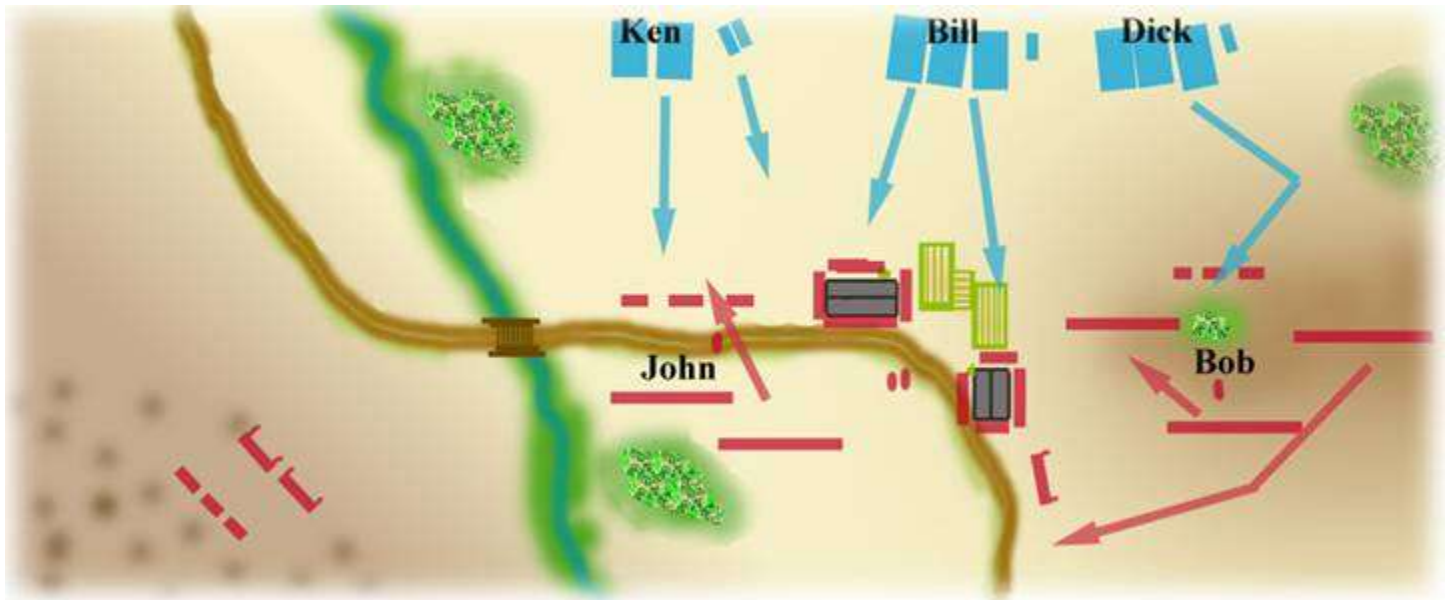


Spain 1810 – Battle of Burgos

[For this battle the river was un-fordable and could only be crossed at the bridge in any column formation.]



Forces

Bob Mackler and I played the British (I was on the left and Bob to the right). We commanded 7 infantry units and 4 small riflemen units, 1 light dragoon unit, 1 horse battery and two foot batteries [emplaced].

From Wellington

Major General Halkett (John) will command the forces from Burgos to Mount Peridiguero and be responsible for securing the bridge. Brigadier General Nightingale (Bob) will command the forces linking your division with the rest of the army.

It is a large area to cover and you have no reserves, so use your troops wisely and try to keep Burgos in British hands. If not possible, move your remaining forces across the Frio river and keep control the west side of the bridge. We can then attack the French and drive them into the Frio.

The French were commanded by, from right to left, Ken, Bill and Dick who had 7 infantry units, 1 light infantry unit, 2 small light units, 1 small hussar unit, 1 dragoon unit, 1 horse battery and 1 foot battery [split into two sections].

From Gen Juneu

Gen De Brigade Didore (Ken and Bill) and Rousel (Dick) will lead the bulk of the division in its assault on Burgos. However, colonel Toussaint (Ken) will command a flanking force of hussars and skirmishers which will move east around the Maladeta and attack the British in the rear.

You should delay an attack on Burgos, until Toussaint has arrived in the British rear. By all means demonstrate in front of Burgos to draw the attention of the enemy. You should then be able to sweep into Burgos, and then attack across the Frio river to the secure the other side.

Turns 1 to 3

The French advanced as planned except for the left flank which thought it best to let the rest of the attack develop before moving. Ken was able to move and deploy his guns and one battalion of infantry and so began to soften up the left half of Burgos. He was soon surprised by the placement of two British batteries atop a major hill, that began to lob cannonball, after cannonball into his troops. To take advantage of the confusion, I advanced my unit of Highlanders ... who promptly became disordered and reduced by French skirmish and artillery fire! Much to my chagrin, the highlander's morale failed and they fled across the bridge not to be seen for the rest of the battle.

Bill moved his troops into musket range, but his attack ground to a halt under the pressure of British fire. This then turned into a slugfest between the British lines and French mixed order skirmishers.

Dick's troops finally began their assault on the ridge, though except for some skirmish, the British forces slowly moved back to the road to form a better defensive line.

Turns 4 and 5

Just as the French left was set to sweep the British off the ridge and descend into the British flank, Lieutenant Colonel Finch with a small force of British arrived on the ridge and more importantly, behind the French advance. This brought the French to a halt, and they spent the next hour holding out against the British relief force.

In the center Bill's force was locked into a tough fight with the British, though his numbers were beginning to tell. He was able to keep the British occupied while still applying pressure on Burgos, where my 24th Foot was having a heck of a time. Between the fire from Ken's horse battery and Bill's skirmishers, the 24th Foot was severely savaged. If not for the commanding presence of General Halkett, they would have surely fled.

Time was out for Ken's small brigade, under constant artillery fire and the especially the brutal hits inflicted by my Riflemen, his two French battalions of infantry broke from the field in rapid succession. The reprieve of the 24th was short lived however ...

Turn 6 and 7

The French flanking force under Colonel Toussaint finally arrived right into the rear of the British lines! Dick's troops had finally contained the British force and were in fact pushing them back. Enough so, that he was able to free up a battalion of infantry to press towards Burgos again.

While Bill had lost a battalion of infantry, he had finally managed to maneuver his unit of Dragoons into charge position. Which I am sure would have been spectacular if the French Hussars had not stolen their thunder! While Ken had the two skirmish units harass the British artillery, he charged the British rear with the Hussars and this sealed the fate of the British at Burgos.

General Halkett, seeing that he was going to be cut off, tried to move his remaining force across the bridge. The confusion of this sudden change in orders must have been great, as not only were the troops not able to make it across the bridge, their indecisiveness left them exposed to hussars!

Ken promptly charged and destroyed two infantry battalions, then reformed and overran a British battery, only finally being halted by some British infantry, that managed to hold out against their savage flank attack. Alas the damage was done, Burgos was ready to fall and the remaining British troops were unlikely to make it across the bridge.

Aftermath

Unable to hold the bridge, the artillery crew abandon their guns and fled hilltop. The rest of the British survivors headed back to the main British force, which was now cut off from their main supply line. Wellington will have to break off the siege of Alameda and bring the full force of the army against the French to reestablish his lines of communications to Lisbon.

Battle result = Major French Victory.