

keyno: 001

---

## The World War 1914 to 1918

Edited in the Reich Archive

The Military Operations on Land

Seventh Volume

Published by E. S. Mittler & Son

Berlin in the Year 1931

keyno: 002

---

The Operations of the Year 1915

The Events in Winter and Spring

With forty maps and sketches

---

Published by E. S. Mittler & Son

---

Berlin in the year 1931

## Introduction to the Seventh Volume.

The present Volume VII describes the military operations of the winter and spring of 1915.

To keep the scope of the complete work "The World War 1914—1918" within reasonable limits, a strict focus on the essentials was an unavoidable necessity. The presentation has aimed to highlight, by excluding less important events, the major lines of development of the war events, both in terms of operational warfare and the events at the battlefronts. While the depiction of the events of the first five months of the war, with the extremely varied course of the war of movement in the West and East, comprised no less than six volumes, the military operations of the entire war year 1915, which only show movement in the East and pure trench warfare in the West, are to be presented in three volumes. The events of the war years 1916 and 1917 are expected to be described much more briefly, while the year 1918, so significant for the outcome of the war, will again be given more space.

The decisions of the Supreme Army Command in the winter and spring of 1915 were significantly influenced by the development of political events, particularly by the negotiations of the Central Powers with Italy. To make the motives of the warfare understandable, it was therefore necessary to address these negotiations, but only insofar as the Supreme Army Command was involved in them. The presentation does not claim to provide a complete account of the political events of that time; it is only a partial excerpt from the overall action, which naturally cannot always fully account for the thoughts and motives of the political leadership. This approach will also have to be adhered to in the later publications of the Reichsarchiv.

### Introduction to the Seventh Volume.

The large offensive in the East described in the present Volume VII and the soon-to-be-published Volume VIII forms a cohesive whole; therefore, the review of the entire period will be placed at the end of Volume VIII. The work has once again received valuable support from the War Archives in Vienna, for which the Reich Archives sincerely thanks.

The Historical Commission has entrusted Major General a. D. Rudolf v. Borries in Potsdam and Dr. phil. Hans Rothfels, a full professor of history at the University of Königsberg i. Pr., with the review of Volume VII. The Reich Archives extends its special thanks to both reporters.

## Table of Contents

The Operations of the Year 1915.

The Events in Winter and Spring.

The Question of the Focus of Warfare

in January 1915 ..... Page

1

The Campaign in the West until Mid-April 1915

1. Considerations and Measures of the German Supreme Army Command 16
2. The Combat Operations on the Western Front until Mid-February 1915 .. 21
3. The French and English Military Leadership at the Beginning of 1915 ... 35
4. The Climax of the Winter Battle in Champagne from Mid-February  
to Mid-March 1915 ..... 41
5. The Battles on the Remaining Western Front from Mid-February to Mid-March  
1915 ..... 54
6. The Return of the German Supreme Army Command to the Western  
Theater of War ..... 62
7. The Defensive Battles from Mid-March to Mid-April 1915 ..... 63

The Campaigns in the East until Spring 1915

- A. The Battles on the Austro-Hungarian Front until Mid-April 1915
1. The Formation of the German Southern Army in January 1915 ..... 74
2. The Carpathian Battle
  - a) The Events until the Deployment of the Southern Army from January 1 to 23,  
1915 ..... 84
  - b) The Carpathian Offensive until February 5, 1915 ..... 89
  - c) The Continuation of Operations until the End of February 1915 ..... 103
  - d) The Last Attempts to Deploy Przemysl ..... 116

e) The Events on the Carpathian Front after the Fall of Przemysl until Mid-April 1915 .....	125
3. The Developments on the Left Wing of the Army North of the Vistula	133
4. The Russian Supreme Army Command and the Operations of the Southwestern Front until Mid-April 1915 .....	136
5. Considerations .....	148
B. The Battles on the German Eastern Front until the End of April 1915 .....	153
1. The Deployment of the New Corps in East Prussia .....	153
2. Battles on the Secondary Fronts until the Beginning of February 1915 .....	161
a) In West Poland	
b) In West and East Prussia	

## Table of Contents.

	Page
3. The Winter Battle in Masuria .....	172
a) Preparations, Deployment and Battle Layout .....	172
b) The Battles of the 8th Army around the Pisseeck Section on February 7th and 8th, 1915 .....	179
c) Advance and Pivot of the 10th Army from February 8th to 10th, 1915 .....	182
d) The Battle of the 8th Army for the Lakes Barrier Rajgrod—Lyck from February 9th to 14th, 1915 .....	197
e) The Thrust of the 10th Army Southward from February 11th to 14th, 1915 .....	206
f) The First Encirclement Attempt at Augustow from February 15th to 17th, 1915 .....	215
g) The Encirclement from February 18th to 21st, 1915 ....	227
h) Defense against Russian Counter-attacks by the 10th Army from February 22nd to 27th, 1915 .....	238
4. Protection of the Right Flank of the 10th Army .....	243
a) Attack of the 8th Army against the Narew—Bob Line in February 1915 .....	243
b) The Offensive of Army Detachment Gallwitz from February 9th to 28th, 1915 .....	248
5. New Decision of the Commander-in-Chief East (February 22nd to 27th, 1915) 257	
6. The Operations of the Russian Northwest Front .....	260
7. Observations .....	268

8. The Concluding Battles on the German Eastern Front from Late February to Late April 1915 .....	276
a) The Intentions of the Commander-in-Chief East .....	276
b) The Battles of the 10th Army in March and April 1915 ...	277
c) The Battles on the East Prussian Southern Front from Early March to Late April 1915 .....	285
d) The 9th Army in March and April 1915 .....	292
9. The Commander-in-Chief East in April 1915 .....	295
10. The Russian Operations in March and April 1915 .....	297
Changing Plans of General von Falkenhayn ..	301
The Creation of a New Army Reserve .....	301
Considerations for a War-Deciding Breakthrough in the West ...	307
The Political Situation and its Influence on Military Decisions .....	323
1. Until the Dardanelles Attack .....	323
2. Until the Deployment of German Army Reserves in the East ...	334

## Table of Contents.

V. The Campaign in Galicia until Mid-May 1915 ...	346
A. The Decision for the Breakthrough at Gorlice-Tarnow ...	346
B. The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice ...	367
1. Preparations for the Battle ...	367
2. The Battle of Gorlice until Noon on May 5, 1915 ...	378
a) The Breakthrough of the 11th Army on May 2, 1915 ...	378
b) The Battles of the Austro-Hungarian 4th and 3rd Army on May 2, 1915 ...	385
c) Progress of the Breakthrough Battle on May 3, 1915 ...	389
d) Completion of the Breakthrough ...	398
e) The Enemy ...	401
3. The Operational Impact of the Breakthrough from Gorlice from May 5 to 10, 1915 ...	403
a) Advance to Jasło on May 5 and 6, 1915 ...	403
b) Advance to Wisłok on May 7, 1915 ...	408
c) Hard Battles at Wisłok on May 8 and 9, 1915 ...	411
d) Advance over the Brzezanka on May 10, 1915 ...	414
4. The Pursuit to the San from May 11 to 13, 1915 ...	419
a) Operational Considerations ...	419
b) The Pursuit on May 11, 1915 ...	422
c) Concentration of the 11th Army at Jarosław on May 12, 1915 ...	424
d) Deployment against the Russian San Front on May 13, 1915 ...	426
5. The Events at the Adjacent Fronts until Mid-May 1915 ...	428
a) The Developments South of the Dniester and in the Carpathians ...	428
b) The Front between Vistula and Pilica ...	433
6. The Russian Leadership from May 5 to 13, 1915 ...	434

7. Considerations ... 437

Appendices.

Appendix 1: Troop Overviews ... 445

Appendix 2: Source References ... 473

Index of Persons ... 477

Index of Troops ... 484

## Table of Contents.

### Maps and Sketches.

The maps and sketches are located in the map pocket at the end of the volume.

#### A. Military Leadership.

No. 1. Map 1:10,200,000. The theaters of war of the Central Powers in spring 1915.

#### B. West.

No. 2. Map 1:1,000,000. The front against France on April 12, 1915.

No. 3. Map 1:300,000. The Western Front at the beginning of 1915. Section of the German 4th and 6th Army.

No. 4. Map 1:300,000. The Western Front at the beginning of 1915. Section of the German 2nd, 1st, and 7th Army.

No. 5. Map 1:300,000. The Western Front at the beginning of 1915. Section of the German 3rd and 5th Army.

No. 6. Map 1:80,000. The Winter Battle in Champagne. Status on February 17, 1915.

No. 7. Map 1:300,000. The Western Front at the beginning of 1915. Section of the Army Detachment Stranz.

No. 8. Map 1:300,000. The Western Front Spring 1915. Section of the Army Detachments Falkenhausen and Gaede.

a) Sketch. The Winter Battle in Champagne. Force distribution at the beginning of the battle.

b) Sketch. The force distribution between Perthes and the Beauséjour Farm on February 24.

c) Sketch. The Winter Battle in Champagne. Force distribution on March 11.

d) Sketch. The battles at Soissons from January 12 to 14, 1915.

e) Sketch. The battles at Chemin des Dames on January 25 and 26, 1915.

f) Sketch. The battles of the XVI Army Corps in the Argonne. January to April 1915.

g) Sketch. The battles at Combres Heights from February to April 1915.

h) Sketch. The Battle of Neuve Chapelle. Status on March 10, 1915.

#### C. East.

No. 9. Map 1:2,000,000. The front against Russia on February 7, 1915.

No. 10. Map 1:750,000. The Carpathian Battle. The Austro-Hungarian 3rd and the German Southern Army from January 23 to February 5, 1915.

## Table of Contents.

No. 11. Map 1:400,000. The Winter Battle in Masuria. Deployment and advance of the 10th Army from February 7 to 14, 1915.

No. 12. Map 1:400,000. The Winter Battle in Masuria. The 8th Army from February 7 to 14 and the encirclement at Augustow until February 17, 1915.

No. 13. Map 1:400,000. The Army Detachment Gallwitz from February 9 to March 3, 1915.

No. 14. Map 1:2,000,000. The front against Russia on February 26, 1915.

No. 15. Map 1:750,000. The Carpathian Battle. The Austro-Hungarian 2nd, 3rd, and the German Southern Army from February 16 to early April 1915.

No. 16. The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice. The operations from May 2 to 13, 1915.

No. 17. Map 1:75,000. The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice from May 2 to 4, 1915.

No. 18. Map 1:2,000,000. The front against Russia on April 26, 1915 and on May 13, 1915.

i) Sketch. The Winter Battle in Masuria. The end of the encirclement from February 17 to 22, 1915.

k) Sketch. The advance on Przasnysz from February 18 to 25, 1915.

l) Sketch. The retreat from Przasnysz from February 25 to 28, 1915.

- m) Sketch. The advance on Przasnysz from March 9 to 13, 1915.
- n) Sketch. The German 9th Army on January 10, 1915.
- o) Sketch. The attack of the Frommel Group in March 1915.
- p) Sketch. The Austro-Hungarian front in the Carpathians from January 18 to 23, 1915.
- q) Sketch. The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army on: January 23, 1915, February 5, 1915, February 26, 1915, April 6, 1915.
- r) Sketch. The Austro-Hungarian Army Group Pflanzer-Baltin on January 23 and February 5, 1915.
- s) Sketch. The Austro-Hungarian Army Group Pflanzer-Baltin on February 26 and April 8, 1915.
- t) Sketch. The Army Detachment Gallwitz. Distribution of forces on March 23, 1915.
- u) Sketch. The German 10th Army from March 8 to 12, 1915.
- v) Sketch. The German 10th Army from March 23 to 27, 1915.
- w) Sketch. The German 8th Army on March 5, 1915.

## Table of Contents.

Notes on the Maps and Sketches.

1. The terrain is only depicted in detail where it seemed significant for understanding the tactical operations.

2. The following applies to troop designations: Corps numbers are given in Roman numerals, army, division, and brigade numbers in Arabic numerals; armies, divisions, and brigades are distinguished only by the size of the numerals.

3. List of abbreviations used:

O. d. L. .... = Supreme Army Command,

Gr. H. Qu. .... = Great Headquarters,

H. Q. .... = Headquarters,

O. B. Ost ..... = Commander-in-Chief East,

Gen.-Gov. .... = General Government,

Br. Exped. K. R. = British Expeditionary Corps,

Seeresgr., S. Gr. = Sea Group,

A. .... = Army,

A. .... = Army Detachment,

A. K. .... = Army Corps,

K. K. .... = Cavalry Corps,

Gr. .... = Group,

S. K. K. .... = Senior Cavalry Commander,

Gr. R. Dn. .... = Group Reserve Divisions,

Div., D. .... = Division,

Brig., Br., B. .. = Brigade,

Abschn., Al. .... = Section,

Sect. .... = Sector,

Abt. .... = Department,

Det. .... = Detachment.

Regt., R. .... = Regiment,

I. R. .... = Infantry Regiment,

Gr. R., Gr. B. .. = Grenadier Regiment,

Large (on Map 15) = Size of the 9th Division,

Btl. .... = Battalion,

G. Sch. .... = Guard Rifle Battalion,

Jäg., Jg. .... = Jäger Battalion,

Füs. .... = Fusilier Battalion,

3 — 2 — 1 .... = 3 Battalions, 2 Squadrons, 1 Battery.

J. R., Inf. .... = Infantry,

Kav., K. .... = Cavalry,

M. (with Austrian Artl.) = Motor,

Mar., M. .... = Navy,

Resf., R. .... = Reserve,

Ldwy., L. .... = Landwehr,

Land., Lfst. .... = Landsturm,

Ersf., E. .... = Replacement,

G. (with Field Artl.) = Mountain,

G. .... = Guard,

G. .... = Grenadier,

Sch. .... = Riflemen,

Fstg. .... = Fortress,

Fst. K. .... = Fortress Cannons,

R., Rsl., Rsl. .. = Rostafen,

Kol. .... = Colonial,

T. (with French) = Territorial,

Prov. .... = Provisional,

self. .... = Independent,

komb., komb. .... = Combined,

zusg., zsg., zus. = Assembled,

Ele. .... = Parts,

verst. .... = Reinforced.

G. d. I. .... = General of Infantry,

G. d. A. .... = General of Artillery,

Glt. .... = Lieutenant General,

Gmj. .... = Major General.

Bayer., 4. b. .... = Bavarian,

Beszk. .... = Beszkiden Corps,

Brit. .... = British,

Non. Rsl. .... = Non-Rostafen,

finnl. .... = Finnish,

Ind. .... = Indian,

kauf., k. .... = Commercial,

Kol. .... = Colonial,

ö. u., österr.-ung., k. u. k. = Austro-Hungarian Troops,

Pol. .... = Polish,

## Table of Contents.

sib., I. s. .... = Siberian,<br>

VI. t. .... = Turkestan,<br>

Tsch. .... = Circassian and Chechen<br>

Riders,<br>

Uss. .... = Ussuri.<br><br>

Alex. .... = Emperor Alexander<br>

Guard Grenadier Regiment<br>

No. 1,<br>

Aug. .... = Queen Augusta<br>

Guard Grenadier Regiment<br>

No. 4,<br>

B. (Austrian) .... = Detachment Benigni,<br>

Br. Gr. .... = Brigade Griepentel.<br><br>

Br. .... = Division Breugel,<br>

Lft. B. .... = Landsturm: Detachment<br>

Bacmeister,<br>

Diess. .... = Division Dieffenbach,<br>

Elis. .... = Queen Elisabeth<br>

Guard Grenadier Regiment<br>

No. 3,<br><br>

Esf. .... = Detachment Esebeck,<br>

Frz. .... = Emperor Franz Guard<br>

Grenadier Regiment<br>

No. 2,<br>

Fö. .... = Detachment Förster,<br>

H. .... = Corps Hofmann,<br>

Kb. K. .... = Combined Corps<br>

Kneusl,<br>

Lah. .... = Lahore Division,<br>

M. (Austrian) .... = Group Marschall,<br>

M. .... = Division Menges,<br>

Pf. (Austrian) .... = Pflanzer-Baltin,<br>

Pf. (with A. A. Gallwitz) = Brigade Pfeil,<br>

Pl. .... = Detachment Plantier,<br>

Richth. .... = Corps Richthofen,<br>

Sch. .... = Corps Schmidt,<br>

Schr. .... = Detachment Schreiter,<br>

Sz. .... = Group Szurmay,<br>

W. (with A. A. Gallwitz) = Division Wernitz,<br>

W. Westhgn. (with 9th Army - Detachment)<br>

= Westernhagen,<br>

W .... = Army Detachment Woysch,<br>

keyno: 012

---

## The Operations of the Year 1915

The Events in Winter and Spring

## I. The Question of the Focus of Warfare in January 1915.

On none of the theaters of war, neither in the West nor in the East, had a decision been made during the summer and autumn campaigns of 1914. The initial war plans of both the Central Powers and their opponents had failed. On all fronts, a balance of forces had been reached, and operations had come to a standstill. Although the German armies had succeeded in freeing German soil from the enemy, except for small areas in southern Alsace and East Prussia, carrying the war far into enemy territory and taking economically valuable lands, this advantage was countered by the increasingly tight blockade ring closing around the Central Powers, posing a very serious threat. Although Turkey had entered the war on the side of the Central Powers, the question of establishing secure connections with the new ally still awaited resolution; Serbia had not yet been overthrown, Bulgaria had not been won over to the Central Powers, and Romania was not inclined to allow munitions transports destined for Turkey to pass through.

