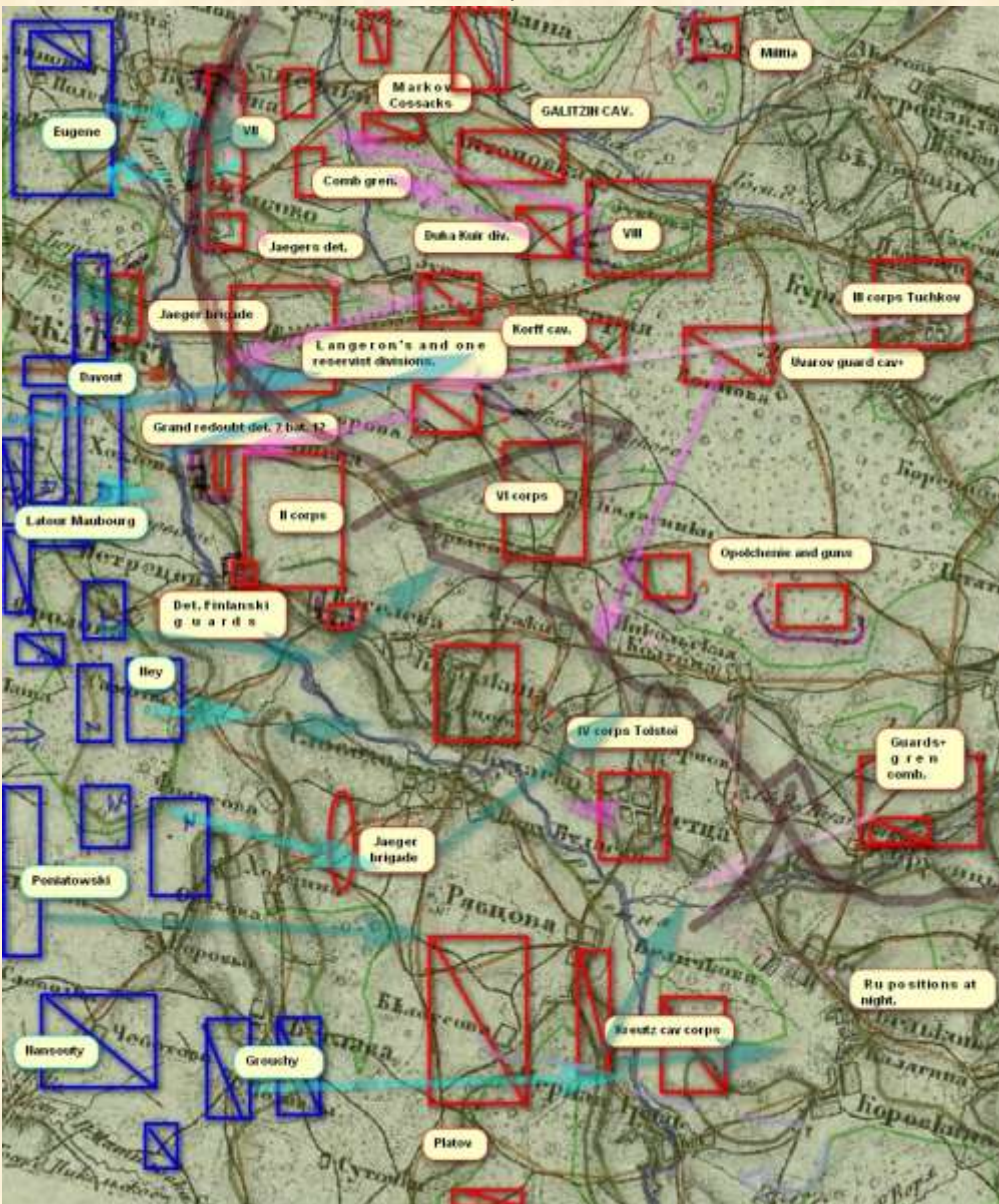


GJATSK BATTLE JUNE 1813 WHAT IF ...

The reinforced Russians are doing their defensive stopping battle a bit further west than Borodino, in a better place after Napoleon wisely stopped east of Smolensk in 1812, hostilities fully restart with late spring. More manoeuvring, more attrition but overall both sides are 40% bigger.

