The 43rd met Kellerman’s grenadiers in the entrance to Vimeiro village around the cemetery. Heavy fighting took place and the grenadiers were driven back.

Junot’s second assault had been decisively beaten back, again with a heavy loss of men and guns.

The retreating French grenadiers were charged by the British 20th Light Dragoons. After scattering the survivors from the French advance, the 20th continued their charge and were themselves attacked by French cavalry squadrons, being dispersed with heavy casualties, including the death of their commanding officer, Colonel Taylor.

The action at the northern end of the ridge started as the fighting around Vimeiro ended.

Brenier’s brigade marched too far to the north in the difficult country before turning west, and became ensnared in a deep ravine that lay along the front of the ridge on which the British left was positioned.

Following Brenier, but without communication between the two commanders, Solignac made the correct turn to the west and came upon the British on the ridge. Solignac expected to be supporting Brenier, whereas he found his brigade to be spearheading the attack, with no sign of Brenier’s troops.

The brigade of Solignac attacked the British left flank, but was driven back from the mountain by Ferguson’s and Nightingale’s brigades, which captured 6 French guns. The 71st Highlanders and 82nd Foot were left to guard the guns. These two regiments were surprised by Brenier, as he finally developed his assault on the ridge, and driven off the guns.

Rallying, the two British regiments returned to the attack, captured the guns and inflicted heavy casualties on Brenier’s brigade. General Brenier was wounded and captured.

Ferguson’s brigade was well on the way to capturing numbers of the defeated French troops, when the brigade commander received an order to halt.

Brenier’s and Solignac’s brigades were being forced along the ridge away to the north, while Loisin, Delaborde, St Clair and Kellerman were driven due east, when all along the line the British pursuit was abandoned.

The ‘stop’ order was given by Sir Harry Burrard, one of the officers senior to Wellesley, newly arrived from England, and, after landing from his ship, now in command.

Sir Arthur Wellesley’s plan was to swing his unengaged right flank across his front, cutting off the retreat of the French Army by occupying the Lisbon road, while pressing the pursuit of the retreating French troops with his centre and left.

Had Sir Arthur Wellesley been permitted to continue the British pursuit of the retreating French troops and the envelopment, Junot’s Army might well have been compelled to surrender entirely.