In view of this situation, the behavior of the neutrals could become of decisive importance. The German General assigned to the Sultan of the Ottomans, Field Marshal Baron von der Goltz, had already emphasized in a letter dated December 14, 1914, to the Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army that the decision would now "largely rest with the small Balkan powers." They could tip the balance to one side or the other with the deployment of their not insignificant forces. This was clearly recognized not only by the statesmen of the Central Powers but also by the Entente. Thus, the courting of the Balkan states by all warring powers was understandable. A success for the Entente threatened the collapse of Austria-Hungary. The decisions of the Balkan powers were influenced not only by the military situation but also by Italy's increasingly dubious stance. This country was increasingly pressing its claims for significant territorial expansion against Austria-Hungary.

---

1) Volume VI, C. 417/18. — 2) Volume VI, C. 412.

## The Question of the Focus of Warfare in January 1915.

While at the beginning of the war the efforts of the Central Powers to create a Balkan bloc against Russia offered not unfavorable prospects, these had increasingly deteriorated despite Turkey's entry into the war. The Central Powers now had to consider it a success if they managed to keep Italy and the Balkan states neutral.

At the turn of the year, political questions began to increasingly influence the conduct of military operations. Already during the Christmas days of 1914, the Austro-Hungarian envoy in Bucharest, Count Czernin, had pointed out to General v. Conrad during a meeting in Teschen that Italy and Romania would enter the war if the Central Powers had not achieved a major success by spring. Romania seemed to make its decisions dependent on Italy, which "increasingly unveiled its old demands for the cession of Austro-Hungarian territory." This discussion prompted General v. Conrad to present to General v. Falkenhayn on December 27, 1914, in which he developed anew his previously considered idea that "complete success on the Eastern Front was still decisive for the overall situation and extremely urgent." Such success could only be achieved through the deployment of new German forces from the West or new formations. "Quick decision and rapid execution are absolutely necessary if the entry of neutrals, which is certainly to be expected by early March, is to be preempted. Hopes of diplomacy for the breakup of the Entente through special agreements with one or another party I consider under current circumstances and without a decisive success on our part to be completely hopeless."

This telegram proved to the German Chief of Staff that his hope that the Oppeln meeting of December 19, 1914, had temporarily bridged the existing contradictions over the further conduct of the two-front war, even if not resolved, was deceptive. The thoughts of General v. Falkenhayn were moving in a completely different direction during these days.

The German Supreme Army Command had seen its primary task from the beginning of the war until the conclusion of the movement war in focusing on the Western Front against the French and English as much as possible.

---

<sup>1)</sup> Volume VI, p. 412.

<sup>2)</sup> Volume VI, p. 360 f. There the essential content of the letter is reproduced, except for the thoughts concerning future operations.

<sup>3)</sup> Volume VI, pp. 354 and 419.

## Contrasts in Views on the Conduct of the Two-Front War.

...to quickly force the campaign decision. Here, she had therefore taken the lead in operations into her own hands, while the leadership in the East was largely left to the discretion of the Commander-in-Chief East and his direct agreements with the connecting army command. General v. Falkenhayn had persistently maintained this assessment of the importance of the theaters of war even after the transition to trench warfare in the West. He saw in any transfer of forces from the West to the East the danger of deviating from the strategic fundamental idea of warfare. In any case, the forces in the East were to be reinforced only reluctantly, for a short time, and to the indispensable minimum extent. By remaining at the western theater of war, the Great Headquarters was inevitably preoccupied with the events there; the effort to launch a major strike against the French and English as soon as possible dominated all the thoughts of the responsible leader of the overall operations and made it difficult for him to have an unbiased overview of the overall situation of the Central Powers, which had fundamentally changed due to the onset of trench warfare and the political conditions. The East was and remained a secondary theater in his eyes. With his skeptical view of the possibility of a war decision in the East<sup>1</sup>), General v. Falkenhayn stood in sharp contrast to the views of the Chancellor, the Commander-in-Chief East, and the Austro-Hungarian army command.

On the same day, December 27, when General v. Conrad discussed his views on the further conduct of the two-front war with the German Chief of Staff, the latter had laid down his views in a letter addressed to Field Marshal v. Hindenburg, but not sent<sup>2</sup>), from which it was unequivocally clear that he planned the next offensive not in the East, but in the West, originally by the end of January at the latest. For this, he had not only considered the deployment of new formations being set up at home (XXXVIII to XXXXI Reserve Corps and 8th Bavarian Reserve Division, a total of 4½ corps)<sup>3</sup>), but even the return of one to two army corps from the East to the western theater of war. There was initially no clarity about the goal of this new operation in the West. Already on December 25, General v. Falkenhayn had turned to his trusted associate, Quartermaster General Major Wild v. Hohenborn, as well as to the Chief of the General Staff of the...

## The Question of the Focus of Warfare in January 1915.

5th Army, Major General Schmidt v. Knobelsdorf, requested the submission of operational drafts for a new offensive in the West, where it was assumed that "apart from the troops standing at the front and necessary to hold it, six army corps with ample ammunition would be available for deployment at any location." A time for the start of the operation was not specified.

These plans were unexpectedly thwarted by General v. Conrad's demand to immediately shift the focus of warfare to the East. To reconcile the fundamental differences in views, General v. Falkenhayn proposed another oral discussion between the chiefs of staff. It was scheduled for January 1, 1915, in Berlin.

Meanwhile, General v. Falkenhayn had received the requested operational drafts for the offensive in the West. Although no statement was required on the question of whether the focus of warfare should be placed in the West or the East, General Wild v. Hohenborn had thoroughly considered it and concluded that "the decision should initially not be sought in the West, but in the East," "where ... there is still ... operational possibility, both because there is freedom of movement on the flanks — especially on the right — primarily the northern flank to be considered" and also because, during the transition of our forces there to strict defense, forces can be withdrawn for new operations, which is not the case in the West. Furthermore: In the West, every operation must begin with a difficult breakthrough, while in the East, the spaces are free for a new advance. Finally: the Russian, despite good soldierly qualities and numerical superiority, is a more favorable object for us than the French, who are excellent in defense, and the English, who are considered a very respectable opponent. Additionally, the advantage that the use of our railway network gives us in the East compared to the Russians, as opposed to the West, where the conditions are reversed. The East is therefore currently more militarily usable than the West. The favorable development of the war situation in the East is also said to be

---

1) For more details, see p. 16 f.

2) In his memorandum, General v. Wild made the following remark here: "Whether this will remain the case for long is questionable according to the latest reports. The now reported fortification of the Pultusk-Plosz line would be quite beneficial."

## Operational Plans for an Offensive in the West.

The endurance of Austria-Hungary and Turkey as well as the development of matters in the Balkans are dependent. One must therefore conclude: "In the East, it seems militarily easier and politically more imperative to reach a decision soon than in the West." However, this is countered by the expectation of a major spring offensive by the English-French army, while Russia "will not significantly strengthen militarily in the foreseeable future." This circumstance seemed to argue for striking first in the West. Nevertheless, the military and political reasons that must be cited for the East are so compelling that the deployment of the soon-to-be-available 4½ corps "as far as the circumstances can be foreseen today" — must take place there as soon as possible; all discussions about possible operations in the West are therefore "more of an academic nature."

From the marginal notes of General v. Falkenhayn on this report, it was evident that he still adhered to his previous view that "we will never achieve a complete military defeat of Russia." A statement by General v. Wild to a general staff officer of the Supreme Army Command on December 30 revealed that General v. Falkenhayn was "as good as determined to conduct the next strike in the West" before his departure for Berlin. The timing for this was now set for February, to allow the reformation time for training.

After General v. Falkenhayn's departure to Berlin, Chancellor v. Bethmann Hollweg learned of his intention for an offensive in the West using the newly formed army reserve. Since he, like the leaders in the East, especially considering the stance of Italy and Romania, regarded an early war decision in the East as the most urgent requirement of the situation, he decided, during a presentation to the Kaiser on January 2 at the Great Headquarters, to request the removal of General v. Falkenhayn from his position as Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army and his replacement by General Ludendorff. Such a resolution of this significant personnel issue also appeared necessary for state-technical reasons, as the unification of the offices of Chief of the General Staff and Minister of War in one person could lead to conflicts with the Reichstag regarding the conduct of operations. The Kaiser, who was informed by the Chief of the Military Cabinet, General

## The Question of the Focus of Warfare in January 1915.

of the infantry Baron v. Lyncker, advised in the opposite sense), however, rejected the Chancellor's request.

Meanwhile, on January 1, 1915, the meeting took place in Berlin, initially attended only by the two chiefs of staff of the allied armies with their closest associates. General v. Falkenhayn noted at the outset that it was impossible to further weaken the Western Front in favor of the East, as there was a double superiority there. The new formations would not be ready for use until February, and he planned to deploy them in the West. Subsequently, a lively discussion ensued between the two chiefs of staff about the future focus of warfare, without achieving a reconciliation of the existing differences. During a break around noon, General v. Falkenhayn had a brief conversation with the Chief of Staff of the Commander-in-Chief East, General Ludendorff, who was also summoned to Berlin. Here, on behalf of Field Marshal v. Hindenburg, he advocated for a decisive war effort in the East, specifically through an offensive from the East Prussian front, and requested the deployment not only of the new formations but also of all forces in the West that could be spared. General v. Falkenhayn replied that it was out of the question to transfer any forces from the Western Front to the East. The conversation between the two chiefs of staff continued in the presence of General Ludendorff. General v. Conrad brought up the question of the deployment of the German new formations, whether in the West or East. General v. Falkenhayn now stated that he could not yet commit to this question; it would only be ripe for decision in about three weeks. Depending on the demands of the situation at that time, the new formations would be deployed "in either direction" as needed. Regarding the course of the discussion, General Ludendorff stated in a letter to the Reichsarchiv dated June 12, 1930, that during the discussion, General v. Falkenhayn could not make a decision on the deployment of reinforcements in the West or East. Particularly unempathetic, I received no clear answer, and even later, Falkenhayn handled everything dilatorily in Conrad's presence. The whole thing was unpleasant and meaningless. It was a struggle against preconceived opinions. If Conrad misunderstood Falkenhayn, it is possible, as clarity was lacking."

## The Result of the Berlin Consultation from January 1, 1915.

General v. Falkenhayn summarized the result of the Berlin consultation on January 2 in a telegram to the Austro-Hungarian Chief of General Staff as follows: "S. M. have agreed with my orally presented position to Your Excellency. Transfer of forces from the Western to the Eastern theater of war is currently impossible. Whether the newly formed units can be deployed in the East at the beginning of February is not yet decided. A decision on this in about three weeks depends on the general situation at that time ..." In the same sense, a telegram was sent to the Commander-in-Chief East the following day. This telegram further stated: "If the new formations are transferred to the East, this is equivalent to renouncing any offensive activity in the West for the foreseeable future with all its serious consequences, which must not be overlooked there either. That an immediate support of the center or the right wing of the Austrian army by German troops may be necessary cannot be denied. Currently, however, according to the assurances and promises of General v. Conrad, this necessity does not yet exist, and without compelling reasons, no one will decide to do so ...").

General v. Conrad reported on the result of the consultations after his return to Teschen to the most trusted General Adjutant of Emperor Franz Joseph and Chief of the Military Chancellery, Baron Bolfras: "Falkenhayn stated that it was all the same to him where success was achieved, whether in the East or West, as long as it was achieved at all. He was fully prepared to deploy the new formations in the East as well, even in the Carpathians"), if the situation required it ..." The letter further stated: "A major difficulty lies in the rivalry between the German Emperor with Falkenhayn as commander in the West and Hindenburg with Ludendorff as commander in the East. If the German Emperor were in Berlin, the matter would be easier. But I believe they must put aside all personal aspirations in serious times. However, if it were possible to bring Emperor Wilhelm to Berlin as the leader of both the Western and Eastern armies, this would seem advantageous to me." Of course, General v. Conrad immediately had the special-

---

1) See more on p. 77.

2) Here lies a misunderstanding of General v. Conrad. General v. Falkenhayn's willingness to deploy forces in the Carpathians if necessary was not related to German new formations or forces from the Western theater of war, but only to dispensable forces from the area of the Commander-in-Chief East.

---

## The Question of the Focus of Warfare in January 1915.

The ally's standpoint asserted: "However, the Austro-Hungarian armies must never be subordinated to him, as this would be completely inadmissible not only for national and dynastic reasons but also for political and operational reasons. We would then lose all freedom of action and be at the mercy of others."

The next day, on January 4, General v. Conrad received a report from the Austro-Hungarian military attaché in Rome, indicating that Italy was making all preparations to enter the war against Austria-Hungary and Germany; Italy's military readiness would reach its peak at the end of March; however, the army was already ready by the end of January. Almost simultaneously, General v. Conrad also received a telegram from the Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Berchtold, confirming the attaché's information and pointing out the great importance that military successes might have in this situation. These serious reports about Italy's stance were what led General v. Conrad to decide to launch a major offensive from the lower Carpathians. After a detailed explanation of the circumstances, he requested on January 6 from the German supreme army command and the commander-in-chief of the East the transport of four to five divisions to the Carpathians. General v. Falkenhayn, however, was initially unable to agree with General v. Conrad's view. When the inquiry, which he also directed to Teschen on the same day, again highlighted the great contrast between the two general staffs in their views on overall warfare. "Romania's stance," General v. Falkenhayn telegraphed — "Defeating Bulgaria and the extremely important establishment of a connection with Turkey is exclusively dependent on the situation in Serbia. Would it not be advisable, therefore, if one were to decide to divert forces from the 9th Army, to deploy them against Serbia rather than in the Carpathians?" But this inquiry also contained another significant hint: According to German diplomacy, Italy could only be kept calm by quickly satisfying its demands by pushing back the Russians from the Carpathians to Galicia..."

---

1) For more details on this and the decision of the commander-in-chief of the East, see p. 76 ff. — 2) Already on August 9, 1914, Generaloberst v. Moltke had rejected General v. Conrad's request to send German formations to secure the border against Italy over the Carpathians and referred to the path of diplomatic negotiations and the settlement of any Italian demands.

## Position of the Quartermaster General on Conrad's Plans.

These statements provoked the lively opposition of General v. Conrad: "To satisfy Italy's wishes" — he telegraphed back to Mézières on January 7 — "and even to a considerable extent is out of the question. Much more important to me is satisfying France to break up hostile alliances. The entire political situation, especially in the East and the Balkans, depends only on the military situation against Russia. Without decisive success against Russia, even the greatest success in Serbia is ineffective." Meanwhile, Lieutenant Colonel Dr, informed by General v. Conrad about the proposals of the Austro-Hungarian army command, had also suggested sending German troops to the Carpathians in line with Conrad's plan.

On the same day, January 7, the Quartermaster General, General Wild v. Hohenborn, also expressed his opinion, prompted by General v. Falkenhayn, on the question of the focus of military operations for the proposals of the leaders in the East. In an assessment of the situation written for General v. Falkenhayn, he stated that the operation of the 9th Army in Poland had "stalled," and no further major successes could be expected there. It was advisable to "resolve such uncertain situations... That we can bring life to the situation in the East is certain. We can, transitioning to a fifth defensive, withdraw significant forces from the 9th Army and use them elsewhere. The only question is how?"

1. The most effective is an offensive against Serbia with all its known consequences... but we currently do not have enough forces available for Serbia, and we do not want to bind insufficient ones there. The only option is to abandon this operation...
2. Acceptance of the proposal of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief... I believe that the operation can be carried out surprisingly, that it will have an excellent political impact in several respects, and that it — this is the main thing — can bring about a military turnaround. It is not excluded that it forces the Russian southern flank behind the Vistula...
3. Use of the free forces of the 9th Army in East Prussia. That is certain, we would free the East Prussian land, and this success would be great..., but the operation actually requires more strength.
4. First East Prussia, no pursuit of further goals there, limitation to clearing the land, and then throwing the dispensable forces into the Carpathians for the operation ad 2...

Another aspect comes into consideration when choosing the operation: I am firmly convinced that the new corps...

## The Question of the Focus of Warfare in January 1915.

Often we must acknowledge, even if we do not like to... Which of the operations discussed above will best prepare the effective deployment of the new corps? In my opinion, the Carpathian operation, because it will draw Russian forces southward, diverting the enemy's attention from Prussia and thereby best preparing a surprise deployment of new forces...

These statements from his trusted advisor and the very decisive stance of Field Marshal v. Hindenburgh and his Chief of Staff for the Austrian operations plan seem to have prompted General v. Falkenhayn to agree to the execution of the Carpathian offensive, albeit reluctantly; moreover, the Commander-in-Chief East, without waiting for General v. Falkenhayn's approval, had already promised reinforcements for the Carpathian front to General v. Conrad. During the presentation on January 8, the Kaiser decided in favor of General v. Conrad's operational proposals. The formation of a German "Southern Army" from Eastern Front forces was ordered. Its newly appointed commander, General of Infantry v. Linsingen, was assigned General Ludendorff as Chief of Staff, and the Commander-in-Chief East was informed of this in a special letter: As the first Chief of Staff,<sup>1)</sup> it was stated here, "joins this Southern Army" Lieutenant General Ludendorff, who will be temporarily replaced in his position with the Commander-in-Chief East by the next senior General Staff officer, Lieutenant General Hoffmann. His Majesty expects that Lieutenant General Ludendorff will see in his appointment a special sign of the highest trust and will do everything in his proven vigor to ensure a successful outcome for this undertaking, in which he has been involved from the outset; His Majesty also expressed the conviction that it is precisely Lieutenant General Ludendorff, with his extensive experience in dealing with federal troops, who will succeed in maintaining good relations with them even under difficult circumstances.