So I am playing solo this huge battle. First placed the Russians after deciding where the French were to be and the intend of Napoleon at the beginning. He will probe and get the Russian flank cavalry out of the way using his superiority in this arm. Then finding the best avenue, probably right center where there is a hinge in the line, try to smash them. As usual in the 1812-13 Russian campaign, if the Russians go away in relatively good order it would not be a strategic victory of note. On the other hand as this campaign already lasted more than a year (in that what if context) the Russian politics might be slightly different with the displaced people and even landlords wary of famines and losing more of their abandoned source of income and food.

As I did not manage to convince Kevin Zucker of having the possibility of that 1813 prolongation, I have not yet thought properly of the victory conditions and consequences. Generally this battle is a substitute for Borodino and might in fine end up the campaign in case of Russian disaster, or more likely do a similar stuff to 1812 historical. General Hiver has his say, as could start later and be milder.



The Russians have a whole string (2 lines) of redoubts, fortified villages. 18 km x 11 190000 for Napo, 160000 for Kutusov 4000 minis

The dark line shows the front at the end, collapsing Russian line.

La Garde is outside behind as are the Westphalians.



from 2019 game



What the Corsican sees.

Both sides deployed. (solo play)

FIRST TURN The French start moving forward. Their light cavalry on their left generates the first enthusiastic shooting of the day from the 3pr pop guns of the Don Cossack battery. No hit. The French move closer, three divisions have orders to engage which is not overly aggressive. Sort of recon in force. In a face-to-face game the Russian would've used dummies and maybe a Cossack screen.



SECOND TURN

The French move closer three divisions have orders to engage with is not overly aggressive. Sort of recon in force.

In an ah face to face game the Russian would've used dummies and maybe a Cossack screen. I Skipped this to speed up, keeping in mind the French would cautiously move in the covers to avoid possible Jägers that would make a mess of the speedier march formations. It came that I nearly did not use grande bandes Jägers in front as they did in Borodino, not having enough troops to spare in the main line. You never know how they will fare and if not crushed to leave a gap of their space in the line. Except for the woods there is little cover, like in Borodino, gullies and streams that would forbid fr cavalry to make mincemeat of them.



The French light cavalry of Chastel division asked for the dragoons to move in support for an attack to chase the Cossack angled trap. They need more units to cover the flank. The Don battery scored a hit with a joyful hurrah, hit that was not saved by the fr hussars (being in line).

The first line of Cossack moved back as the fr advanced, getting the choice of the move. Bad here as I could have moved the gun and shot the Cossacks, but keep in mind they do not know what lies in woods, so best do it that way for this part of the field.

Little dice show that all units there, engaged as within close combat move distance or shat at, got a fatigue (stress) point.

As N want to move ahead engage (" hold as much of them by the basques") and turn their left with cavalry to discover the position details before committing to assault(s).

URNS THREE

Order phase

Kreutz Russian third cavalry corps commander on their left tries and at the third attempt, (would have taken him too long to probably send another) to order provisional div Koulnev to engage the Fr cav. from the left of wood 22, to force them facing south.

Grouchy orders one brigade of dragoon to attack alongside the lights. Had to roll twice as insubordinate order, his corps orders engage.

Davout will stop Dessaix from engaging. Just hold. Too hot in front. No urge. Again, had to roll twice.

Misses!

Who moves first, after giving new orders for both sides. fr win again (each success gives a +1 up to +4 to the other side's roll next turn). Chose second to give a shot to the Cossacks. Test on it even if they save, as they don't like artillery hits.

Thiry dragoon brigade understands its order and goes after the left Cossack brigade. These can try to evade with 4D6 (but with a max of 18" their normal move, I only allow Cossacks a similar light cavalry in line or in recon mode to do that). from 7" distance. Fr dragoon will at most move 16" , so mini 4+7 = 11, if they roll under 12 they are screwed. But enticing the dragoons in a move to be flanked by the other Cossacks is worth. Of course, Thiry can try to stop if he cannot reach. In reality, he would see he cannot catch or can.

