear that strong enemy forces might arrive via the road from Barcelona or along the right bank of the Ter River, attack the besieging force from the rear, and, supported by the garrison, force them to abandon their siege works and equipment.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS



No. 1

Letter from General Gouvion Saint-Cyr to General Reille.

Vic, 12 May 1809.

General, I am taking advantage of the reconnaissance of the country between Girona and Vic, which I have ordered General Lechi to carry out in order to ascertain the resources of this region and the positions to be taken should circumstances require it, to inform you that at this moment I cannot detach the five thousand men you mentioned to Girona, given the enemy's new dispositions. Having a new commander, they appear to be preparing to attempt another battle against us.

All the troops they had left at Tarragona have rejoined the army and are taking up positions around us.

I hope, however, that General Lechi will be able to return by the time the enemy is fully prepared, and this division, although small, will be useful to me in attacking them, provided they do not anticipate my move. Perhaps I should not have allowed General Lechi to leave; but I wanted to inform you of the army's current situation so that you would not count on reinforcements that it is unable to provide at this time, and so that you may begin the siege of Girona with the resources the government has allocated for this operation.

Please accept, General, the assurance of my highest consideration.

Signed: COUNT GOUVION SAINT-CYR



No. 2

Letter from General Verdier to General Gouvion Saint-Cyr.

Medina, 15 May 1809.

Your Excellency,

His Majesty the Emperor having ordered me to replace his aide-de-camp, General Reille, I received today the letter he wrote to him from Vic on the 12th of this month, in which he informs him: "that he should not count on the reinforcements he had requested from Your Excellency in order to undertake the siege of Girona, and to tell him to begin this siege with the means that the government has determined." Responding to Your Excellency's letter, I have the honor to inform you that, having had the troop strength reports for the area beyond the Ter River presented to me, I found that the total number of combatants present under arms amounted to fourteen thousand six hundred and ninety-six men, including the garrisons of Figueres and Roses, and the artillery and engineering personnel; which reduces the number of troops I will be able to employ in the siege to approximately nine thousand bayonets. Your Excellency,

knowing the great extent of the fortress of Girona and its forts, has too much experience in warfare to believe that such an operation could be undertaken with so few men.

Based on these facts, Your Excellency cannot, I believe, blame me for the course of action I am taking, which is to risk nothing until you come to my aid, or until His Majesty the Emperor, to whom I am making my situation known, has given me positive orders regarding such an important operation. I will therefore remain in position without advancing anything concerning the siege equipment, occupying myself only with driving back the insurgent groups that already surround me on all sides, while awaiting Your Excellency's arrival. has defeated the enemy army that it says is forming before it, and that it would be so kind as to take a decision regarding Girona, whose submission should, I believe, bring peace to the rest of the province of Catalonia.

I beg Your Excellency to allow me a reflection, which will be the first and the last I will have the honor of making to you regarding the siege of Girona: Your Excellency commands the Seventh Corps of the Army of Spain, that is to say, all the troops that are in Catalonia; and the city of Girona must concern you more than anyone else, since this point cuts off all your communications with France and Barcelona, where you have a part of your army. His Majesty the Emperor wants the siege of this city to be undertaken, and he can only want it to be carried out with the means and troops that are in this province. Your Excellency commands everything, therefore it is you who must direct everything, as much for your personal interest as for the success of the undertaking; finding myself again under your orders, I have the honor of assuring you in advance that I will execute with pleasure, and with all the zeal of which I am capable, everything that you may be pleased to prescribe to me; but I believe I must tell you, given the small number of troops that are here and their composition, that it is essential, for the siege of Girona to be undertaken with any hope of success, that you approach this city, that you see it, and that you then determine the troops that you deem necessary both for the siege and for maintaining communications with Figueres and France, an object more important and more difficult than it appears at first glance.

I beg Your Excellency to see in the reflections that I have the honor of addressing to you only the desire I have to serve well; I also beg you to accept the homage of my respect.

Signed: VERDIER.

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### No. 3

*State of the troops intended to lay siege  
to Girona, as of 14 May 1809.*

FRENCH DIVISION, General Verdier.

|                                              |   | Men pres.                                           | Emplacement.                               |
|----------------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Brigade,<br>General Joba.    | { | 32 <sup>nd</sup> Light.....                         | 830 Bàscara.                               |
|                                              |   | Det. of 7 <sup>th</sup> Regiment.....               | 544 Figueres.                              |
|                                              |   | 16 <sup>th</sup> Line.....                          | 683 Bàscara.                               |
|                                              |   | Det. Valaisan.....                                  | 219 Rosas.                                 |
|                                              |   | 28 <sup>th</sup> Chasseurs à Cheval.....            | 89 To the right of San Medir.              |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Brigade,<br>General Guillot. | { | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Line Regiment.....                  | 488 Bañolas.                               |
|                                              |   | 56 <sup>th</sup> .....                              | 691 Id.                                    |
|                                              |   | 113 <sup>th</sup> .....                             | 772 Rosas, Moulin bridge.                  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Brigade,<br>General Amey.    | { | 12 <sup>th</sup> Neapolitan Chasseurs à Cheval..... | 319 Verges.                                |
|                                              |   | Württemberg Regiment.....                           | 1521 Before Girona.                        |
|                                              |   | 1 <sup>st</sup> Regiment of Berg.....               | 1183 Id.                                   |
|                                              |   | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Regiment Id.....                    | 1153 Colomés, San Jorge,<br>under Figueres |
|                                              |   | Princes Battalion.....                              | 757 Verges.                                |