As much as the new assignment of General Ludendorff was justified by service requirements, the Commander-in-Chief East could not overlook that the separation of the General from him was a consequence of the disagreements that existed between General v. Falkenhayn and the leaders in the East regarding the conduct of the two-front war. Not only the differences in assessing the overall situation but also the predominant reputation that the

---

1) See p. 79 f. — 2) See p. 81 f.

### Falkenhayn's Approval of Conrad's Operational Proposal.

The Commander-in-Chief East, due to his military successes in the army and among the people, made the position of the Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army extremely difficult whenever disagreements arose. To protect himself from future surprises from the leaders in the East, General v. Falkenhayn withdrew with the intention, in case the deployment of the new corps in the East should become necessary, to secure more influence than before on the conduct of operations there<sup>1)</sup>; this was undoubtedly facilitated by a separation of Field Marshal v. Hindenburg from his previous Chief of Staff.

The new assignment of General Ludendorff to the South Army led to serious objections from the Commander-in-Chief East. On January 9, he sent a report to the Supreme War Lord, in which he first presented his assessment of the war situation in general and the reasons that had led him to transfer forces to the allies. As a result of the deployment of German units on the Carpathian front, a success was to be expected here in a few weeks, which, however, would by no means suffice for the difficult situation of the allied powers. "It must be combined," it continued, "with a decisive blow in East Prussia. At the beginning of February, four newly formed army corps will be ready for use. The deployment of these fresh forces in the East is a necessity. With them, it will not be difficult to quickly bring the opponent standing in East Prussia to a decisive, probably annihilating defeat, to finally completely liberate the heavily afflicted province and to push through to Bialystok with full force. If the Russians are thus sharply attacked on both flanks, the impact on their center cannot fail to materialize. The final defeat of Russia will also affect the situation in France. I see this operation, with the deployment of all newly established forces in the East, as decisive for the outcome of the entire war, while their deployment in the West would only lead to a strengthening of our defensive power, or, as in operas, to a costly, little promising frontal advance. Our army in the West should be able to hold its ground in well-developed, interconnected fortified positions without reinforcements from the new army corps until the decisive success in the East is achieved. — Your Imperial and Royal Majesty have most graciously ordered that Lieutenant General Ludendorff be transferred by me to the South Army as Chief of the General Staff. From the fact that as his replacement the oldest General Staff officer

### The Question of the Focus of Warfare in January 1915.

of my staff is determined, I believe I may conclude that the detachment of the lieutenant general is only to be temporary. I have been closely associated with my chief since the days of Tannenberg and the Masurian Lakes, since the operations against Ivanorod and Warsaw, and since the advance from the line Wreschen—Thorn; he has become a loyal, irreplaceable assistant and friend to me, in whom I place my fullest trust. Your Majesty knows from military history how important such a fortunate relationship is for the course of events and for the welfare of the troops. In addition, the new, much smaller sphere of influence does not do justice to the comprehensive skills and great abilities of the general. Furthermore, I fear certain difficulties due to his subordination under General v. Conrad-Hötzendorf, with whom he has already had several disputes on an equal footing about strategic and tactical questions, which have always represented a justified criticism of Austrian measures. In addition, the senior staff officer of my staff, Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmann, despite all respect, cannot possess the authority over the armies subordinate to me that is indispensable in longer service interactions. For all these reasons, I dare to respectfully request that my comrade in arms be graciously returned to me as soon as the operations in the south are initiated. It is not personal ambition that leads me to lay this request at the feet of Your Imperial and Royal Majesty. That is far from me! Your Majesty has overwhelmed me with grace far beyond my merit, and I will gratefully, with a joyful heart, step back into the background after the end of the war. It is rather a duty that I believe I fulfill by expressing this most humble request."

The factual and personal differences of opinion prompted General v. Falkenhayn to once again go east for a verbal discussion. On January 11, he had a consultation in Breslau with General v. Conrad about the formation and deployment of the Southern Army; General v. Linsingen, and his chief of staff, General Ludendorff, were present. General agreement was reached on all questions concerning the Carpathian front. In the further course of the consultation, the Italian question was also discussed again. General v. Falkenhayn stated that one should consider territorial separation-

---

1) See more on p. 83/84.

## Discussions in Posen on January 12, 1915.

must be ready for Italy. However, General v. Conrad rejected such wishes for external and internal political reasons most decisively. He hoped to influence Italy best through successes in the Carpathians. The discussion following the consultation between General v. Falkenhayn and General Ludendorff about his new assignment led not to an understanding but to a deepening of the existing discord.

The next day, January 12, General v. Falkenhayn went to Posen, where first a private conversation and then a larger meeting with Field Marshal v. Hindenburg took place; General Ludendorff, who had temporarily returned to Posen, Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmann, and some army chiefs summoned to Posen participated. This discussion was brief and more formal; the present chiefs gave reports on the situation at their fronts. The question of deploying the new corps and the operation planned by the Commander East from East Prussia was not addressed at all, but General v. Falkenhayn immediately afterward had Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmann alone give him a detailed report in his office about the offensive planned by the Commander East from East Prussia. The discussions in Posen, however, led to no definite result. Neither the Field Marshal nor General Ludendorff nor Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmann received any information from General v. Falkenhayn about the use of the new corps and the return of General Ludendorff. He left for Berlin the same day, General Ludendorff to the Carpathian front.

Since General v. Falkenhayn's trip to the eastern theater of war led not to an understanding but to an intensification of the oppositions, it was only

natural that the conflict of opinions on a question whose solution could be decisive for the outcome of the war grew into a severe crisis, given the emotional excitements and temperaments of the involved personalities. In the course of this, General v. Conrad also strongly advocated in a telegram on January 5 to General v. Falkenhayn for the deployment of the new formations on the Eastern Front. After hard struggles, in which the demand for the removal of General v. Falkenhayn from the position of Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army, previously raised by the Chancellor and now also by the Commander East, was at stake, the oppositions could be temporarily reconciled through a compromise.

---

1) Notes of Major General Max Hoffmann, Volume II, p. 91.

## The Question of the Focus of Warfare in January 1915.

to be resolved. General v. Falkenhayn resigned from his position as Minister of War but remained Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army; his trusted associate, the former Quartermaster General, Major General Wild v. Hohenborn, became Minister of War. Lieutenant General Freiherr v. Freytag-Loringhoven, previously the German General at the Austro-Hungarian Army Command, was appointed Quartermaster General, and his successor was Colonel v. Cramon. Based on Imperial decisions from January 20 and 21, the deployment of the new formations (four corps) was to take place in the East, and General Ludendorff was to return to his former position as soon as the deployment of the German Southern Army was completed. On January 23, General v. Falkenhayn informed the Ministry of War that the use of the newly formed 10th Army, consisting of the XXXVII, XXXIX, XXX Reserve Corps, as well as the XXI Army Corps of the Western Army, to be relieved by the XXXVI Reserve Corps, was intended for the East, and requested the establishment of the corresponding Army High Command 10 and the Stage Inspection 10 by February 1. The XXXI Reserve Corps and the 8th Bavarian Reserve Division had already been assigned to the Western theater of war on January 16; their transport was to begin on January 21. Thus, the burning and difficult question of where the focus of warfare should be placed was decided in favor of the leaders in the East. However, it was questionable from the outset whether the four corps provided would be sufficient to bring about the decision of the campaign in the East.

General v. Falkenhayn had only "with a heavy heart" given his consent to the deployment of the army reserve in the East, because this meant "renouncing any active warfare on a larger scale in the West for a long time." He was also not unclear that the deployment of forces would hardly suffice "to take a truly significant advantage from the enemy for the general situation, especially as it was unlikely that the natural obstacles due to the weather of the season, especially in the mountains, would allow initial successes of full scope." He doubted the possibility of bringing operations separated by a weakly occupied area of more than 600 km to joint effects, for which only limited forces were available, to exploit the advantages of the inner line. Thus, he did not expect much from the planned simultaneous offensives on the Carpathian Front and

## Concerns of the Chief of General Staff against the Deployment of Army Reserves in the East.

in East Prussia only "greater local successes" as opposed to the leaders in the East, who hoped for a decisive shift in the war situation from these operations with sufficient force deployment. When General v. Falkenhayn nevertheless did not grant approval for the operation in East Prussia, he did so under the compulsion of circumstances and because he also deemed it necessary to relieve the Carpathian front of the Allies "from the uninterrupted influx of Russians there."

Given the fundamental opposition to the views of the leaders in the East, General v. Falkenhayn naturally had to be concerned that "the leadership in the East would also be exercised with constant consideration of all needs for the overall situation"<sup>1</sup>). This seemed to him only assured if he took the lead of operations on the Eastern Front into his own hands. "In view of massive enemy attack preparations in the West," he considered it completely out of the question to forgo the realization of this wish.

Whether the situation on the Western Front or rather the realization of the difficulty of restricting the independence of the Commander-in-Chief East was the decisive motive for this renunciation may remain undecided. In any case, the fact that General v. Falkenhayn did not prevail in the extremely important questions of the deployment of army reserves and personal influence on the conduct of the war in the East, but nevertheless remained in his position as Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army, was of grave significance for his further actions.

---

<sup>1</sup>) Falkenhayn, a. a. D. p. 50.

## II. The Campaign in the West until Mid-April 1915.

### I. Considerations and Measures of the German Supreme Army Command.

In the last days of 1914, when the use of the corps<sup>1)</sup> being formed at home was still uncertain, General v. Falkenhayn had hoped to be able to count on the Eastern Army supplementing the four and a half corps of new formations then intended for the West with allocations to make six<sup>2)</sup>. The question was whether a decisive success in the West could be achieved with this. The two generals he consulted, Wild v. Hohenborn and Schmidt v. Knobelsdorf<sup>3)</sup>, could not affirm this question in their answers. Both were of the opinion that the deployment of six new corps in Champagne or on both sides of the Argonne would push the French front back to Verdun and, as a result, enable the Western front from Verdun. Neither hoped for more. General v. Wild also considered a breakthrough to Amiens and pointed out that a separation of the French and English promised great prospects, but did not consider the success of such an operation with the six available corps to be assured. "With six army corps," he concluded, "hardly anything can be done in the West, not even in February, but rather than French-English re-formations with twelve army corps in March." General v. Falkenhayn was of the same opinion and added: "Quite right - but we will never have twelve army corps in the West in March. The East gives nothing back. Unless forced! In any case, I also consider the thrust on Amiens to be correct." A partial success, as both generals considered achievable with the available forces in Champagne and against Verdun, did not seem certain enough to General v. Falkenhayn.

Thus, the prospect of conducting larger operations on the Western theater of war faded. Possibly, this would again have to be left to itself for a longer time, a prospect that General

---

1) p. 3 ff. — 2) p. 4. — 3) p. 4.

## Security Measures for the Western Front.

v. Falkenhayn once again gave cause for security measures. As early as January 2, he requested reports from the army high commands of the West on what orders had been made or were intended for the construction of rear positions. The result did not seem satisfactory to him. On January 7, he therefore issued an order to the armies of the Western Army, emphasizing that the goal, "to fortify the positions so that they can be held for a long time, even by small minorities, against attacks by superior forces," had only been achieved at a few points. "Only if this succeeds will it be possible to grant real rest to the withdrawn parts, and on the other hand, to provide strong parts for special use in army command, which is absolutely necessary for obvious reasons." He was still primarily concerned with holding the front line and expanding the positions facing the enemy. In addition, he demanded "installations that ensure interception of the enemy if he should succeed at one point or another in taking over the first line of defense."

General v. Falkenhayn supplemented these orders with a directive<sup>1)</sup> on January 25 to all army high commands of the Western Front, in which he demanded that the troops stubbornly defend the front line in the event of an enemy attack. "Even the slightest success" should be immediately wrested back from the enemy. Nevertheless, it must be expected that the enemy will succeed in breaking through in places. Therefore, rear positions should be expanded. "Under no circumstances is it intended to occupy the expanded rear position to a large extent, but only at the purely local point where a breakthrough by the enemy succeeded. The connection from this small part of the rear position to the front, not taken by the enemy, should be immediately established in the given case, so that only a bulge in the front line arises." The interpretation that this was the first step towards initiating voluntary withdrawal from larger parts of the army front was countered: "Should it ever be operationally necessary

---

<sup>1)</sup> The occasion for this directive was a disagreement between the army groups Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria and Generaloberst v. Heeringen. In the first army group, General v. Falkenhayn seems to have wished for the construction of a continuous rear position at the beginning of January, having spoken of smaller terrain points "between the Lys and the sea." Generaloberst v. Heeringen, who had not received such a suggestion, insisted that all efforts should be focused on expanding the front position. † World War. Volume VII.

## The Campaign in the West until Mid-April 1915.

Should the withdrawal of one or more armies to a further rearward position become necessary, the necessary instructions from the Supreme Army Command will be issued in due time; the construction of a rearward position by the army in the sense considered here is not applicable.

General v. Wild had pointed out in his memorandum the necessity of having the army command establish larger, contiguous rearward positions. He even advocated fortifying the Maas line. It was clear that one of the most important tasks to be solved was the procurement of the necessary workforce. The armies were not able to do this on their own. However, worker formations could initially only be made available to the armies of the Western Army in a very insufficient manner. The strength of the reserves they had released remained low. Although the principle of structuring the front defensive position into several trenches lying behind each other, connected by approach routes, with appropriate staging of accommodations and flanking installations was implemented everywhere where location and terrain allowed, a reduced need for forces for defense did not result as expected. Only the 4th and 6th Armies were able to prepare closed divisions as reserves, according to the demands of General v. Falkenhayn in the past November. The organization of the Western Army into army groups had indeed led to temporary assistance between the armies, without the need for intervention by the Supreme Army Command. However, none of the group leaders were able to spare their own army group reserves of significant strength.

How far the installations created in recent months would prove effective in the expected battles was not foreseeable. The enemy attacks repelled with relatively little effort in December 1914 could hardly be considered a reliable measure. If the Western Front remained in defense while the German Eastern Army attacked the Russians, it was highly likely that the French and English would make the utmost efforts to exploit the situation for success in the West. As early as the beginning of January, counts of the number of shots fired by the enemy and by our own artillery ordered by the army command seemed to indicate a sometimes considerable superiority of the former. How

---

1) Volume VI, p. 372.

## Security Measures for the Western Front.

its increase in serious offensive operations would force the infantry to protect itself by digging deeper in new installations or by greater distribution of cover backwards, had to be left to troop experience. Attempts by the army command to uniformly regulate the details of trench construction had certainly not been made by the turn of the year. General v. Falkenhayn did say in his directive of January 7: "Behind the foremost line of defense, trenches must be created throughout, in which the garrison can cover itself when there is heavy artillery fire on the front line ..." and: "Recently, the enemy often tries to prevent the readiness of the reserves in critical moments by placing a gun screen behind the front trenches. It is therefore necessary to have covered connections from the positions of the reserves to the front"; however, the directive did not go beyond such general indications.

In view of the uncertainty about the prospects of important, well-prepared attacks by the enemy, General v. Falkenhayn believed that significant forces could not be withdrawn from the west for transfer to the east and that all related claims had to be rejected. The idea, temporarily considered in the autumn of 1914, of voluntarily retreating to shorten the front extension, was not taken up again. It was foreseeable, however, that the continued stay in the developed defensive without the possibility of moving the troops stationed in the positions to the rear area for longer recovery would have an unfavorable influence on the troops.

On the other hand, the situation on the western theater of war had significantly stabilized compared to the autumn of the previous year, as the railway network had now been fully restored and by spring 1915 had been expanded in its most important lines to such an extent that the demands of the command regarding rapid troop movements and army supply could be fully met. To ensure the immediate deployment of available troops for defense in the event of enemy attacks, readiness trains were set up in areas of each army near the accommodations of their reserves, and along the western front, wagon command trains were kept ready for the removal of units withdrawn from the front. They enabled not only great mobility but also firm defense readiness and, in conjunction with the increase in railway performance,

## The Campaign in the West until Mid-April 1915.

led to an increased defensive capability of the front. The growing needs of army supply during trench warfare placed increased demands on the railways and created the previously unknown concept of mass freight traffic in logistics due to the significant demand for trench construction materials. More than ever, the army was dependent on the homeland and on efficient connections with it.

General v. Falkenhayn had long anticipated that the enemy in the West would significantly strengthen in the coming months. A memorandum from the Intelligence Department of the Supreme Army Command dated December 25, 1914, estimated that enemy forces, expected to appear "by spring 1915," would consist of 21 to 22 new divisions. It estimated the expected increase on the French side at about 7, and on the English side at 12 to 13 divisions. Two additional divisions could be raised by the Belgians. That the Western powers intended to wait until these reinforcements arrived seemed unlikely according to the received reports. Already in the last days of December, the 3rd Army, in agreement with agent reports, had reported on information about an impending new, larger attack in Champagne. Around the same time, news came in that attacks would take place around mid-January 1915, allegedly a few days before the meeting of the French Parliament on January 12, with the area around Soissons being named as the location. The English army command was supposed to intend to break through the German positions near the coast in cooperation with the fleet.

The English army had strengthened. An agent report received at the end of January reported the disembarkation of the entire English 28th Division between January 15 and 20, which, together with the 27th Division, formed the new V Army Corps. Both were formed from still available active troop units.

