The Battle of Harville-Moulotte
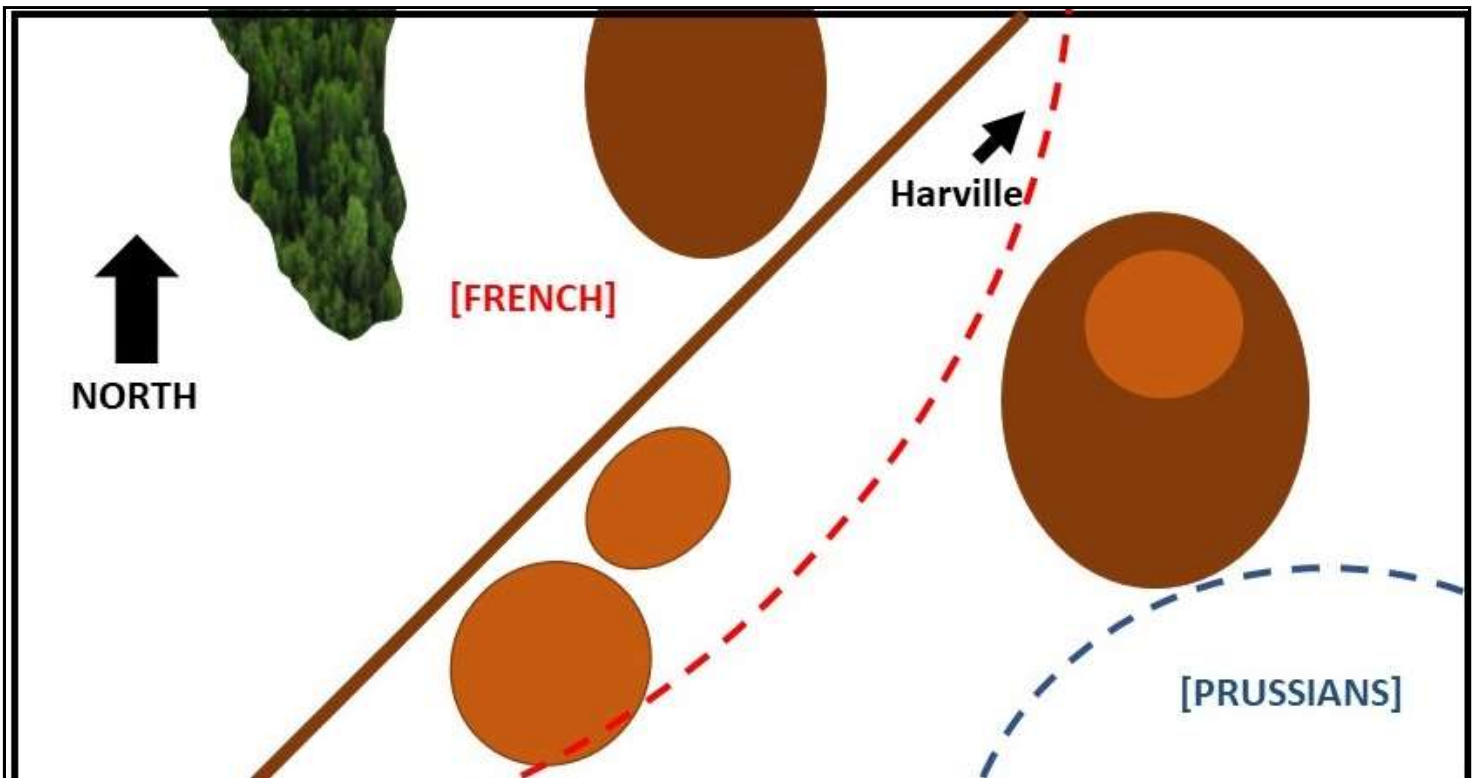
A Scenario for *La Guerre á Outrance*

Background

This is a "what-if" scenario which assumes that the French army was able to begin their withdrawal from Metz on the 15th of August, 1870, so that the encounter which triggered the Battle of Mars-la-Tour on the 16th was what the Prussians actually expected it to be - an attack on the French rear-guard. (Had the French been less dialtory, this would likely have been the case). The action is set a short distance to the west of Vionville, at the town of Harville.

Prussian III Corps and X Corps have been pushing hard to catch up to the French, swinging south through Thiaucourt and turning north. The French deploy Frossard's 2nd Corps to hold them off as the rest of the French march west. If the Prussians can get around Frossard's flank at Harville, then a more general engagement will be unavoidable to prevent the French from being destroyed in their march columns.

The Battlefield

The woods are rough and provide soft cover. The hills to the east and north are also rough and provide cover (they are wooded), the hills to the south are open and act only to block LOS.

The French set up first in the area shown. The Prussians will then set up Alvenleben's command (III Corps and the 5th Cavalry Division) anywhere in the indicated area - other Prussian forces will march onto the board.

Orders of Battle

Prussian

Prince Frederich Karl: Overall Commander

Alvensleben' Command: (III Corps and Attached)

    Corps General (Alvenseben)

    Division

        Divisional General

        2 Brigades Regular Infantry (each 4 bases)

        1 Cavalry Regiment (2 bases)

        Divisional Artillery (2 bases)

    Division

        Divisional General

        2 Brigades Regular Infantry (each 4 bases)

        1 Cavalry Regiment (2 bases)

        Divisional Artillery (2 bases)

    Cavalry Brigade (4 bases)

Corps Artillery (1 base)

von Voights-Rhetz's Command (X Corps and Attached)

Corps Commander (von Voights-Rhetz)

Division

Divisional General

2 Brigades Regular Infantry (each 4 bases)

1 Cavalry Regiment (2 bases)

Divisional Artillery (2 bases)

Division

Divisional General

2 Brigades Regular Infantry (each 4 bases)

1 Cavalry Regiment (2 bases)

Divisional Artillery (2 bases)

Corps Artillery (1 base)

Cavalry Regiment (2 bases)

French Forces

II Corps

General Frossard (Overall Commander)

Division

Division Commander

1 Brigade Zouaves (4 bases Elite)

1 Brigade Regular Infantry (4 bases)

Divisional Artillery (1 base)

Division

Division Commander

1 Brigade Zouaves (4 bases Elite)

1 Brigade Regular Infantry (4 bases)

Divisional Artillery (1 base)

Division

Division Commander

2 Brigades Regzular Infantry (each 4 bases)

Divisional Artillery (1 base)

Division

 Division Commander

 1 Dragoon Brigade (Regulars) (4 bases)

 1 Cuirassier Brigade (Regulars) (4 bases)

Corps Artillery (1 base)

Game Length and Victory Conditions

The French must hold off the Prussians for 7 turns. If, at the end of Turn 7, no Prussian units have exited the table to the west of the Harville road along the northern edge, then the French rear-guard has been successful. Otherwise, it is assumed that the French will be forced to turn and give battle, defeating the purpose of their withdrawal from Metz.