Unlucky Cossack rolls 11!

Chastel hussars are shaken so cannot charge, second line the Bavarian brigade moves through and charges. While the hussars will recover. Marked with a rally with the risk, in case it all gets apeshit and they have to fight they will do it with another -1!(not prepared) surprised.

The Cossack tries to evade, to entice the Bavarians onto the waiting uhlan. They move just enough, and lucky as the uhlan reaction was a lucky 6+ 2 for being lights, enough to intercept the Bavarians. They are in column vs line though, not so good. But better than being smashed in the back for the Cossack.

Motivated Chuguiiev uhlan who were just Cossacks a few months ago!

Outflanked on one side (the other side is woods)-1 but lancers charging +1 compared to ordinary lights. Equal! Melee, not good for lancers. Both score one melee hit. Re roll this kind of thing normally lasts less than 10 minutes! Now in disorder.

-1 for outflanked Chuguiiev, and whooping +6 to the dice for the Bavarians.

Uhlans rout. Bavarian decide to pursue to hit the recuperating Cossacks. Both are in disorder. The Cossack lava outflanks them on one side, but as they are not charging they don't roll their unknown ability, will fight as D. Bavarians have continuing charge with elan (for routing the uhlans.) the Cossacks are static.

Advantage +2 to the Bavarians.

Bavarian day: bier in Regensburg. +6!

The Bavarians carry on the length of their started pursuit. And with blown horses so do Illowaski Cossacks and Chuguiiev for running away.



Dragoons do a bad die but they have so many plusses vs the rear of the Cossacks that they still manage to rout them. it would need really extreme dice not to. They succeed in reigning in the pursuit and not to have blown horses. Masterly discipline. Turns 45° to be nicely in the rear of the last visible Cossacks.

I will do all the right side before moving left, for several turns. So far quite independent. Now ru move.

Kulnev no doubt confused about the mess around receives his order from GmKreutz but does nothing, not implementing it (rolled 5). As there is a strong change of situation I could have him try initiative orders.

But first 1/3 of his command and 1/2 of Platov's are routing we have some maneuver elements demotivation tests first.

Kulnev's passes, only one unit running and the rest being B.

But Platov's fails, both brigades retire shaken with one sp each lost (stragglers).

Looks like Grouchy order to Chastel generally pointing at the Cossacks "enlevez moi ça que diantre" was done nicely.

Kulnev now succeeds a whooping 19 on his initiative test and gives himself attack orders, deploys his two hussar rgts and battery to screw those pesky Bavarians next turn and be flanking any French rash forward move. Platov tries to rally two brigades, one he does with using at the end of the turn his charisma +1 and reroll! The last Cossack brigade in the woods, out of sight and control on a different order stays unaware of the mess. The Cossack gunners who escaped the dragoons by taking refuge in the woods now instead of getting their guns back mount their horses and run away.

On the center, Dessaix did not get a new order. So he must engage, which mean forward to a distance of minimum shooting his guns which would lose them fast with all that is facing him, or bolder, move the skirmishers line to hinder/ harass the Ru guns. This would be more in spirit.

Friant and Dessaix preparing to go, both rgts of légère spreading out in complete skirmish formation ahead of the rest. The hills are actually heights on that side of the river, roughly of the same height as the other bank where the Russians are, some crests could be found, nothing fully level. It is anyway mostly out of range and the Russian guns won't waste ammo on sk. Especially at that distance.

Delzons from Eugene corps moving through the woods gets to the crest facing him.

Gudin fails initiative to transform his engage to attack to flush out the jagers from behind their breastworks and abatis.

Russian phase

Kapesvich from 6th corps could possibly try initiative to send his jager brigade forward to counter what is coming, but they are just average, not worth the trouble. Seems I put the wrong corps there.

The supporting dragoons move a bit to the rear of the guns to help and will deter part of the fr sk mass to come close. So far very few fr guns in sight so no pb.

GT 4

Davout sends an attack order to Gudin. Will reach him next turn. Kreuz to engage to the huge Skalon dragoon brigade. He thinks those fr cav could be nicely bottled up between the woods. Barclays moves to his left to see what is going on.