In a memorandum dated January 21, the Intelligence Department assumed that the first Kitchener Army, consisting of six divisions, would appear in February, and a second of the same strength in April in France. A third from divisions 21 to 26 would not be usable for operations on the mainland in the foreseeable future. A strong Canadian division was still in England but could also soon be expected in France. The army corps currently located there,

## News about the Enemy.

Five English and one Indian seemed recently to be divided into two armies. An agent report received by General v. Falkenhayn on January 27 expressed the prevailing belief in England that it was only a matter of gaining time to develop the military forces of the British Empire. Then they would win. The report also contained the suggestion that the appearance of Zeppelin airships over London would have an intimidating effect.

The Belgian army was in the process of rebuilding, but had not yet advanced far enough to consider its participation in an offensive as feasible.

Overall, the views expressed by the Supreme Army Command in December about the growth of the French and English armies in the spring of 1915 seemed to be confirmed. Although there were initially no signs of the seven divisions of French reinforcements accounted for at the time, two English divisions not previously calculated had newly appeared. A major offensive seeking a decision against the enemies in the West had to become increasingly difficult.

On January 28, the departure of the Supreme War Lord with General v. Falkenhayn first to the homeland and then to the eastern theater of war took place. Even from there, General v. Falkenhayn personally retained command of the Western Army.

## 2. The Combat Operations on the Western Front until Mid-February 1915.

Maps 3 to 8, sketches a, d, e, f.

In the German 4th Army in Flanders (Commander-in-Chief Duke Albrecht of Württemberg, Chief of the General Staff Major General Ilse), the Ypres salient and the villages from Westende to Zeebrugge on the North Sea coast remained focal points of daily firefights and small operations. Off the coast, enemy warships of all kinds frequently appeared, down to torpedo and submarines; aircraft also bombed villages and works. The air forces and coastal batteries of the Marine Corps deployed against them were able to repel them without difficulty.

German forces also launched long-range operations against the enemy hinterland. The depot at Dunkirk was repeatedly

## The Campaign in the West until Mid-April 1915.

Bombing squadrons attacked, German planes roamed over the sea to the English coast, the activity of the German submarines from Zeebrugge<sup>1)</sup> began.

Apart from a partially successful advance by the 53rd (Saxon) Reserve Division in the area southwest of Passchendaele and the successful defense against an attack by Moroccans in the Nieuport sector, nothing of significance occurred.

Against the 6th Army (Commander-in-Chief Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria, simultaneously leader of the right army group consisting of the 4th, 6th, and initially also the 2nd Army, Chief of the General Staff Major General Krafft v. Dellmensingen), attacks by the allied British and French between Armentières and Arras<sup>2)</sup> took place on December 17, 1914. By December 20, they had stalled; their aftereffects smoldered for weeks; focal points remained the area of Neuve Chapelle, La Bassée, Carenny, and Ecurie. The 6th Army Command had instructed the XIV Army Corps on January 1 to initially gain enough ground at the Loretto Chapel to establish a stronghold and make enemy artillery observation on the heights impossible. Then, the VII and XIV Army Corps were to jointly conduct an attack against Givenchy les la Bassée-Cuinchy on both sides of the La Bassée Canal. On the Loretto Heights, the efforts of the Baden regiments had to be initially limited to a rather changeable and costly artillery and hand grenade battle due to a lack of sufficient offensive means. This led to no visible successes by early February, similar to the advances by parts of the VII and XIV Army Corps west of La Bassée on January 25.

With the 2nd Army (Commander-in-Chief Generaloberst – from January 27 Field Marshal – v. Bülow, Chief of the General Staff Major General v. Zieten), which was united with the 1st Army into a new army group on January 27, the first months of 1915 were generally a time of quiet positional warfare. Only in the section of the XIV Reserve Corps did the enemy repeatedly undertake small advances in the area of Beaumont, Thiepval, and La Boisselle. In mid-March, the Guard Corps (General Command and 2nd Guard Division), previously subordinate to the 6th Army, transferred to the 2nd Army.

---

<sup>1)</sup> Volume VI, p. 386, 392.

### III. The Campaigns in the East until Spring 1915.

#### A. The Battles on the Austro-Hungarian Front until Mid-April 1915.

##### I. The Formation of the German Southern Army in January 1915.

Maps 1 and 9.

General v. Falkenhayn maintained his view at the end of the year regarding the continuation of operations on the eastern theater of war, which he had expressed on December 19, 1914, in Oppeln during a discussion with General v. Conrad: It was the task of the German Eastern Army "to push the Russians back to the Vistula or into their bridgeheads, and otherwise to clear up the Russian parts opposite West Prussia and in East Prussia as quickly as possible, then to limit itself to a more delaying warfare." At the same time, he expressed his opinion that a similar task as that of the German Eastern Army must fall to the Austro-Hungarian military leadership "in Galicia and Serbia, with whose solution they would have enough to do for the winter months."

In stark contrast to this was the position that the Austro-Hungarian Chief of General Staff continued to hold. He considered the current deployment of allied forces on the eastern theater of war insufficient to achieve any greater success at any point. In particular, he considered any attempt to drive the Russians out of Galicia with the available forces to be hopeless. The only effective preventive measure against the intervention of neutral powers, expected with certainty by early March at the latest, he saw in the "quickest deployment of new German forces from the west or newly formed ones" in the east. With their help, he considered a "decisive success" on the eastern theater of war achievable. He suggested their deployment "in the gap between Pilica and Nida, especially the northern wing of the 2nd Army Woysch, to break through the gap in the Russian front towards Radom and force the Russians to retreat behind the Vistula-San line."

---

1) Volume VI, p. 421 ff. — 2) p. 2. — 3) pp. 2 and 8.

## Various Assessments of the Situation in the East.

The Commander-in-Chief East assessed the overall situation in the East even more unfavorably at the turn of the year. As he explained in a detailed communication on December 30<sup>1)</sup> to the Supreme Army Command, he no longer expected anything from the continuation of the 9th Army's offensive in western Poland, as the Russian forces standing west of Warsaw could not be tied down in the long term and could not prevent the shifting of additional forces against the front of the allies. Field Marshal v. Hindenburg therefore intended to halt the 9th Army in the coming days, switch to defense, and free up three, at most four divisions for other uses. Regarding further operational possibilities, the letter stated: "... Deploying fresh forces towards Kielce—Opoczno with a simultaneous attack on the entire front north of Krakow must occur immediately if it is to achieve a decisive success. This favorable situation does not exist. Austria-Hungary needs too many forces for Hungary-Galicia, does not attack north of Krakow. The 9th Army cannot release any forces if it is to continue attacking. A later offensive towards Kielce—Opoczno with new significant reinforcements from Germany can hardly be expected to succeed. Deploying forces towards Mlawa—Warsaw is no longer successful, as the Russians are establishing position after position here. Small forces can be effectively deployed in East Prussia, provided Austria-Hungary's emergency does not require immediate support, as unfortunately must be the case again. This emergency of Austria-Hungary has become the crucial point in the operations of the Eastern Army and will increasingly be so; no deception should prevail about this. It can only be compensated by significant and complete reinforcements from Germany under energetic German leaders, which must be immediately supplied to the Austro-Hungarian army, whether for strengthening their front or on the right wing."

The Commander-in-Chief East thus agreed with the Austro-Hungarian Chief of General Staff that the redeployment of strong German forces on the eastern theater of war was absolutely necessary. However, while General v. Conrad expected a complete turnaround of the situation in favor of the Central Powers, Field Marshal v. Hindenburg saw it only as the indispensable means to provide the ally's front with sufficient support in the long term.

During the already mentioned<sup>2)</sup> meeting on January 1, 1915 in

## The Carpathian Offensive.

Berlin, where General Ludendorff occasionally participated alongside the chiefs of staff of the allied armies, General v. Falkenhayn made the decision on whether the units being formed at home would be deployed in the West or East dependent on the general war situation expected in about three weeks. It was thoroughly discussed how operations on the eastern theater of war should be conducted in the meantime. General v. Conrad advocated for an offensive on the Carpathian front. He wished for the Austrian-Hungarian 2nd Army, currently stationed in West Poland, to be involved and for their front on the northern wing of the Böbrik Army to be taken over by German troops. General Ludendorff instead proposed the use of three to four divisions from the 9th Army in the Carpathians, which General v. Conrad agreed to. However, General v. Falkenhayn rejected any partial undertaking on the Carpathian front, mainly due to terrain difficulties, and advocated for the continuation of the 9th Army's offensive in Poland; he believed it would be possible to bring six to seven divisions into decisive action through regrouping. Only if the ally could not hold in the Carpathians did General v. Falkenhayn express readiness to deploy German forces. They finally agreed to continue the 9th Army's offensive as proposed by him.

This result was confirmed by the German chief of staff in the following days in telegrams to General v. Conrad and the Eastern Commander-in-Chief. "The less we estimate the resistance strength of our ally" — as stated in the message sent to the Eastern Commander-in-Chief on January 3 —, the more important it is to bind the Russians and shift new forces against them. This can only be achieved by not letting the enemy in Northern Poland go. It will certainly be difficult to achieve the hoped-for success in the initially purely frontal struggle. However, the attempt cannot be considered hopeless when one considers that on our side it involves troops accustomed to victory under Your Excellency's command, and on the enemy's side, masses that have been continuously dealt heavy blows by Your Excellency since mid-November, and are now retreating, making it possible to unexpectedly deploy the majority of the mentioned six to seven divisions with powerful artillery for a decisive strike. Where the strike is to be directed,

### General v. Conrad Decides on Offensive from the Carpathians.

It will naturally result from the tactical situation. It is clear only that it will be more effective the closer it gets to the Pilica area." As an indispensable prerequisite for the continuation of the 9th Army's offensive, the Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army had already declared in a telegram to General v. Conrad on January 2, "that the Austro-Hungarian 1st and 2nd Armies, including Bohemian, will not let the enemy go, and that the firm intention to hold the armies south of Krakow as well as in the Carpathians will be carried out." The agreement reached in the Berlin meeting on January 1 of the allied general staffs estimated it would not be long. General v. Conrad still considered an advance of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army from the Carpathians northwards towards Przemysł to be the most promising. Their reinforcement by two divisions of the 1st Army was already underway. On January 5, General v. Conrad further obtained from Emperor Franz Joseph the deployment of three divisions from the Balkan theater of war. He also contacted the Commander-in-Chief East through Captain v. Fleischmann, who was with him, regarding the use of German forces on the Carpathian front. General Ludendorff had already declared to this liaison officer on January 2 that he was fundamentally prepared to provide four to five divisions in case the continuation of the 9th Army's attack, as he expected, would not yield any greater success and the situation on the Carpathian front should become threatening. He maintained this view even now, when on the morning of January 5, Captain v. Fleischmann expressed General v. Conrad's request for reinforcement of the Carpathian front by four to five German divisions, but he made the reservation that the consent of the German Supreme Army Command must be obtained.

For General v. Falkenhayn, the telegram from the Commander-in-Chief East, which arrived in Mézières on the morning of January 5, stating that General v. Conrad had requested his immediate support for the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army in the Carpathians, "as it could not otherwise hold," was a complete surprise. He saw in this request a sharp contradiction to the agreements made in Berlin. An immediate request for clarification was sent to the allied army command. General v. Conrad answered these requests in a detailed telegram on the night of January 5 to 6, which also went to the Commander-in-Chief East: Repeated follow-up-

## The Carpathian Offensive.

Reports of intensive and purposeful armaments, particularly in Italy, and the apparent agreement of Italy with Romania left no doubt that a hostile action by these two neighbors must be expected in the spring. This no longer allowed for waiting for the intervention of German new formations, but urged rapid action. A decisive success in an effective direction was hoped for by the German 9th Army, even with the greatest sacrifices, through a thrust to the north with the strongest possible forces. For this purpose, he had already strengthened the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army with two divisions of the 1st Army and had planned further reinforcement with three divisions from the Balkan forces. At the end of his presentation, General v. Conrad requested approval that four to five divisions from the German 9th Army, united as an army under German command, would be brought to the Carpathian operation.

General v. Falkenhayn then immediately requested a wire report from the Commander-in-Chief East, "what new agreements have been made with the Austrian military leadership and on what information any deviation from the operational plans established in Berlin on January 1, to attempt a breakthrough in the Pilitza area with all forces, is based." Neither the Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army had political nor operational concerns against the copy of General v. Conrad himself. On the evening of January 6, he telegraphically inquired in Teschen whether more than a pushing back of the enemy from the Carpathians to Galicia was expected from the planned operation with the simultaneous release of the Russians in Poland in the foreseeable future. He also requested information on whether it could be expected for a longer period, about six to eight weeks, that the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army would not need support for the passive defense of the Carpathian passes, or whether there would be any danger for the fortress Przemysl by the end of February. At the same time, General v. Falkenhayn requested both the Commander-in-Chief East and Lieutenant General Freiherr v. Freytag-Loringhoven, who was present as the representative of the allied military leadership, to express how they thought the difficulties arising from the non-usability of German artillery and train vehicles in the forested mountains of the Carpathians would be overcome. General v. Freytag replied on the same day, "German vehicles would come

## Commander-in-Chief East Transfers Forces to the Carpathian Front.

only as rear echelons, the connection from there to the troops would only be possible with light Austrian vehicles, which the Austrian military command intended to provide."

From a telegram received at 8 p.m. from the Commander-in-Chief East, the surprising fact emerged that he had meanwhile, in accordance with General v. Conrad's request, already decided to transfer forces from the 9th Army to the Carpathian Front, albeit to a lesser extent than the ally had wished: "Austria receives five infantry divisions, three of which are from the Serbian border, on its right flank. This now provides the possibility of a quicker success, even if the 9th Army is reinforced there, without giving up its own attack. This is possible if the 9th Army gives up two and a half infantry divisions and one cavalry division. With these forces, seven to eight divisions gather on the right Austrian flank, with which success is possible. The 9th Army remains strong enough to hold the enemy forces west of Warsaw through attack and to prevent troop movements from there to Galicia. I have made the necessary arrangements ..."

The decision forced by the threatening situation in the Carpathians by the Commander-in-Chief East presented General v. Falkenhayn with a fait accompli. However, a new uncertainty arose from a message received on the morning of January 7 from the Austro-Hungarian military command, which was also addressed to the Commander-in-Chief East. According to it, it was intended to transport the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army from Poland "as soon as possible" and to use it for the attack over the Carpathians. It was proposed to replace the army in Poland with German troops. The reason given was "the conditions set by the Eastern Headquarters for the use of German forces for an offensive over the Carpathians and the concerns expressed by Lieutenant General v. Freytag regarding the use of these German forces in the direction proposed by the Army High Command<sup>1)</sup><sup>2)</sup>." The nature of the conditions mentioned here by the Commander-in-Chief East only became clear when

---

<sup>1)</sup> Austro-Hungarian military command.

<sup>2)</sup> General v. Freytag reported to the O.H.L. on January 6 that the deployment of German forces on the Carpathian Front, as an "independent right wing echelon over Strzy against difficult Dniester lowlands and local Russian fortifications under fortified Lemberg, would lead." In this respect, General v. Freytag had made no secret of his concerns about this to the Austro-Hungarian military command.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

During the afternoon, he reported telegraphically that he had demanded the subordination of Austro-Hungarian troops under the command of the German group. General von Hindenburg declared an offensive use of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army on the Carpathian front according to General von Conrad's wishes to be out of the question. In a later telegram, he then stated that the allies had abandoned their intention to relieve the 2nd Army with German troops and wanted to accommodate the subordination of Austro-Hungarian troops under German command on the Carpathian front as much as possible. Furthermore, the Commander-in-Chief East explicitly commented on the questions posed to him by the Supreme Army Command the day before: "With good leadership and cohesion of strength, Russians can be pushed back over the San and Przemysl relieved. This would lead to further retreat of the Russians facing us towards the Vistula. Further successes cannot be achieved. However, by retreating over the San, Russia would have lost the campaign. Whether the Austro-Hungarian army will hold out, however, cannot be affirmed with certainty. Nevertheless, the proposed operation is the only possibility to strive for quicker success on the public theater of war with the available forces, which will, however, also take weeks. It is certainly safer to exert strong pressure on Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Romania to satisfy them politically. Without deploying new forces on the Austrian right wing, it cannot be held defensively in the long run. According to Captain Fleischmann's assurance, the troops to be deployed in the mountain forest do not require special equipment, which Austria also does not possess. Our artillery and train vehicles should not encounter insurmountable difficulties. Moreover, Austria has undertaken to provide twelve stage columns, each with a hundred light local wagons for the German troops..."

General von Conrad also sought to refute the concerns raised by the German Chief of Staff against the Carpathian Offensive the day before in a telegram received on the afternoon of January 7. He discussed the question of the combat strength of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army and the situation of the Przemysl fortress: "Predicting the resistance duration of a troop for many weeks is not possible, nor is it foreseeable what Russia will undertake east of the 3rd Army over the Carpathians during this time. The supply situation in Przemysl requires prompt

## The Supreme Army Command Agrees to the Formation of the South Army.

act." The telegram simultaneously confirmed the communication from the Eastern Commander-in-Chief that the intention to relieve the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army in Poland would be abandoned and that the agreements made with the Eastern Commander-in-Chief regarding the deployment of forces from the German 9th Army would be implemented. Before General v. Falkenhayn obtained the decision of the Supreme War Lord, he requested Field Marshal v. Hindenburg on the evening of January 7th for information on the agreements he had meanwhile made regarding command relations with the ally. The response received on the night of January 8th was: "Subordination of approximately equal Austro-Hungarian forces under German Army Commander, General v. Linsingen, this under the direct command of Archduke Friedrich."

On January 8th, the decision of the Supreme War Lord was made following the presentation by the Chief of the General Staff in line with these proposals. The two and a half infantry divisions and one cavalry division made available by the Eastern Commander-in-Chief were to leave his command area and be united with yet to be determined, at least equally strong Austro-Hungarian troops under the command of General of Infantry v. Linsingen as the German "South Army." This was directly subordinated to Archduke Friedrich. Lieutenant General Auerndorff was appointed as the First Chief of the General Staff.