WESTPHALIAN DIVISION, General Morio.

|                                              |   |                                                  |                                   |
|----------------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Brigade,<br>General Boerner. | { | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Line Regiment.....               | 1100 Before Girona, to the right. |
|                                              |   | 4 <sup>th</sup> id.....                          | 914 Id.                           |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Brigade,<br>General Ochs.    | { | 1 <sup>st</sup> Battalion of Light Infantry..... | 326 Id.                           |
|                                              |   | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Line Regiment.....               | 1510 Sierra under Girona.         |
|                                              |   | Gendarmerie.....                                 | 8 San Medir below Girona.         |
|                                              |   | Cuirassiers.....                                 | 12 Id.                            |
|                                              |   | Foot Artillery.....                              | 1040 Id.                          |
|                                              |   | Horse Artillery.....                             | 58 Id.                            |
|                                              |   | Pionniers Blanc, train.....                      | 242 Id.                           |
|                                              |   | Miners.....                                      | 78 Id.                            |
|                                              |   | Sappers, including Italians, numbering 69.....   | 164 Id.                           |
| TOTAL.....                                   |   |                                                  | 14,696                            |

*Signed: VERDIER.<sup>6</sup>*



<sup>6</sup> Translators note: Valais was a Swiss Republic (1802-1810); White Pioneers were Austrian prisoners of war serving in the French Army after the Austerlitz Campaign.

## No. 4

*Letter from General Verdier to Governor Alvarez.*

Medina, 26 May 1809.

Governor,

I have learned that a Spanish officer presented himself at my outposts with a trumpeter, under the sacred guise of a parliamentary envoy, and that he distributed a proclamation there designed to incite desertion among my soldiers.

Such tactics only dishonor those who employ them, and I should respond to them only with the silence of contempt; but it is important that you know that I have given the order to shoot without mercy any parliamentary envoy who presents himself at my outposts.

Perhaps the time will come, Governor, when you will regret having destroyed all means of communication between us.

I have the honor to be, etc.

*Signed: VERDIER.*



## No. 5

*Letter from General Verdier to the Duke of Feltre, Minister of War.*

San-Medir, 4 June 1809.

Your Excellency,

I have the honor to report to Your Excellency that the city of Girona no longer has any communication with the outside world, and that it is completely blockaded on all sides, at least as far as my limited resources for such a large operation have allowed. I completed the blockade the day before yesterday by taking the position of Our Lady of Angles, which is the key to all the roads leading from Girona to the sea and into the region of La Bisbal; this very elevated position was defended by eight or nine hundred men who had entrenched themselves there. Five companies of the First Berg Regiment, commanded by Colonel Mouff, were sufficient to capture it and drive out the enemy, despite the most stubborn resistance on their part; these five companies attacked like seasoned troops: I expressed my satisfaction with their excellent conduct and included in the division's orders before Girona the praise they deserved; but however honorable these commendations may be, they still fall short of what these troops have earned.

Reconnaissance of the city, which Generals Sanson, Taviel, and I are conducting, will be completed tomorrow or the day after; the attack plan will be finalized, the batteries will be constructed, and within six or eight days at the latest, we will begin firing on the city, which, moreover, appears prepared to offer

the most vigorous defense. All the deserters who have come to us agree that the people, the priests, and the monks are determined to be buried under the rubble of the city and its forts rather than surrender.

My rear guard worries me much more than the city itself. I, in turn, am blocked on all sides by a swarm of Catalan militiamen and armed peasants, who kidnap and massacre in the most cruel manner anyone unfortunate enough to stray five hundred paces from the camp; so that I must guard myself on this side with more caution than towards the town. My communications with Bellegarde are completely cut off, and I am obliged to send out a mobile column of fifteen hundred men to reopen these communications and clear the country infested by the insurgents for a short time; I say for a short time, because as soon as my column has left the area, this rabble, which is very difficult to reach, will reappear and resume its brigandage. To give Your Excellency a more accurate idea of the state of affairs, I have the honor of enclosing with my letter the one written to me on this subject by General Viala, commanding at Figueres, and what the local authorities have written to him. Your Excellency will undoubtedly notice with surprise that the bands that have come to throw themselves into the Empordà region are composed of some of the troops that General Gouvion Saint-Cyr had before him.

I can only communicate with General Saint-Cyr every eight days, as Your Excellency will have seen from my previous dispatches; moreover, it requires at least two strong battalions to open a passage for me to meet the troops he sends to deliver his correspondence; which weakens me accordingly, and deprives me of a part of those troops intended for the siege works; so that if I were to be strongly attacked during the absence of these troops and the mobile columns that I am obliged to send to my rear, I do not know how I would manage, and how I could avoid lifting the siege, which would be necessary to reunite my troops and prevent a total loss. If some of the troops that were facing General Saint-Cyr have managed to escape into the Empordà region, nothing prevents the remaining troops from retreating to Girona; and surely Your Excellency will understand that the troops I have here, dispersed over such a vast area, will not be able to stop the Spaniards. I believe that General Saint-Cyr, informed of the enemy's movements, will also come this way; but will he arrive in time, and could I, without his assistance, hold the position and stop a body of troops that might attack me from the rear?

It follows from this account of the facts, which is unfortunately all too true, that I find myself in the most critical situation any military commander has ever faced. Therefore, I have the honor to beg Your Excellency to bring this to the attention of His Majesty the Emperor, and to hold me blameless if any misfortune befalls me.

I have the honor to request that Your Excellency accept the assurance of my profound respect, etc.

*Signed:* VERDIER