Then sends an order to Platov to re-engage from the other side of 22 hill. Probably faint chances but on the long run maybe. It will reach him next turn.

Napo +2 on die 10 helps a lot. Ok put Kutusov only able as very inactive like at Borodino. Maybe too much. On the other end one can use Barclay and Bagration rolling own initiative to get orders if not the who choses to move first thing. Admitting a bit artificial, but after all they were mostly reacting really. Not badly. Russians have the choice so move first to help Kulnev. Dice were a tie, in 1812, it will give choice to the one who did not have it before.

Kulnev charges the Bavarians who roll nice to react, so they are not taken in flank but still won't have the charge bonus. And they get off not too badly repulsed, shaken with one step loss. Russian hussars nicely disciplined keep their horses fresh. Not the Bavarians.

Infantry moves forward. Skirmish bandes deploy out of the forest, negotiate a crossing of the river. Three divisions do.

Russian 12 lv shoot, even manage to shoot the few fr batteries deploying in time before they are fully deployed but all miss at extreme range.

Grouchy consolidate. Bavarians fall back to be protected by the others, to recover. The dragoons should attack but having too many enemies seen in two different angles, that would put them into a vice, are allowed to wait for the redeployment.

Part of the Cossacks start to rally, so does Chuguiev, from rout to shaken. Not Davidov's brigade though. Attack order reaches Gudin de la Sablonniere who sends forward the legère in skirmishers supported by the disordered columns to flush out the Jägers in the center. They fall short of it stopped half a move by the abattis, Jägers shoot them, lots of noise for little effects.



Gt5

Nansouty gives order to Bruyeres light division to engage via the right of hill. 22 to unlock the mess., St sulpice cuirassiers to go and support the front.

Fr move first

Bruyeres gets his orders and dashes forward with a double move to seize the moment, at expense of a fp for each brigade.

Chastel and the supporting dragoons charge the ru hussars.

Grouchy ' dragoon out of control on the left, tests on attack orders, and gets the "conform (previously named sheep action!) to neighbour's actions, of the same type that can be seen, and in priority of its own outfit. A very human reaction. So ignores rightly Denisov Cossacks on the left which cannot do anything aggressive being shaken, goes for the ones in front, same global direction as the rest of its division. Vlassov Cossack brigade with Platov at their head who just rallied them, bravely counter charges to cover the dragoons behind them crossing the bridge.

Despite Platov charismatic reroll, having a pre roll die difference of -4 hard to overcome, they duly get chased out losing one step. The dragoons fail to reign in and pursue with enthusiasm (they get the élan marker for further fight) but in disorder and with blown horses. Like the other routed these Cossacks having charged and fled get automated blown horses, no need to roll against discipline.

The Russian artillery shoots the mass of lights coming for them. To hits saved by the dispersed formation; one ammunition of 12 pdr consumed (die roll 2)

Friant's rgt closes defeating attempt by the gunners and their supports to keep them at bay, inflicting one casualty on the supporting brigade who shakes off the morale test like true defenders of holy Russia.

Dessaix regiment is on the other hand impressed by the noise and fails to close, which means he won't shoot the guns in next player's phase, and they remain unscreened.

Gudin 7e léger attacks the breastworks from the abattis, Jägers resists to a melee, both take a casualty, then re roll, -4 for the French who vainly attempt to use a chance card allowing another re roll. Repulsed shaken with two casualties, one more for the Jägers.

Kulnev busy running alongside routed hussars, Elisabethgrad hussars cautiously roll to wait and see. The battery tiptoes asap to get back out of charge temptation from the French cavalry. The uhlan conform by coming behind Elisabethgrad for support.

Denisov rallies his brigade to good morale.

GT6

Kreutz thinks this mass of cavalry reported by Elisabethgrad officer is too much, succeeds to give orders to kulnev to retire and to Skelon's dragoons, but fails sending to Platov.

Grouchy tells his chassuer brigade that was left to watch the left flank, no useless as the whole of Bruyères' division is there, to go engage watching now his left. The Bavarians have not rallied at all, twice!

Ney's infantry does not dare out of the woods without artillery in disorder with this big cavalry furlough in front. Till it is cleared.