The German Supreme Army Command had given its approval for the formation of the South Army without detailed knowledge of the partial task assigned to it within the framework of the overall offensive on the Carpathian Front. In several telephone conversations on January 7th, General Freiherr v. Freytag described the deployment of German forces at the Uszok Pass in the Hungarian mountains west of it as promising; the local terrain difficulties were to be overcome, a thrust towards Przemysl would effectively hit the left flank of the main Russian force. The early deployment of the fortress would influence Romania's stance. However, General Freiherr v. Freytag also now rejected an advance from the area east of the Uszok Pass, "due to the impossibility of following with our vehicles, and because movement continuously shifted." General v. Falkenhayn agreed with this assessment. To quickly gain clarity on the intentions of the Austro-Hungarian Army Command, he requested on January 8th during the telegraphic transmission-

---

1) p. 10. — 2) He was replaced by Major General v. Stolzmann on January 22nd. — 3) See p. 79, footnote.

\* World War. Volume VII.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

Regarding the approval for the formation of the Southern Army, General v. Conrad requested the prompt announcement of the task envisaged for it, its composition, and deployment areas. He also expressed the view of the German Kaiser that "for all those cases where, as anticipated, the Austrian 3rd Army and the Southern Army would be forced to operate together and in close conjunction, the hoped-for goal could only be achieved under a unified command of both armies."

In his response received on the evening of January 9, General v. Conrad outlined the tasks of the Southern Army as follows: "In connection with the main attack of the Austrian 3rd Army against the area Sanok—Lisko—Stary-Sambor, the Southern Army will advance as an encircling group from the area northeast of Munkacz and north of Huszt, using the main lines over Bereczke—Lucholka, over Bolovec—Tuchla, and over Toronya—Wyszkow. After reaching the area Dolina—Stryj—Synnówka, the further task of the Southern Army will depend on the outcome of the battles of the 3rd Army in the area south of Przemyśl on one hand and the intervention of Russian reinforcements on the other. Depending on the situation, the Southern Army will either engage comprehensively and decisively in the battle of the 3rd Army over Drohobycz—Boryslaw or, if the 3rd Army has already reached the area Sambor—Przemyśl by then, advance against the flank and rear of the enemy over Schydaczow—Zurawno—Martiniow. However, if strong Russian forces are brought into the area Stanislau—Nadworna—Kolomea, the further task of the Southern Army could also be to attack these enemy forces, for which the army group advancing with the left wing over Körösmező under General of Cavalry v. Pflanzer would be subordinated to it. Depending on these tasks, which can only be assessed during the course of operations, A. O. K. will also regulate the command relationships according to the situation and arrange for the consolidation of higher formations for joint tasks."

General v. Falkenhayn had serious reservations about the intentions laid down here, which he expressed in a telegram to General Conrad on January 10: According to all the information available to him, the Carpathian Mountains east of the Uzsoker Pass are impassable for German artillery and supply vehicles at this time of year. He was also not aware that the agreements made by the Austro-Hungarian military leadership with the Commander-in-Chief East envisaged an operation over Stryj, rather he assumed that the deployment of the Southern Army was intended at and west of the Uzsoker Pass.

## Planned Deployment of the Southern Army.

General v. Falkenhayn proposed a change in the deployment such that the German forces would be united with parts of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army in the area west of the Uszok Pass to form the Southern Army, and the newly deployed Austro-Hungarian forces would be used in the area east of the Uszok Pass.

In an immediate response, General v. Conrad sought to dispel these concerns: "The road and terrain conditions in the operational direction envisaged for the Southern Army are exactly the same as those between Uszok and Beskid Pass. Please trust my personal, precise knowledge of these areas in this regard. The Southern Army has two good, continuous roads and a continuous railway at its disposal. Furthermore, the progress of German troops is ensured by the ample provision of light vehicles, the use of difficult mountain paths is planned with the provision of pack animals, trains, and the combination of units with Austro-Hungarian troops has created the possibility of allowing troops to solve difficult tasks (mountain paths) that have been fighting in this mountain range for months and are equipped not only with mobile artillery but also with mountain guns, namely 24 mountain cannons, 20 mountain howitzers. The organization of the Southern Army, unloading and assembly areas have already been firmly agreed with Headquarters East and General of Infantry v. Puhinsgen and everything is in execution. Changes are not possible. Furthermore, it was important to the Imperial and Royal Army High Command<sup>1)</sup> in accordance with their wishes to give the leadership of the Southern Army, although it only includes 2½ German infantry divisions<sup>2)</sup>, an independent, important task in conjunction with Austro-Hungarian forces."

It remains questionable whether General v. Falkenhayn abandoned his concerns about the deployment area and the planned direction of the Southern Army's offensive based on this telegram from General v. Conrad. On the same day, January 10, he proposed to the Austro-Hungarian Chief of General Staff an oral discussion for the evening of January 11 in Breslau<sup>3)</sup> for "further clarification of the conditions under which the use of the Southern Army would take place." In this discussion, General v. Conrad, supported by Generals v. Linsingen and Ludendorff, who were also present at Falkenhayn's request, succeeded in fully expressing his wishes for the use of the Southern Army.

---

1) Austro-Hungarian Army Command.

2) Strictly speaking, 2½ infantry divisions, with the ½ 3rd Guard Infantry Division counting three regiments. — 3) See p. 12.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

to enforce. He designated January 23 or 24 as the time for the start of the Carpathian Offensive. Generals v. Linsingen and Ludendorff stated that the task assigned to them was not easy, but feasible. "No decision, but a great victory is to be hoped for." General v. Falkenhayn summarized: "I will report to His Majesty that Your Excellencies view the operation proposed by the Austro-Hungarian military command with full confidence."

### 2. The Carpathian Battle1).

a) The events up to the deployment of the Southern Army from January 1 to 23, 1915.

For this, maps 15 Volume VI and 10 Volume VII and sketches p and r.

At the turn of the year 1914/15, the Russian attacks against the Austro-Hungarian front between the Romanian border and the Vistula had generally come to an end; only on the outer flanks of the Pflanzer-Baltin army group and at the junction between the Austro-Hungarian 3rd and 4th Armies did fighting still occur.

The army group of General of Cavalry Baron v. Pflanzer-Baltin, stationed on the eastern flank of the army front from Brumbisten, secured with its strong, approximately two and a half divisions, the area from the national border to west of the Uzsok Pass<sup>2)</sup>. Its right flank was advanced into the Suczawa and upper Sereth Valley, the center blocked, roughly following the border ridge, the most important crossings from southeastern Galicia to Hungary, as well as south of the Pakk heights railway and road Munkacz—Stryj. On the left flank, the Uzsok Pass was overcome in the Czeremusch, the retreat reached those standing in the line Schahat Radautz; as a further consequence, the eastern adjoining front section also had to be withdrawn and the Russians allowed the area around Berezitalalas. While calm prevailed in the center of the army front, the right flank was pushed back in continuous fighting in the first half of January to the Pakk heights near Jacobyen, further west even behind the border ridge; only in a counterattack, for which reinforcements from the army center were brought in, could the

---

1) For the depiction of the Austro-Hungarian front, preliminary work by the Austro-Hungarian General Staff G. Steinich and the official Austrian war work "Austria-Hungary's Last War 1914—1918", Volume II, have been used.

2) Position course as well as strength and division of the troops see sketch p.

## The Situation on the Carpathian Front at the Beginning of 1915.

The situation here was restored and the area around Kirlibaba was regained.

Meanwhile, on January 9, the command of Pflanzer received the order from the Austro-Hungarian military leadership for the attack on the entire Carpathian Front, which simultaneously determined that the German South Army should be inserted between the Pflanzer Army Group and the 3rd Army. General v. Pflanzer was to hand over the Hofmann Group to this army and, reinforced by the 6th Infantry and 5th Cavalry Division, initially participate in the offensive with the left army wing.

To the west, adjoining the Pflanzer Army Group, the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army under General of Infantry v. Boroevic held the general border area of the Carpathians against Galicia at the beginning of January. Due to the events on the left wing of the Pflanzer Army Group, the defense of the Uzsok Pass had been assigned to it; to support this front, the only available reserves, the 56th Landsturm and 8th Cavalry Division, were marched there. Fortunately, the Russians did not exploit their success here. General v. Boroevic postponed the recapture of the important pass in agreement with the military leadership until the time of the joint attack of the entire Carpathian Front. He received the instructions for this operation on January 8, simultaneously with the notification that his army was to be reinforced by five divisions: from the 1st Army north of the Vistula, the V Corps (33rd and 37th Infantry Division) was assigned to him, from the 5th Army from the Balkan Front the XIX Corps (7th, 29th Infantry Division) and the 40th Infantry Division were supplied. On the previous right wing and in the middle of this army front, some position improvements were made in preparation for their own offensive, leading to the occupation of the area at Kalnica, Komancza, and Hafel. Also on the inner wing of the front, in the section of the Pflanzer Army between the road saddle 604, northwest (Glabizow and Konieczna) the Cavalry Corps Bortv secured, relatively small battles were fought, Russian attacks, which were undertaken against the southern wing of the 4th Army, aimed to bring the important communication line Gorlice—Neu-Sandez, which was threatened, to a halt.

Bent sharply northwest on the Carpathian Front, the 2nd Army under the command of General of Infantry Archduke Joseph Ferdinand extended from the foot of the Beskids to the Vistula<sup>3</sup>).

## The Carpathian Offensive.

The Russians continued their attacks on the right wing and center of the front south of the Dunajec on New Year's Day — but without success —, only on the northern wing was there complete calm. From January 5, almost all combat activity ceased, and both opponents fortified their positions like fortresses. After the situation at the 4th Army had stabilized in the first days of January to the extent that there could no longer be any doubt about its defensive strength, General v. Conrad had the V Corps, originally intended for the 4th Army, transferred from the left wing to the right wing of the 3rd, and even believed he could weaken the army of Archduke Joseph Ferdinand by three divisions, which he set in motion to reinforce the 3rd and Southern Army as well as the Pflanzer Army Group.

The situation of the fortress Przemysl, surrounded by the Russians, remained unchanged. On January 1, 1915, the commander of the fortress, General of Infantry v. Kusmanek, reported that the food supplies would last until February 18 with ample consumption of horse meat. A few days later, he supplemented his report by stating that with further extensive slaughtering of horses, the rations could be stretched until March 7, although the mobility of the fortress garrison would suffer significant losses as a result. The fortress command therefore inquired with the Austro-Hungarian military leadership whether it should undertake a breakout under these circumstances, to which a decision was to be made only on February 1, with the execution reserved for March 7. On January 14, the Austro-Hungarian military leadership had the order transmitted to the fortress by aircraft to form five divisions from the garrison; by February at the latest, the forces of the fortress were to either support a relief attempt or, leaving a minimum garrison in the fortress, seek connection with the field army.

North of the Vistula, the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army had continued the pursuit of the Russians to the Nida, crossing this river only temporarily-

---

1) 86th Brigade (43rd Inf. Div.) and 43rd Brigade (22nd Inf. Div.) to the 3rd Army, 19th Infantry Division to the Southern Army, 6th Infantry Division to the Pflanzer Army Group.

2) See Volume VI, pp. 368 and 370. The number of people to be fed in the fortress at the beginning of 1915, including the civilian population and prisoners, was almost 150,000; the garrison counted 42 battalions, including 18 mobile batteries and 8 foot artillery battalions with a total strength of 50,000 men, and 80 horse-drawn guns. The enemy surrounding the fortress was estimated at about four infantry divisions and two cavalry divisions.

## The Situation of the Fortress Przemysl and North of the Vistula.

giving with weaker forces could cross, but also repelled Russian attacks. Of their divisions, six were in the front line (14th, 33rd, 46th, 5th, 4th, and 25th Infantry Division), two (106th Infantry and 2nd Cavalry Division) were behind in reserve, the 37th Infantry Division was in the process of marching for transport to the south, and the transfer of the 33rd Infantry Division and the command of the V Corps had been initiated.

On the left wing of the Austro-Hungarian army front, at the Borowik army, the Landwehr Division Bredow and the Austrian Landwehr Corps had advanced on December 30 and 31 to prevent further withdrawal of enemy forces. They had initial successes against heavy counterattacks but could only hold them partially. A continuation of the attack was currently hopeless: against a capture of 1000 prisoners, there were own losses of 65 officers and 2200 men. At the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, the two southern corps (Austro-Hungarian XII with German 35th Reserve Division and Austro-Hungarian 16th Infantry Division as well as Austro-Hungarian X with Austro-Hungarian 31st Infantry Division) were stuck east for several days, while also the Gallwitz Corps (Austro-Hungarian 27th, 32nd, and 35th Infantry Division with the infantry and artillery parts of the Hauer Cavalry Corps<sup>1)</sup>). On December 28, the parts of the 9th Army standing south of the Pilica (Posen Corps without the brigade Reitznitz deployed at the Higher Cavalry Command 1 near Inowlodz) and the Frommel Cavalry Corps (Higher Cavalry Commander 3, German 5th Cavalry Division and Austro-Hungarian 7th Cavalry Division) joined. General v. Gallwitz had broken off the rather unsuccessful attack in the last days of December on the orders of General v. Conrad and ordered the withdrawal of the Austro-Hungarian 35th Infantry Division and the parts of the Austro-Hungarian 7th Cavalry Division and the Hauer Cavalry Corps still deployed at the front.

Already on January 8 and 9, General v. Conrad had issued individual orders for the upcoming Carpathian Offensive<sup>2)</sup>. He summarized these on the 22nd in the following general instructions: "On January 23, the offensive of the eastern wing of the 3rd and southern army begins with the attack on

---

1) The riders were resting backwards. — 2) p. 82.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

the Uszok and Verecke Pass. The Pflanzer Army Group will join this attack in the east in stages, advancing towards Delatyn-Nadworna and with parts through Bukovina. As the offensive progresses, the western wing of the 3rd Army will have to attack over Zmigrod and Dukla, the 4th Army with the southern wing over Jaslo..." The Austro-Hungarian armies north of the Vistula and the Woerlich Army should also join the attack if necessary.

As these instructions show, General v. Conrad envisioned a large-scale decisive operation with far-reaching goals. He intended, as he had already informed General v. Falkenhayn on January 16, "to deliver a blow whose effect he estimated to be far greater than mere territorial gain up to the San-Dniester line." That in this plan the thrust of the 3rd Army, where the main force of the attack lay, occurred without support from the right wing of the army, since both the Southern Army and the later advancing Pflanzer Army Group had to overcome the mountain zone before they could turn northwest, General v. Conrad consciously accepted due to the difficult situation of the Przemysl fortress. The decisive thrust against the Lisko-Sambor area was to be conducted under protection against the Uszok Pass at the southern wing of the 3rd Army, which General v. Boroevic intended to deploy comprehensively over Altzyndz; the western wing of the army was to join the attack. The Southern Army was to attack in coordination with the right wing of the 3rd Army, the Szurmay Group, from the line Busk-Tuczno-Sambor over Koromya-Boryslaw, Borlovec-Tuchla, and Berecke-Tuchola. Since the Southern Army's high command considered the capture of the Uszok Pass to be of decisive importance for this attack, it requested on January 16 the temporary reinforcement of the right wing of the 3rd Army by the 6th Infantry Division designated for the Pflanzer Army Group, as well as the subordination of the Szurmay Group. General v. Conrad could not agree to this, but instead reinforced the Szurmay Group with the 7th Infantry Division, intended as an army reserve, and ordered, as General Ludendorff had suggested as assistance, the relocation of the 3rd Guard Infantry Division from Munkacs to the Uszok area, so that it could either participate in the capture of the Uszok-

## The Instructions of General v. Conrad for the Operation in the Carpathians.

Could assist in the pass or, proceeding via Libuchora, facilitate the opening of the Verecke Pass for the South Army.

The deployments for the offensive, which was to begin on January 23, proceeded without interference from the enemy. According to the reports available in Teschen, the following approximate balance of forces existed at the start of operations on the Austro-Hungarian front:

Strengths of

Allies | Inf.Div. Cav.Div. | Inf.Div. Cav.Div. (approximate figures)

Army Group Pflanzer-Baltin<sup>1)</sup> | 5½ | 1 | 3¾<sup>2)</sup>

South Army | 5½ | 2 | 1

3rd Army | 15 | 3½ | 13

4th Army | 15½ | 2½ | 13 | 1

total | 41½ | 8 | 30¾ | 11

Thus, there was a considerable superiority in troop units on the side of the Allies, although the Russian forces had higher artillery strengths. North of the Vistula to the Pilica, approximately equal forces faced each other: 15 infantry and 4 cavalry divisions of the Austro-Hungarian 1st and 2nd Army and the Woorsch Army Detachment against 17½ infantry and 6½ cavalry divisions of the 4th and 9th Russian Army.

h) The Carpathian Offensive until February 5, 1915.

Including maps No. 9 and 10 and sketches q and r.

The Attack of the South Army.

Between January 12 and January 23, the units designated for the South Army — insofar as they were not already deployed at the front — arrived at the unloading stations of the routes to Stryj and Munkacz and were stationed with the 1st Infantry and 3rd Guard Infantry Division in the area of Munkacz, with the 48th Reserve and the Austro-Hungarian 19th Infantry Division near Huszt; the German 5th Cavalry Division remained in the Szag area. The High Command, after arriving in Munkacz on January 13, established contact with neighboring armies and proceeded to the front for personal reconnaissance. The justified concerns on the German side due to the diffi-

<sup>1)</sup> The figures for Army Group Pflanzer-Baltin refer to January 30, after the completed deployment.

<sup>2)</sup> Including 1 Landwehr Division.



## The Carpathian Offensive.

...difficulties of a winter campaign in the mountains were already fully confirmed here.

The Carpathian Mountains consist at the Hungarian-Polish border of a number of parallel mountain ranges, which generally run from southeast to northwest, gradually flattening out. While the mountains in the northwest rarely rise above 1000 m, they ascend to almost 2000 m towards the east in the direction of the sources of the Tisza. In the area east of the Uszok Pass, thus in the operational area of the Southern Army, three mountain ranges from 1000 to 1500 m in height can be distinguished, which have a total width of about 100 km, and whose middle forms the watershed. The course of these mountain ranges is followed by deeply incised large longitudinal valleys, intersected by short winding transverse valleys. However, valleys that cut through the entire mountain range are missing, so that convenient crossings are extremely rare; only two roads cross the mountains: from Hujtz via Wizkow to Dolina and from Munkacs via Tucholka to Stryj. In the entire Carpathian region, five railway lines<sup>2</sup> crossed the mountain area: the main line, also the only double-track, Homonna-Lupkow-Przemysl, branched off into three branch lines: Ungar-Uszok-Sambor, Munkacs-Volovec-Stryj and Maramaros Sziget-Körösmezö-Stanislau, further from Maramaros Sziget via Jacobeny-Kimpulung and in the Bistritz Valley via Borgo Prund-Dorna Watra-Jacobeny a connection to Czernowitz, which, however, consisted of less efficient horse-drawn railways on the sections Borja-Jacobeny and Borgo Prund-Pojana Stampi. The terrain generally has a mid-mountain character – up to 1500 m covered with dense forest, beyond that up to about 1800 m with scrub –, but also, especially in the eastern part, a pronounced high mountain character. The mostly unthinned forests severely restrict freedom of movement outside the paths.

In addition to these difficulties, there were the particular challenges of the combat situation and weather at the time. The Austrian positions were located in the inhospitable, sparsely populated, and very poor part of the mountains, so that the supply conditions for the troops were extremely unfavorable, and they were entirely dependent on resupply. The Russians, on the other hand, were in the convenient and accessible northern mountain area, which was more densely populated and more favorable for troop movements; they also held the most important pass positions. Thus, the Austrian-

---

<sup>1</sup> p. 76 and 78. <sup>2</sup> See map 10 and sketch 1.

## The Terrain and Weather Conditions in the Carpathians.

Hungarian troop units had already suffered in their physical performance at the beginning of the offensive due to the long stay in the inhospitable mountainous terrain. For the newly deployed German units, there was the added challenge that they lacked important prerequisites for a winter campaign in the mountains: the troops were not accustomed to staying in the mountains and the increased physical exertion associated with it, and despite all efforts to procure winter clothing and equipment, the deployment of German troops in the mountains was largely an undertaking without sufficient preparation.

The extraordinarily unfavorable weather this year brought further difficulties. Very soon after the start of the offensive, extensive snowfall with strong winds set in after clear, calm frost weather, often escalating into massive snowstorms. Snow flurries and then dense fog again left the artillery with only temporary effectiveness. Only loaded on hand sleds and pack animals, mountain artillery was able to follow the troops off the passable road, while mobile artillery became irretrievably stuck in the deep snow as soon as it left the solid roads; even individual pedestrians fared the same. Thus, the main burden of the battle rested solely on the infantry. The demands placed on them by the terrain were unheard of: almost every path had to be shoveled and trodden first; often the infantrymen sank up to their chests in snowdrifts and had to work their way out again with all their strength. Bitter wind whipped the frostbitten face, covered it with painful ice crust, and left the body steaming from exertion frozen. Constantly, the troops had to step in for the failing draft animals to move the sleds loaded with machine guns, mountain guns, ammunition, and baggage forward. When the troops engaged in combat, the stiff-frozen hands had to be thawed before handling the weapons, and when battle and march were over, accommodation and necessary care, often even warm meals, were lacking. Often, the troops had to spend nights in a row in the open at 15 to 20° cold. The number of sick grew to a threatening level, and the physical and mental resilience of the troops was put to a severe test. This harsh mountain deployment lasted well into April, and when thaw and rain set in, floods and the swampy conditions of the valleys and roads impaired the combat and marching capability of the troops.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

By January 23, the deployment of the Southern Army in the area of Huszt—Munkacs and northward was generally completed. On the front, the Austrian 12th Landsturm Brigade was positioned on the right flank, blocking the road to Wyszkolow on both sides of Ökörmezö. To the west, the Austro-Hungarian 131st Brigade and 55th Infantry Division secured the crossings to Tuchla and Tucholka south of the Wolovec—Bezierszallas line. Behind them, as the right attack group, the German XXIV Reserve Corps under the command of General of Infantry v. Gerok, with the Austro-Hungarian 19th Infantry Division around Szinever, and the 48th Reserve Division on the Huszt—Busckomeszö road, was deployed. The left attack group, led by Field Marshal Lieutenant Hofmann, included the German 1st Infantry Division, stationed in the Szolyva area, in addition to the Austro-Hungarian units deployed at the front. The German 5th Cavalry Division was moved as an army reserve to the area south of Munkacs, and the 3rd Guard Infantry Division was transported on the morning of January 23 from Munkacs via Ungvar by rail to Nagy berezna, to be positioned there after a short march behind the right flank of the Szurmay group.

In his army order of January 21, the commander-in-chief of the Southern Army, General of Infantry v. Linsingen, assigned the Gerok Corps the attack on the enemy positions that blocked the valley roads to Wyszkolow at and north of Repente, and tasked the Hofmann Corps with enveloping the enemy's northern and eastern flanks over the Wolovec—Bezierszallas line. The 3rd Guard Infantry Division was to advance over Libuchora into the rear of the enemy standing before the Southern Army, as soon as the situation allowed it at the Szurmay group, while the 5th Cavalry Division at Munkacs awaited further orders. Both attack groups initially had limited objectives. Gerok was to throw the enemy over Toronya and then, if necessary, swing west over the mountain separating the valleys to open the way for the Hofmann Corps to take Bezierszallas. Due to delays in transport, the Gerok Corps could only begin on January 24, whereas the attack at the Hofmann Corps began as planned on January 23. However, this immediately encountered stubborn resistance from the Russians entrenched on both sides of the pass road, which, despite terrain gains, especially by the parts set for the western envelopment, could not be broken on January 23. The next day, we even had to repel strong Russian counterattacks, and also with the envelopment column, which through an infantry-

## The Beginning of the Attack of the German Southern Army.

With the regiment of the 1st Infantry Division reinforced, fierce battles erupted in the area of Sjenowoya. Now the right wing group — Corps Gerok — could also advance: General v. Gerok, having detached strong reserves, had the Austro-Hungarian 19th Infantry Division encircle eastwards against the pass road Repnaye—Toronya, the 48th Reserve Division with the main force under Lieutenant General v. Hahn against Repnaye, and a small side column under Major General Stehr over Csufka. Serious fighting did not occur on January 24. The 19th Infantry Division approached, without encountering the enemy, to within 2 km of the pass road south of Felszöbes, thus standing deep in the rear of the Russians still holding before the 48th Reserve Division; from this, Group Hahn prepared to attack the strong Russian positions north of Divimez, while Group Stehr, delayed by extraordinary terrain difficulties, only came within 3 km of the enemy positions south of Csufka.

On January 25, the Austro-Hungarian 19th Division did not succeed in reaching the pass road, nor could the center and left wing drive the Russians from their positions south of Repnaye. On the left army wing, the enemy also yielded under the pressure of the western encirclement and withdrew to the heights south and east of Bezierszallas.

Despite the previously small territorial gains, the prospects for the Southern Army did not seem unfavorable. The extreme right army wing was already southeast of Toronya in the enemy's rear, only on the left army wing had it managed to escape the encirclement from the west. Moreover, since the right wing of the 3rd Army had seized the Uzsoker Pass, General v. Linsingen believed, based on the enemy's previous behavior and the received reports, that the Russians would not withstand a powerful attack, but were fighting for time and seeking to delay the army's advance. The army order for January 26 therefore emphasized that each corps had to open its own advance route through energetic action, regardless of the neighbors. The intervention of the 3rd Guard Infantry Division from the west was not expected for the next day, as it was only expected to reach the area south of Uzsok at that time.

But even on January 26, the Austro-Hungarian 19th Infantry Division did not succeed in reaching the pass road near Toronya. The two columns of the 48th Reserve Division engaged in heavy fighting to take Repnaye from the area northeast of it. On the left army wing, fierce battles developed over the height positions near Bezierszallas.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

On the night of January 27, the Russians abandoned their resistance in front of the right wing of the Southern Army and withdrew; however, it was not possible to cut off their retreat by capturing Toronya. In pursuit of the retreating enemy, the Austro-Hungarian 19th Infantry Division reached the Galician border by evening with the main forces, about halfway to Wyszkow, and advanced with a right flank column up to the Beskid Pass; the 48th Reserve Division gathered in the area of Felsövereze-Majdanka. B<sup>1)</sup>) of the Hofmann Corps, the enemy still offered stubborn resistance; it was only in the evening, after heavy fighting in the deep snow-covered, pathless forest terrain, that the fiercely contested steep high positions at Bezerzallas were wrested from the enemy, with regiments of the 1st Infantry Division involved on the flanks. As the reports arriving in Munkacs on the evening of January 27 from the right wing of the army were very favorable, the 19th Infantry Division, in pursuit of a severely beaten enemy, was already assumed to have taken possession of the area resistance at the Beskid Pass and near Wyszkow, General v. Liningen ordered the dispatch of a mixed brigade in the direction of Wolfsjanka for the next day, to also assist the left wing of the army in advancing.

However, the course of January 28 showed that the high command's hopes for rapid progress were premature. Attempts to relocate the Russians' retreat route to Dolina by encircling them via Beskid Pass-Leopoldsdorf failed due to insurmountable terrain and weather difficulties. The Austro-Hungarian 19th Infantry Division was stuck in front of the Beskid Pass and Saddle 941 south of Wyszkow, the 48th Reserve Division advanced into the Toronya-Repente area and thus was out of action for the day's battle; the brigade Stehr<sup>1)</sup> deployed by it towards Wolfsjanka only reached the area southeast of this place; it thus effectively became part of the Hofmann Corps but remained subordinate to the 48th Reserve Division. For the Austro-Hungarian 10th Cavalry Division arriving that day, no use was yet in sight, and it was initially placed as an army reserve in the Kiralyhaza-Beregisza area. In front of the left wing of the army, the Russians vacated their position, allowing the Hofmann Corps to take possession of Bolovec, Felsövereze, and Al. Berecke. The 3rd Guard Infantry Division had arrived in the area around Uszok and was to reach Libochora from there the next day.

---

1) Five battalions of the 96th Reserve Brigade and a mountain artillery detachment.

### The Attack of the Southern Army Reaches the Pass Line.

Fierce storm and heavy snowfall made movements extremely difficult on January 29. At the front of the Austro-Hungarian 19th Infantry Division, the situation remained unchanged. The encirclements laid both east of the Beskid Claw and west on Wiszkow could no longer be effective on this day. The Stehr Brigade encountered the enemy south of Wolosjanka; reports from them were missing. Before the Hofmann Corps, the Russians made a stand again at noon at the Berbázz Pass and Beskid Pass as well as on the intervening heights. The 3rd Guard Infantry Division reached Libawohna without encountering the enemy. The western enclosing group Szurmay was attacking the heights of Borynia.

General v. Linsingen, who appeared at the front of the Hofmann Corps around noon, decided, on the suggestion of the Austro-Hungarian military leadership, to advance the 1st Infantry Division to accelerate the forward movement and deploy it as well as the 3rd Guard Infantry Division on Tucholka, as it had suffered less than the Austro-Hungarian troops already deployed in the front line for a longer time. The next day, the attack was to be continued across the entire front. It was hoped that the right wing of the army would break the enemy resistance and that the initiated encirclement of the 3rd Guard Infantry Division on Tucholka and the advance of the Stehr Brigade on Wolosjanka would also pave the way for the left wing. Meanwhile, the Russians could not be driven from the Beskid Claw on January 30 despite the use of heavy artillery, both encirclement groups of the Gerok Corps encountered the enemy. At the Hofmann Corps, the 1st Infantry Division managed to advance over the Berbász Pass to Klimiec, but the Russians were able to reestablish themselves on the 1000 m high Lysa Pass; the heights at the Beskid Pass and west of it also remained in their hands. Of the encirclement columns, the Stehr Brigade was attacking a Russian position south of Wolosjanka, the 3rd Guard Infantry Division encountered the enemy west of Smorze, so their impact could not yet be felt. Prisoners revealed that Russian reinforcements had already intervened in the battles on the left wing of the army.

On January 31, the encirclement initiated against the Beskid Claw began to become noticeable at the Gerok Corps; as the western encirclement column had also been reinforced, there was hope for the next

## The Carpathian Offensive.

Finally, decisive success. At Hofmann's corps, neither the intervention of the 3rd Guard Infantry Division nor that of the Stehr Brigade was noticeable so far. In this still unclear situation, General v. Linsingen believed he could not comply with a request received at noon from the Austro-Hungarian army command to advance northwards east of the Stryj Valley with eight battalions and mountain artillery to support the attack of the Szurmay Group<sup>1</sup>, until the pass heights in front of the southern army were opened.

On the night of February 1, parts of the Austro-Hungarian 19th Infantry Division succeeded in taking possession of the Beskid Claw and capturing two guns and two machine guns as booty, along with five officers and over 800 men. However, the rest of the front was again denied success; the 3rd Guard Infantry Division was still in an undecided battle at Smorze. In various places, especially against the Stehr Brigade, which even lost some ground, the Russians launched fierce counterattacks. There was no longer any doubt that they had significantly reinforced; in addition to the previously known parts of two Russian divisions, parts of three to four more had been identified.

In clear weather and favorable visibility conditions — a change in weather had finally occurred during the night — the artillery of the southern army could become more active on February 2. Nevertheless, the extreme right wing, due to the particularly unfavorable terrain here, failed to advance northwards beyond the Beskid Claw in the Swica Valley. The situation on the left wing of the Gerok corps seemed more favorable, where the encircling column of the 48th Reserve Division<sup>2</sup> gained ground, so that a quick success was expected here, especially since the Austro-Hungarian 19th Infantry Division could also make progress on the front against Wyszkow. The change in weather also had a favorable effect on the combat situation at Hofmann's corps and the 1st Infantry Division<sup>3</sup>; they succeeded in breaking into the middle of the enemy position on the Lysa Heights. Moreover, both encircling columns were in advancing combat; the 3rd Guard Infantry Division was able to defeat the enemy at Smorze. Thus, there was justified hope that the Russians would no longer hold out. The success at Smorze gained particular significance because, to the left of the southern army, the Szurmay Group moved into positions on the night of February 2.

---

<sup>1</sup>) p. 100. — <sup>2</sup>) Brigade Putfamer. — <sup>3</sup>) The 1st Infantry Division had become independent again, as its divisional command, Lieutenant General v. Conta, was senior to Field Marshal Lieutenant Hofmann.

## Increasing Resistance of the Russians.

had retreated hard north of the Uzjok Pass\*); Russian forces had already appeared in the area of Rykow. General v. Linsingen was nevertheless determined to continue the attack, in order to achieve at least a decisive success on his left flank.

This hope was not to deceive him. Although all efforts remained fruitless for the Gerok Corps the next day, the Hofmann Corps achieved a significant success: its right flank was able to take possession of the Beskid Pass and also gain forward ground on the left. The 1st Infantry Division reached Luchowla fighting with the foremost parts. The 3rd Guards Infantry Division also succeeded in storming the heights west of Luchowla, where the enemy had settled again, and in making contact with the 1st Infantry Division in the town itself. In contrast, it was less significant that the Stehr Brigade had not advanced and had to regroup for a new encirclement.

By noon, the Southern Army's high command had received reports from the neighboring Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army on the left, which necessitated new orders. Enemy forces were reported to be advancing against the bent-back right flank of this army. This was confirmed by our own aerial reconnaissance and reports from the front. Although the flank threat to the 3rd Guards Infantry Division seemed resolved, especially since their rear connections could now be based on W. Bereze, there remained a concern about the impact of the events at the 3rd Army on the Southern Army. General v. Linsingen raised this both with the allied army commands and with the high command of the 3rd Army and received assurance that their right flank would be reinforced and then the offensive resumed. But now that the enemy seemed defeated in front of our own left army wing, General v. Linsingen ordered the 3rd Guards Infantry Division to advance northwest against the enemy reported south of Zawadka, to secure our own flank and simultaneously relieve the 3rd Army. The 1st Infantry Division was set on Stole, the Hofmann group on Luchla for pursuit. The previous task remained for the right flank. On February 4, the center and left wing of the army succeeded in gaining further ground. The Stehr Brigade fought its way to the area southwest of Slawko, the Hofmann Corps occupied the area around Lawoczne, and the 1st Infantry Division approached Izwini, on

---

\* p. 100.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

where the enemy had again entrenched themselves in a strong elevated position. The 3rd Guard Infantry Division advanced detachments to the area south of Zawadka and rested with the remainder west of Tucholka.