French getting in his first move choice.

Thiry's dragoons despite disorder and blown horses but elated by their previous success plus having overlapping on both sides of the line, and seeing the opportunity charge Skelon's dragoon mass not knowing that they are D class Siberians etc. with little horses and lots of newish chaps in the ranks. Twice as many Russians, and luck, they get a melee, (as then needs a n roll to unlock, no melée is carrying on another 15-30min! and once in melee the non charging thing does not apply) one casualty each side then , second melee result which gets the attacker back, even more tired and cooled down (lost élan marker).

Bruyères has engage orders so can only charge flanks and rears etc. position himself so as to intercept Kulnev if this one was inclined to get the hussars with blown horses.

The retire order reaches Skelon who deploys and moves back facing the French dragoons, not enough movement to cross in one go, cannot trot double move crossing this any way. But the order does not reach Kulnev, who waits as the best situation here, nicely bottlenecking the cavalry mass coming from the left... So far.

Center: all fr skirmishers go for the harassment of their foe, none do any damage though. The Russians hunker down not too sure that any attempt at chasing them would not be worse.

Something that can only happen with fog of war on. In a normal game Zonnenbach Russian near Q village would not be seen by the French, their side of the bank is higher there. So with their order to support the nearby guns and infantry they are aware of the relative unsupported situation of the fr skirmisher the fr player too greedy wanted not to be losing bits of his columns.

The French 33rd légère of Dessaix division gets the surprise, fail to react (they had every little chance to form hasty clumps (counting as surprised disordered squares) the extreme range shooting to help of three fr batteries does nothing. So they get ridden down losing 5 steps (one for two cavalry joyfully sabering them). They will rout and maybe later will be rallied and a couple of these dispersed chaps strength points after hours will be back, till then pretty much out.

Not a good turn overall for the French.

Denisov facing all these Wüttembergers infantry tries initiative, misses but still gets Player choice on the dice (he could have got charge or run) retires across the river in disorder hoping to re-join Platov.

All other Cossacks rally; obviously not the Bavarians.

Gudin's column conforming to their attack orders enter the abbatis, get shot by the Jägers and each rgt loses a step, no pb with morale yet.

Gt7

Napoleon totally fails to send any orders this turn! Munching old cheese half sleepy with a glass of Patrimonio.

Grouchy changes his mind gives an order to his spare chasseur brigade to engage on the right covering the right rear.

Nansouty to Bruyères to attack.

Now on while alone I will use one of the enemy solo systems I captured from the much regretted Warweb. Kulnev goes for it, with everything, Grodno hussars trot in getting one fatigue to get in line, and all for it. Once all controlled units are done, Illowaski Cossacks nearby test and want to join. They go to the right as support not charging but extending the line nicely.

Bruyères first line rushes to help, the horse artillery barks.

But the dice were against it, the Russians lose badly, but it was worth with equal chances.

The fr cavalry is now pretty tired. The first line routs, shaking the second (Chugiuiev) Bruyères hussars and Vistula lancers fail to stop and pursue into Chugiuiev who routs now with the rest. No luck for them.

The Cossack only in side support gets a retire shaken result (one level less than the fight).

One step loss with each fighting Russian unit.

The Wüttembergers advance, the rest of Ney conform to orders.

Both remaining French skirmish grandes bandes score admirably, each hitting a battery and the supports.

One of the batteries gets silenced. Eugene screen not willing to get the treatment of the other one retires behind the river.

Gudin waves his hat and spurs his disordered columns up to the Jägers breasworks. The heroic good (B class skirmish ability 3) 1st and 33rd Jägers resist to a general melée but numbers prevail, the second roll pushes them still in good morale. They lost 3 steps since the beginning and inflicted 5 losses.

V and VIII corps show up on the table as well as all the fr reserve cavalry.

The Bavarians having run out of Bier, rally.

So does the 7 e léger of Gudin.

GT 8 to 15

Lots of waiting for orders to coordinate; skirmishing, moving to positions. Russians small reserves moves.