Through these successes achieved under extraordinary efforts, the possibility seemed finally within reach to force an exit from the mountains, at least with the left wing of the army. General von Linsingen was determined to exploit the situation with all means. However, the fighting strength of his army had sunk so much under the impact of the heavy fighting and the weather that the final success seemed doubtful without new reinforcements. Significant reserves were no longer available: the artillery and the machine gun unit, as well as the assigned infantry battalion of the German 5th Cavalry Division, had already been set in motion to the 3rd Guard Infantry Division, cavalry not usable in the mountainous terrain. Since the offensive of the Pflanzer army group, which began only on January 31, had not yet had an effect, General von Linsingen requested the Austro-Hungarian military command to assign him further forces on both army wings, the Austro-Hungarian 6th Infantry Division of the Pflanzer army group, as well as parts of the 3rd Army. However, to give the enemy no time for new resistance and to bring up further reinforcements, the continuation of the attack was ordered for the next day, with Brigade Stehr subordinated to the Hofmann group for this purpose.

However, February 5 did not bring the hoped-for success. Across the entire army front, the enemy responded to new encirclement attempts by extending their lines, repeatedly repelling the flanking columns. Thus, only the Hofmann group could come closer to Slawków. The right wing remained south of Wyszkow, the 1st Infantry Division lying before the elevated positions of Ostrog and Zwinin. The 3rd Guard Infantry Division reached Zawadka without a fight, and beyond that, the advanced units already encountered the enemy 3 km northwest of Zawadka.

The request by General von Linsingen for reinforcements was rejected on February 5 by the Austro-Hungarian military command. The enemy intended General von Conrad to give new impetus to the attacks of the Pflanzer army group through newly brought-up reinforcements and thereby relieve the Southern Army.

## The Attack of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army and the Russian Counterattack.

Meanwhile, simultaneously with the German Southern Army, the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army<sup>1)</sup> had also launched an attack. On its right wing, the Szurmay Group<sup>2)</sup> had captured the Uszok Pass on January 26 after three days of fierce fighting, supported by parts of the Puhallo Group<sup>3)</sup> to the west. However, the attack on the dominant high ground further north at Borynia had failed.

West of it, the Puhallo Group had quickly gained ground to the north and, after crossing the San on January 26, stood with its right wing and center on both sides of Autowiska, while the left wing had already reached Chrewt on the San on January 23. Together with the right wing division (43rd) of the Krautwald Group to the west, which was subordinated to the Puhallo Group, Baligrod could be taken on January 26. Despite heavy resistance, decisive successes were not achieved on the rest of the Krautwald Group's front, and its left wing even had to be withdrawn to its original positions. The commander of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army, General of Infantry Boroevic, had ordered on January 25 that the Krautwald Group should hold the positions it had reached and intended to expand the successes of the right army wing.

However, on January 26, the Russian counteroffensive broke out against the center and west wing of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army. The blow struck the army at a moment when the prospects of its own attack had already been significantly reduced: the right wing, Szurmay Group, was stuck in front of the heights of Borynia; this also hampered the advance of the main assault group Puhallo. West of this, the Krautwald Group, with its already withdrawn west wing, barely held its positions. On the left army wing, the Russian attack pushed back the inner wings of the VII and III Corps.

At the beginning of the Austro-Hungarian offensive, negotiations had taken place between the 3rd and 4th Armies about joint action of the inner army parts against the area of Banica. No result was achieved, as General v. Boroevic considered the offensive of his right wing and center more important. General v. Conrad had agreed with this view, however, ordered that in the event

---

1) Initial positions of the Austro-Hungarian army see map No. 10. — 2) See note 2) p. 88. — 3) See map No. 10.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

for the 4th Army's impending attack, the left wing corps of the 3rd Army was to advance in support against Banica.

On January 27, the right wing of the 3rd Army, Group Szurmay, launched a new attack against the heights of Borynia, whose possession truly secured the Uzsok Pass. Until January 31, the troops of Field Marshal Lieutenant Szurmay struggled in vain to capture these heights. After a regrouping of forces, a double envelopment attempted on January 31, in which the 3rd Guard Infantry Division was originally supposed to participate<sup>1</sup>, failed again. Field Marshal Lieutenant Szurmay decided to withdraw his troops to the positions reached on January 27, just north of the Uzsok Pass. The movement took place on February 1 and during the night of February 2. As the Russians now advanced comprehensively from the north against the right wing of Group Szurmay and simultaneously threatened the left wings of the 3rd Guard Infantry Division deployed there in the flank and rear, parts of the right wing of Group Szurmay were pushed forward again to the southern bank of the Stryj River, on orders from the Army Command in Teschen and at the request of the Southern Army<sup>2</sup>, to jointly flank the new enemy with the 3rd Guard Infantry Division, which had also swung there. Fighting occurred southwest of Zawada on February 4 and 5.

Meanwhile, the Russians, feeling threatened on their flank by the Austrians already fighting north of Autowitz, advanced northwest to attack but were thrown back by a counterattack from the right wing of Group Puhallo, which had turned east. However, a new crisis arose due to Russian attacks against the center and left wing of the 3rd Army. West of Group Puhallo, there was a severe setback; the area around Cisna, covered by the XVIII Corps and important as a road junction and for supplies to the right army wing, was threatened. To support the front here, General v. Boroevic deployed his only available reserve, the 29th Division of the XIX Corps. Worse still, the left army wing, despite brave resistance, had to keep retreating south due to relentless heavy blows.

When the Russian counterattack broke out at the Ujla Pass, the commander of the 3rd Army believed it to be more of a relief attack than

---

<sup>1</sup> p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> See the battles on the left wing of the Southern Army pp. 97/98.

## Russian Counterattacks Bring the Offensive to a Standstill.

to plan a large-scale offensive with far-reaching goals. He therefore suggested an offensive by the 4th Army to divert Russian forces from the decisive eastern flank of the 3rd Army. A thrust with a strong southern hill was also considered, but it was to begin only after the impact of the 3rd Army's attack. As the situation on the left flank of his army became increasingly threatening, General

v. Boroevic was forced on January 30 to urgently request immediate reinforcement from the army command. General v. Conrad then left the 4th Army with the option of an immediate attack or the transfer of troops. This time, a frontal attack against the strong enemy positions was deemed hopeless, so he decided to transfer troops; initially, however, only a composite brigade was freed and sent to Mezőlaborcz.

Meanwhile, in the Lupków area and west of it, the VII and X Austro-Hungarian Corps had retreated further; intercepted radio messages suggested the continuation of Russian attacks. The danger reached its peak. The Lupków-Mezőlaborcz area was of crucial importance for the Austrian operations: it was the only double-track route leading north over the Carpathians, with major roads branching off through the mountains into the San and Wisłok valleys, and in Lupków, the narrow-gauge railway leading to Cisna and Kalnica, essential for the supply of troops fighting in the upper San valley, connected to the main line.

General v. Boroevic decided to counterattack the enemy that had broken through at the VII Corps from the west with the 2nd Army and forces made available from the southern hill of the 4th Army<sup>1</sup>).

General v. Conrad, however, pursued higher goals. He intended to restore the situation through a large-scale counterattack: under

the leadership of General of Infantry Kritek (XVII Corps),  
an attack group of five infantry divisions and one cavalry  
division (10th, 13th, 26th, 45th, and 11th Infantry Division, 11th Cavalry  
Division) was to relieve the western flank of the 3rd Army south of the Magora;  
the parts of the 4th Army stationed on both sides of Gorlice were to join. The start date of the  
offensive was set for February 7.

In this critical situation, the offer of the commander-in-chief of the 5th Army, Archduke Eugen, to  
make the VIII Army Corps  
(9th and 21st Infantry Division) available was gratefully accepted.

---

<sup>1)</sup> These were weak parts of the Ura group, intended for the counterattack  
of the southern hill of the 4th Army.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

taken and the corps was set in motion on February 3 from the Serbian theater of war to the 3rd Army. It received orders to hold its positions under all circumstances.

In view of the major offensive planned by General v. Conrad, General v. Boroevic postponed his counterattack, which could only have local significance given the limited available forces. He intended to use the brigade promised by the 4th Army to support his VII Corps and requested the deployment of the VIII Corps over the Uszok Pass to give new momentum to the stalled offensive of his eastern wing. However, as a gap was now opening again on the western flank between the III and VII Corps, General v. Conrad feared a complete breakthrough in the Laborcza Valley. He therefore wanted at least one division of the VIII Corps to be moved to Mezőlaborcz. Finally, on February 3, he agreed to General v. Boroevic's request on the condition that the area around Mezőlaborcz could be held under all circumstances with the two brigades sent there.

However, these plans were thwarted by events on the left wing of the 3rd Army. Already on February 3, aircraft had reported strong columns advancing on Samok. The resistance of the left wing was shaken, and the III Corps fighting here planned its withdrawal to the area around Boro. On February 4, the 2nd Infantry Division defending Mezőlaborcz, despite brave resistance, was breached in several places; in bitter street fighting, Mezőlaborcz fell into Russian hands on the night of February 5. The complete material and the entire train could be saved. The crisis reached its peak. On the evening of February 5, the left wing of the 3rd Army, northwest of Komiencza, was connected to the 4th Army, behind the Ropa and Ondava to the west of Felsődör. To its right, a wide gap covered only by weak militia and cavalry gaped to the northwest of Stropko. From here, the heavily battered corps, III and X, held the line south of Szyja — 4 km south of the Laborczer junction of the Homonna—Samok railway with the Galician border to the area south of Baligrod. The XVIII Corps, which was adjacent on the right, also could not maintain its successes from January 23 to 26 and had retreated to south of Baligrod—south of Chewro. Only the right

---

1) Besides the combined brigade of the 4th Army, the 1st Militia Brigade of the 106th Militia Division (Brigade Brauner) from the 1st Army had also been set in motion there.

## Successful Attack of the Austro-Hungarian Right Wing.

The army wing, V Corps, and Szurmay Group held the captured area north and south of Lutowiska as well as north of the Uzsok Pass. Southwest of Zamadka, the 3rd Army connected with the Southern Army.

The Operations of the Pflanzer Army Group.

While a shift had already occurred on the left wing of the attack front on January 26, which quickly led to the known successes, the Pflanzer Army Group, due to difficulties in transporting the forces assigned to it, only launched an attack at the end of January. The Western Group (6th Infantry Division) advanced with the main forces over the Pantyr Pass towards Zielona on January 30; a left side column had already reached Osmaloda on January 28. The spatially distant Eastern Group (36th Infantry Division and Border Guard Units) advanced with the main forces over Izwor-Brezaz northwards on January 31, with a right side column towards Rimpolung. On February 1, the Central Group (42nd Infantry Division) finally caught up; it advanced with the main forces over the Tartar Pass towards Worochtza and reached Zabie with a right side column on the same day. Only in the Pruth Valley did enemy rearguards offer stronger resistance. By February 5, the western column of the 6th Infantry Division was at Porohy and west of it in the Lomnica Valley, with the main forces still held up before Zielona. The 42nd Division was close to Tatarow, its right column in the Bornarsch from Zabie eastwards towards Uście Putilla. The Eastern Group had reached Schipoth with the parts that had advanced northwards and had come halfway to Rimpolung-Fundul Moldova with the eastern column. The development of these operations promised a quick success.

### c) Continuation of Operations until the End of February 1915.

For this, see maps No. 9, 10, and 15 and sketches a, r, and s.

New Resolutions of General v. Conrad.

The course of the battles with the 3rd Army was a severe disappointment for General v. Conrad: the hoped-for relief of the fortress Przemysl, which had been a motive for initiating the offensive,

---

1) Course of the front of the 3rd Army on February 5, 1915, see map No. 10.

2) On the 6th Infantry Division, which had already been set in motion by the 4th Army on January 10, the XIII Corps with the 36th and 42nd Infantry Divisions was added before the 5th Army. 3) Maps No. 9, 10, and sketch r.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

had to be postponed indefinitely. The recapture of the area around Mezőlaborcz, indispensable for resuming the attack, now came to the forefront of considerations. Fortunately, the Russians, following the railway line south, proceeded only very hesitantly and cautiously here. Since the 4th Army, in a report on February 5, pointed to the extraordinary difficulties of the planned attack and declared itself unable to begin it before February 9, General v. Conrad decided to abandon this operation and to march the XVII Corps (11th and 45th Divisions) designated for this purpose to the 3rd Army. He intended to deploy it in the gap secured only by the 4th Cavalry Division and a Landsturm Brigade between the III and VII Corps over Felsővízköz to attack the Dufla Pass. The VII Corps was to join the advance, the III to cover the left flank. General v. Conrad hoped to begin the new attack on February 9 or 10. The VIII Corps, rolling in from the Serbian theater of war, was designated after some negotiations for deployment west of the Szurmay group to also create space at the Uzsok Pass. Given the decisive importance General v. Conrad attached to the operation of the 3rd Army's eastern wing, he decided to detach it from the rest of the army and form a new 2nd Army from it, under the General of Cavalry v. Boehm-Ermolli<sup>1)</sup>).

Meanwhile, the situation at the front of the 3rd Army, especially at the Dufla Pass, had become increasingly threatening, and General v. Boroevic had just been prompted, contrary to the intentions of the army command, to move a division of the VIII Corps (21st) there, when on February 7 a new heavy blow struck his army: Aufvo was lost, and the Russians thus gained possession of the double-track railway south to Mezőlaborcz. Also southwest of this, new terrain had to be abandoned. The impact of this mishap on the commander-in-chief of the 3rd Army was so strong that he wanted to completely abandon the offensive and only clear the area around Mezőlaborcz of the enemy. General v. Conrad, however, remained firm. The 3rd Army was informed on February 8 that further dismantling was out of the question; the VIII Corps would only be made available to it with the restriction that its 9th Infantry Division would have to be assembled in the Tácsány—Szontos area. At the same time, the deployment of the 2nd Army command was ordered.

The next task for the 3rd Army until the new regulations came into force-

---

1) p. 101. — 2) Cf. p. 110.

## The Operations of the Pflanzer Army Group from February 6 to 19, 1915

The situation for the Pflanzer Army Group had meanwhile developed favorably. After Zielona was taken on the western flank on February 6, Nadworna remained on the 13th, and further east, Kutty-Wisznitz was occupied. This secured the exit from the mountains and opened the field for further operations. As early as February 8, General v. Pflanzer had ordered the main pressure to be placed on the western flank. On February 16, the XIII Corps moved northwest towards Dolina, the eastern group with the main forces over Kolomea-Ottynia towards Stanislau, with a left side column behind the XIII Corps over Bohorodczany. The extreme eastern flank of the army group, which had reached the area around Storozyne and north of the Sereth on February 15, was to swing north with the parts advancing on both sides of the Czeremosz towards its mouth and cover the eastern flank of the army. The 5th and 10th Cavalry Divisions, which were in transport, were directed to Dolina and Stanislau.

On the night of February 16, the Russians abandoned Kolomea, but offered stubborn resistance north of Nadworna. It was only when General v. Pflanzer ordered the 6th Infantry Division, which had already marched west towards Dolina, and the eastern advancing parts to swing in that the Russians also retreated northwards on February 19. The 10th Cavalry Division was immediately set to pursue, and all other parts turned back to the northeast. By the evening of February 19, the main forces of General v. Pflanzer

---

1) Locations, unless noted on sketch s, on map No. 9 and 10.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

already advancing again against the Stanislau—Perehinsko line, which was almost reached on the left flank. General v. Pflanzer attempted to achieve a faster closing of his forces through rail and wagon transport.

In Bukovina, Czernowitz had meanwhile been liberated from Russian occupation; eastwards to the border, the Pruth line was secured, and to the west, parts around Sniatyn were positioned to throw the enemy over the Dniester and then follow the main forces to Stanislau.

The Battles of the Southern Army from February 6 to 15, 1915.

In the Southern Army, the attack against the stubbornly defended ridge positions had barely progressed by February 8; new reinforcements had flowed to the Russians, and with tenacious determination, they defended each individual height position. On the left flank, the 1st Infantry Division prepared the assault on the commanding heights blocking the road to Stryj at Siniava and Olyz, while the 3rd Guard Infantry Division, which was to advance east of Stryj in cooperation with the right wing of the Szurmay Group, prepared to attack the strong positions northwest of Jaworka; parts of it were deployed to support the 1st Division against the northwest end of Swiniin.

General v. Linsingen, who attached decisive importance to the rapid advance of the Southern Army for the success of the overall operation as well as for the relief of the Przemysl fortress, was not satisfied with the negative decision of the Austro-Hungarian High Command on his request for reinforcement. He therefore turned with a detailed presentation of the situation to the representative of the German Supreme Army Command in Teschen, Colonel i. G. Cramon, as well as directly to the Supreme Army Command, and also asked General v. Pflanzer to swing north with all available forces and to send only weak parts to Bukovina.

On February 8, the Hofmann Group succeeded in penetrating Slawków; however, they found the enemy already back in strong positions on the heights southeast and northwest of it. Due to the crisis with the 2nd Army, the prospect of continuing the attack together with its right wing seemed to have vanished for the time being; thus, the focus of the battles shifted back to the right army wing, to which the Pflanzer Army Group, after overcoming the mountains by swinging

## Continuation of the Attacks by the German Southern Army.

The advance to the north was intended to facilitate the operation. The opening of the Wyszkow Pass became all the more important. Here, General v. Gerok had to refrain from continuing the frontal attack and decided to proceed with a double, widely separated envelopment on Wyszkow. He requested the reattachment of Brigade Stehr of the 48th Reserve Division, fighting in the Hofmann Group, which was assigned to envelop from the west via Seneczow into the Mizumta Valley for the attack scheduled for February 10, while a column of the Austro-Hungarian 19th Infantry Division was to swing out to the east.