Ney went in initially on his own initiative having only an Engage order, forcing to roll twice for orders, initial moves ok with the intention, but soon needing Attack orders to close in with the Russians. He did it nicely using a harder but successful coordinated corps order moving his units in echelon left, then attacking with Ledru the village and getting into the Russians positions. Razout and Neubronn went in support, while Wollwarth watched the bridge.



Around GT 14 Davout sent one then two divisions, Compans and Dessaix (but I screwed up as the one in front right was the C class and two B were those I left in the rear reserve!-maybe he did not want to endanger his step brother). It was a big struggle just as Borodino was historically with attack and counter-attacks till the French got a secured footprint on the plateau from the Russians of VI and II corps, both commanded by rather dull generals, Dokturov and Baggovut so as a Russians I managed to put my less responsive chaps at the Schwerpunkt. Napoleon ordered Latour Maubourg to support Davout and to Sorbier to form a grand battery to follow up with IIIrd and Guard corps guns.

Ledru got stuck in a stalemate by Tolstoi who moved forward but failed to dislodge him. Uvarov guard light cavalry and Hussars rushed in by the active Barclay did not manage to catch the franco Portuguese brigade out of square nor to coordinate with the infantry attacks. (need the right combo of moving first and second as inf. And cav. Cannot attack the same target together.)

Napoleon ordered Poniatowski reinforced corps (with Merle Swiss) to follow up Ney and be ready to take over the attack. Daendels division was re attached from Vandamme (VIII corps) to proceed to support Davout. The mighty Hessians...

Meanwhile on the left Eugene struggled against Bagration: Galitzin called in part of Duka division which cleared the recently lost breastworks giving a breather to the rapidly dwindling numbers of VII corps. They pursued down to the river to be blasted by Eugene grand battery from the other side,, then back out of the fight. Paskievitch division first and second line plus the other division's jaeger brigade nearly lost 90% of their troops in the struggle, counter attacking Broussier then Delzons divisions to a standstill. using their stoic characteristic they traded casualties vs. recoils and had good dice. TRUE HEROES. Delzons' division routed to the rear for the day. Eugene called in his last full division, the Italians, only having the tiny guards in reserve.



Italians coming in



Duka's charge



Napoleon ordered a grand battery formed with all the horse artillery of the guard, the mobile machine gun, using a card to move fast they rushed to Murat to clear out the way across the river.

Kulnev uses initiative to move out diminishing the casualties from the guard artillery who despite its ability to re-roll and the use of one of the two the artillery general rerolls, managed to cause few casualties on the Russian hussars. But the way was cleared for the French cavalry to cross and re order themselves unopposed.

Uvarov seized a chance sending hussars in the flank of the French cavalry surging over the river, pushing out a combined Polish Prussian brigade back out. But they were shaken away by the guns attached to the Württembergers and the cuirassiers coming next.



Davout went in further chasing off counter attacks by Korff dragoons and generally getting the upper hand with his skirmishers and good troops. The mighty grand batterie deployed , 88 guns and blasted IInd Russian corps away in one hour. Latour Maubourg went around the grand redoubt now in french hands to clear out the rest of Korff annoying cavalry.

Now as Barclay I remembered the troops not put on the table! Behind the suffering IV corps are the Guards and their formidable Kuirassier division. It took a while to bring them in as too far. As Russian the center had to be withdrawn before being fully annihilated, the day was nearly over and the night was going to save them for a renewed fight the next day. III Tuchkov corps went in, the last reserve to fill in facing Davout, VI corps having been badly tired too. Eugene troops were finally sent back in disarray by Bagration attached to the VII corps elite troops Neveroski heroic elite division and the grenadiers. Three divisions took finally 5 Russians the whole day, that was the point.

I decided to stop the thing not to take out of the drawers even more figures, the thing pretty much done as I don't know how to save the Russians from further beatings. I still decided for the fun of it to deploy the whole French guard corps that would partly bring in the estocade the next day.

My Russian deployment was faulty and both sides had their reserve way too far back. It was mighty, fun and a lot of work, will do it again.



The high mark of Eugene corps...

The Russian center being grinded down by the grande batterie, with the cavalry corps moving in for the kill.



The right cavalry finally cleared out.



French reserves, guards etc. Bessières'



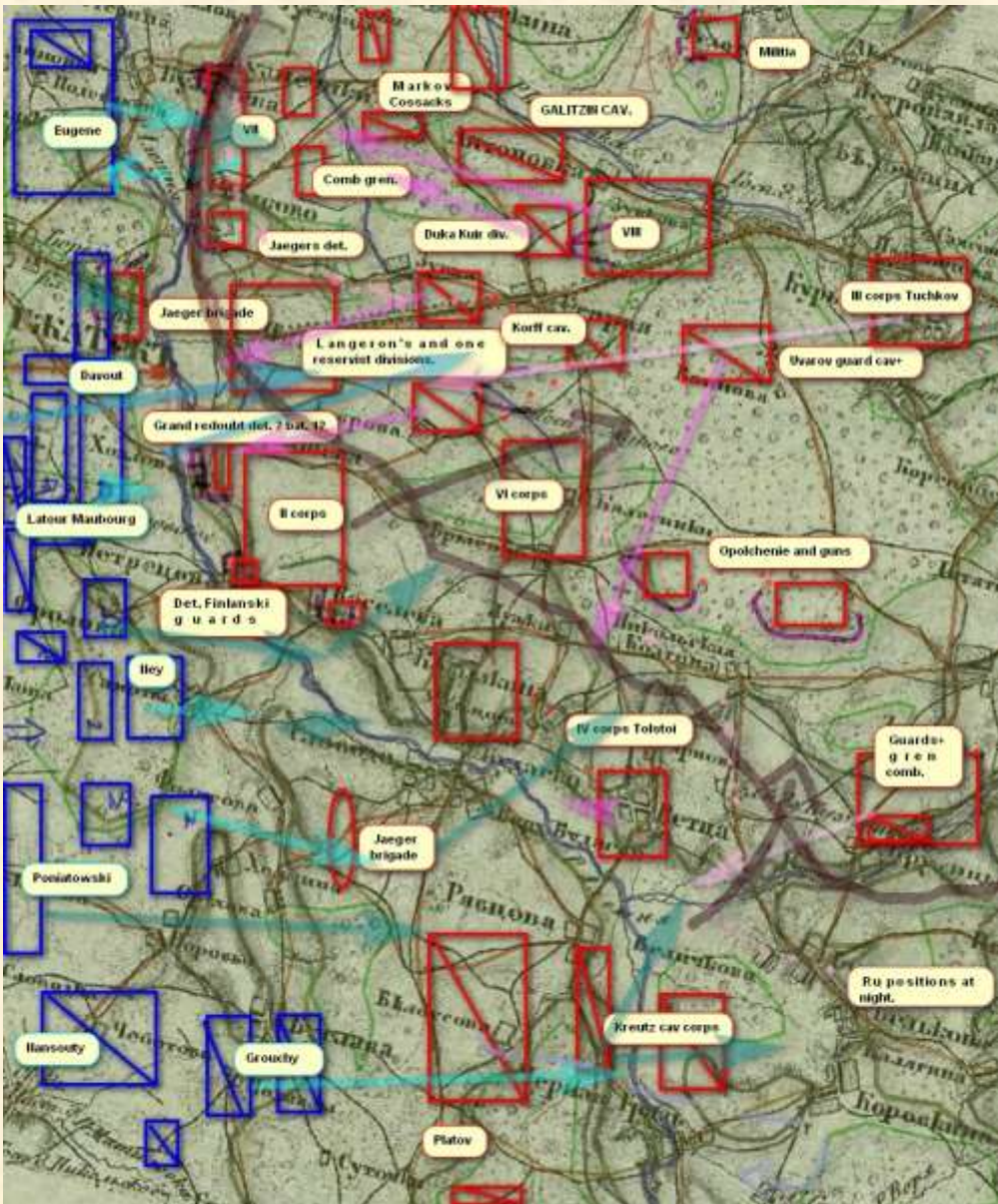
Mortier's



The Vistula legion.



The Italians fleeing, the heroic counter attack led by Bagration (with 70% casualties!).



The line shows the front at the end, collapsing Russian line.



Now He drinks to his victory!