Meanwhile, on the early morning of February 9, the 1st Infantry Division launched an assault on Zwinin, but had to vacate the height after fierce Russian counterattacks. The parts of the 3rd Guards Infantry Division assigned to the northwest end of Zwinin fared no better, with their main body already positioned south of Rybno since February 6, in close operational contact with Austro-Hungarian troops of the Szurmay Group, standing with the Russians near and west of Zamadka.

The new attack initiated by the Gerok Group on February 10 did not lead to any serious engagement with the enemy that day. The Hofmann Corps managed to advance to the southern slopes of the heights about 7 km south of Luchla; however, the Russians had already entrenched themselves in new positions, extending from here hard south of Luchla to the northwest.

The extraordinarily heavy and hard battles of the past days had reinforced General v. Linsingen's conviction that he could not accomplish the task assigned to him with his own forces. The situation of his army seemed to justify this view. After 19 days of fighting, only 20 to 30 km of the 60 to 80 km deep mountain range had been overcome, with the key positions of the Wyszkow Pass and Zwinin still in enemy hands. Through continuous deployment of reinforcements, the enemy apparently regained superiority. The own combat strength had significantly declined due to unprecedented exertions and losses. The attack always stalled in a short time at the front, and envelopments quickly led to new fronts. Since General v. Conrad had rejected the allies' request, General v. Linsingen applied for reinforcement by German troops at the German Supreme Army Command on February 10.

In the next two days, it almost seemed as if the attack of the Southern Army might still break through; on February 11, the Gerok Group worked its way to the Russian positions on the Kalinowce years, and the Hofmann Corps reached the Holowniczanka Valley, while

## The Carpathian Offensive.

The 1st Infantry Division gained ground east of the pass road to the north. On February 12, the Gerok Corps succeeded in breaking into the enemy position on the Kalinowce, and the western encircling column was already preparing to descend into the Mizunfa Valley. The Hofmann Corps was also able to take possession of the southern part of the Russian position southeast of Tuchla.

However, the situation changed the very next day. Although the center of the Gerok Corps was able to complete the capture of the Kalinowce Heights, fierce counterattacks by the Russians began in the Swica Valley and also against the Hofmann Corps, extending across the entire front of the Southern Army on February 14 and 15. Although they endeavored to continue the attack, it had actually already come to a standstill.

## New German Reinforcements for the Carpathian Front.

General v. Falkenhayn had initially viewed the far-reaching plans that General v. Conrad had based his Carpathian enterprise on, and the hopes attached to them, with internal reservations. These were mostly rooted in the difficulties of conducting warfare in mountainous terrain. The limited progress, sometimes even interrupted by worrying failures, seemed to justify the doubts of the German General Staff Chief. On February 8, General v. Conrad noted that the goal of bringing about a significant turnaround there "seemed temporarily unattainable, although it was still hoped for later, relying on the capabilities of the Austro-Hungarian army." However, General v. Conrad viewed the situation more favorably at this point. He only expected a "full and rapid success of the operations" from the new deployment of reinforcements with the German Southern Army, as requested by General v. Linsingen on February 10. In a telegram to General v. Falkenhayn on February 11, it stated: "We are continuously transporting all forces that can be spared elsewhere to the Carpathians." At the same time, he urgently requested consideration of whether a German division could be freed up somewhere and quickly brought to the Southern Army. General v. Falkenhayn was willing to comply with this request and initially asked the Eastern Commander on February 13 to distribute an infantry division of the 9th Army along a self-chosen railway line so that its transport could be carried out at any time.

## Negotiations on New German Reinforcements.

... could be carried out as quickly as possible. The next day, General v. Conrad renewed his urgent request to "consider the first reinforcement of the South Army by a German infantry division in the interest of rapid, successful advancement."

In response to General v. Einem's last request for reinforcements, the Austro-Hungarian military leadership informed him on February 15 that they now intended to reinforce the South Army with the Austro-Hungarian 5th Division, which had been freed up in Poland, and that the German Supreme Army Command had promised to send a division as soon as circumstances allowed. On February 18, the German Supreme Army Command ordered the transfer of the 4th Infantry Division from the area of the 9th Army to the South Army.

### The Events in the Center and on the Left Wing of the Carpathian Front from February 6 to 15, 1915.

The battles in the center and on the left wing of the Carpathian Front had been even less successful than those of the South Army. For a moment, it seemed as if support for the attack of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army by the southern wing of the previously uninvolved 4th Army could be made possible. The command of this army had proposed to the military leadership on February 10 to attack with its own right wing over Banica towards Smigrod. However, this plan was not carried out because the participation of the left wing corps of the 3rd Army in the attack was also required, but this was not possible due to its own battles. On February 10, the XVII and parts of the III Corps of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army had launched a counterattack west of the Laborcza Valley to push back the enemy who had broken through over the Dujla Pass and Lupkow, and thereby to force the extremely important area around Mezőlaborcz for the continuation of the offensive. However, the attack met with stubborn resistance and only managed to push the Russians back to the Ondava in bitter, fluctuating fighting. Since the Chief of Staff of the 3rd Army, Major General Bog, considered the continuation of the attack hopeless, but on the other hand regarded the possession of the right bank of the Ondava as a prerequisite for the planned attack of the VII. ...

## The Carpathian Offensive.

When considering the X Corps, he suggested to the Austro-Hungarian military leadership, referring to the proposal of the 4th Army from February 10, to now move the forces designated for this<sup>1)</sup> into the combat area of the XVII Corps. When General v. Conrad did not want to engage in this, the 3rd Army finally resorted to the proposal of an offensive of the southern wing of the 4th Army, which could not begin before February 17. Thus, on February 15, only the VII Corps launched an attack. However, it did not lead to a decision on that day.

The operations on the rest of the army front had also not taken the hoped-for course. In the center, with the V, XVIII, and XIX Corps, there were even new setbacks and considerable territorial losses. Against the V Corps, still standing north of the San, the Russians had advanced comprehensively on both sides and forced it to abandon the northern bank. The situation here became so threatening that General v. Boroevic saw himself forced on February 13 to deploy the 9th Infantry Division of the VIII Corps, originally intended to support the front of the XIX Corps, at the V Corps. Earlier attempts on the right army wing, with the Szurmay Group, to wrest the area around Borynia from the Russians had also failed. The cessation of the Szurmay Group's attack had already been ordered on February 10.

When General of Cavalry v. Boehm-Ermolli, who took command of the new 2nd Army, consisting of the Szurmay Group, as well as the V, XVIII, and XIX Corps, to which the 34th Infantry Division was added, on February 12, he found an extremely difficult situation: the six reinforcement divisions<sup>2)</sup> set in motion by the military leadership were only just rolling in, the front was wavering in the center and on the left wing. Nevertheless, he ordered for February 16 that the outer wings should hold their positions, and the center should retake the lost area north of Cisna.

## The Events on the Right Army Wing, Southern Army and Army Group Pflanzer, from Mid to End of February 1915.

Maps No. 10, 14, and 15, Sketch 5.

After the Russians had abandoned Kolomea before the western group of the Pflanzer-Baltin Army on the night of February 16<sup>3)</sup>, and this in

---

<sup>1)</sup> 13th and 26th Infantry Division under Field Marshal Lieutenant Kralicek. 13th Infantry Division, 38th and 41st Infantry Division before the 4th Army, 27th, 31st, and 32nd Infantry Division from the Boroevic Army. — <sup>3)</sup> p. 105.

## Fierce Russian Counterattacks Against the German Southern Army.

The advance against Dolina seemed to fulfill all the prerequisites to finally enable the Southern Army to overcome the mountains. However, the Russian counterattacks that began here on February 13 intensified in the following days to such an extent that by February 19, the parts of the Austro-Hungarian 19th Division standing on the extreme eastern flank of the Southern Army on both sides of the Swica Valley had to retreat to the border ridge under the pressure of the enemy. The recently captured height of Kalinowce was also lost, and the left encircling column of Corps Gerok had to evacuate the Mizunfa Valley again and move towards the broader front against the 48th Reserve Division standing at Szczenzow. Thus, the XXIV Reserve Corps was thrown back on its entire front in defense, again on the border ridges south of the Beskid Claw and the Wyszkower Saddle. These events necessitated the withdrawal of the right encircling column of Corps Hofmann, positioned at Tuchla, to the heights just east of the Rozanta Valley. On the left wing of the army, the 1st Infantry Division continued to struggle in vain for possession of the Zwinin position, while the 3rd Guard Infantry Division held against strong attacks south of Zawadka.

The forces of the Southern Army were exhausted, as reports from General v. Gerok and Field Marshal Lieutenant Hofmann left no doubt. The Russians continuously reinforced in front of the army front, and another attack, given the deployment of the anticipated reinforcements, offered no hope of success. The difficulties of troop deployment in the still deeply snow-covered mountains were too great. Consequently, General v. Linsingen, following a suggestion from General v. Conrad, declared on February 16 that the newly anticipated forces — the German 4th and Austro-Hungarian 5th Infantry Divisions — should be deployed on the left wing of the Pflanzer army group, which was expected to soon bring Dolina into their hands. However, due to the limited capacity of the railway to Delatyn, initially only the Austro-Hungarian 5th Infantry Division could be supplied to the Pflanzer army group. The unloading of the German 4th Infantry Division had to be relocated to the Muntačs-Bolovec area south of the mountains. To strengthen the western wing of the Pflanzer army group for its task as much as possible, General v. Linsingen decided to also send the German 5th Cavalry Division there; however, due to the difficult transport conditions, it had to rely on marching on foot.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

In tense anticipation, the High Command of the Southern Army followed the events north of the Carpathians: everything depended on quickly reaching the area around Dolina. On February 20, the right wing of General v. Pflanzer's assault group occupied Stanislau, with the main forces advancing towards the Kalusz—Dolina line. At the same time, General v. Pflanzer subordinated the Austro-Hungarian 5th Cavalry Division and the 6th Infantry Division to the German Lieutenant General Freiherr Marschall, who was sent by the High Command of the Southern Army to ensure close coordination in the operations of the two armies. On February 21, the XIII Corps, whose leader was ill, joined these formations. Everything seemed to be developing most favorably: with the almost certain capture of Dolina, the retreat lines of the Russian forces positioned before the center and right wing of the Southern Army were breached. On February 21, strong enemy forces advanced from three sides to counterattack Stanislau. Forces had to be withdrawn from the group facing Czeczawa and from the eastern group at Horodentka, and the first parts of the 5th Infantry Division arriving in Delatyn had to be brought in; only with the help of these reinforcements could Stanislau initially be held.

However, on February 23, the Russian resistance began to stiffen in front of the Marschall group, so that their advance at Czeczawa came to a halt. On the right wing, it was possible, with the help of the reinforcements that had arrived, to push the enemy back to Jezupol and Halicz from February 24 to 26, but then the Russians launched an attack against the western wing and pushed it back behind the Lomnica. On the evening of February 26, the XIII Corps, whose command General of Infantry Baron Rhemen had resumed, stood behind the Lomnica, with the left wing opposite Perehinsko, then northward the Marschall group in front of Kalusz. The front continued, roughly following the Kalusz—Stanislau railway, to the area around Jezupol<sup>1)</sup>. The Dniester was secured by weak detachments up to near the Russian border, then the front jumped back to the Pruth.

Against the Southern Army, the Russians had essentially ceased their attacks after their success on February 19<sup>2)</sup>). The 1st Infantry and 3rd Guards Infantry Division fought with varying success.

---

1) See army division sketch. — 2) See p. 111.

## Serious Setback for the Pflanzer-Baltin Army Group.

The extraordinary importance attached to the rapid advance of the Pflanzer Army Group in a northwesterly direction prompted General v. Linsingen on February 22 to again request the subordination of the left wing of this army under his command, in order to ensure the unity of operations of the Southern Army with its parts already standing north of the Carpathians. However, General v. Conrad believed that dividing the Pflanzer Army Group would endanger the unity of command between the Dniester and Lomnica, and therefore rejected General v. Linsingen's request; in agreement with him, he subordinated the parts of the Southern Army standing north of the Carpathians (Austro-Hungarian 5th Infantry, 10th, and German 5th Cavalry Division) to General v. Pflanzer. At the same time, General v. Linsingen applied for the reinforcement of the Southern Army by the German 3rd Infantry Division at the German Supreme Army Command. However, General v. Falkenhayn rejected this request after the commander-in-chief East declared himself unable to provide further forces.

The preparations for the offensive of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd and 3rd Army and the events at the front from the Uszok Pass to the Vistula until the end of February 1915.

Maps No. 9, 14, and 15.

Meanwhile, the attempt by the VII Corps on both sides of the Homonna–Przemysl railway to regain the area around Mező-Laborcz, despite the deployment of the 21st Infantry Division (VIII Corps) on the right wing, failed after initial partial successes. At the request of the commanding general of the VII Corps, Archduke Joseph, General v. Boroevic ordered the front to be withdrawn from the enemy to give the completely exhausted troops at least some respite. Similarly, the advance undertaken on February 17 by the inner wings of the 3rd and 4th Army against the area around Banica stalled after initial successes, as the Russians quickly brought reinforcements into the fight. After some negotiations between the two army commands and the Austro-Hungarian Army Command, it was decided to abort the attack and withdraw the troops to their original positions; these movements were carried out smoothly on the night of February 23. The only success of the

---

1) p. 104 and 110.

World War VII Volume. 8

## The Carpathian Offensive.

The operation<sup>1)</sup> consisted in the fact that the inner wings of both armies had now gained immediate connection. The situation with the 4th Army remained unchanged. Since the conditions with the Army Group Pflanzer required the detachment of the XI Corps as well as another division from their front, the possibility for their own offensive operations almost completely disappeared.

Meanwhile, help for the besieged fortress of Przemysl became increasingly urgent. The commander, General of Infantry v. Kusmanek, had already reported on February 10 that supplies would only last until mid-March; Emperor Franz Joseph also urged the relief of the fortress. Based on such considerations, the leader of the 2nd Army, General of Cavalry v. Boehm-Ermolli, presented his operational plan in Teschen on February 19. He intended to advance on Lisko on both sides of the road to Baligrod with an assault corps consisting of five divisions under General of Cavalry v. Terztyhanszky<sup>2)</sup>. However, the prerequisite for this was the usability of the narrow-gauge railway Lupkow—Cisna, as otherwise the entire left wing of the army was dependent only on the single truly efficient road Taczany—Cisna. Consequently, before the operation began, the area around Mezőlaborcz and thus the railway to Lupkow should be regained through a joint advance of the inner wings of the 2nd and 3rd Army.

General v. Boehm-Ermolli did not fail to note that it was again a renewed frontal attack, and indeed with consideration of cooperation with the Southern Army and the Army Group Pflanzer. Consequently, he believed he should simultaneously point out that, in view of the considerable difficulties of the proposed frontal attack, he considered the vigorous continuation of the offensive south of the Dniester to be far more promising and was therefore ready to make two divisions<sup>3)</sup> of his army, which would then naturally have to limit themselves to the defensive, available to reinforce the Army Group Pflanzer. General v. Conrad rejected this proposal because the effect of the operation for the fortress Przemysl would come too late, and because he assumed that the Russians would be able to bring strong forces into the Dniester area more quickly using the better Galician railway network.

---

<sup>1)</sup> In the attack were involved, from the 3rd Army: parts of the 28th Infantry Division, 4th Army: parts of the 10th, 26th, and 13th Infantry Division.

<sup>2)</sup> The Army Group Terztyhanszky included: 43rd, 27th, 29th, 34th, and 41st Infantry Division. Behind them 32nd Infantry Division.

<sup>3)</sup> IV Corps (31st, 32nd).

## The Second Offensive of the Austro-Hungarian Army Center.

To throw the area as its own army on the less efficient Carpathian railways. Thus, General v. Conrad decided on the frontal attack proposed by the 2nd Army. The High Command of the 2nd Army had the gravest concerns about its execution. When heavy rains caused flooding in the mountains, endangering bridges and roads — especially the one leading to Cisna — General v. Boehm-Ermolli seriously considered postponing the offensive until more favorable weather conditions. However, General v. Conrad urged; the threatened situation of the Przemysl fortress exerted a compelling influence. He had the Chief of Staff of the 2nd Army convey his view that the difficult frontal attack against Lupkow could be avoided if the 2nd Army advanced with a strong group in a northwesterly direction into the area north of Lupkow. Under these conditions, the 3rd Army also assured vigorous support. General v. Boehm-Ermolli believed that, considering the Przemysl fortress, he could no longer resist. Both armies now agreed on February 26 as the start date for the preparatory attack over their inner flank, and the main attack group of the 2nd Army, the Terstyánszky group, was to advance a day later.

On February 23, General v. Boroevic issued the attack order: the outermost right wing (24th Infantry Division) was to advance against the line Bidrany—Mezőlaborcz, Group Krautwald (2nd, 21st, 45th Infantry Division, assembled brigade) on both sides of the Laborczaflo, the VII Corps (17th and 20th Infantry, 1st Cavalry Division) over Havaj against Mibó, while the left wing — Group Kritek (11th Infantry, 4th Cavalry Division, 1st Landsturm Brigade) and III Corps (22nd and 28th Infantry Division) — was to hold its positions.

On the evening of February 24, just as General v. Boehm-Ermolli was issuing the final orders for his army's attack, rain and thaw had rendered the main supply route of his army between Tatschany and Bartne completely unusable. Despite feverish efforts to overcome these new difficulties, the start of the offensive had to be postponed by another 24 hours.

At the front of the 2nd and 3rd Army, the fighting had meanwhile continued uninterrupted and led to a strong mixing of the units: of the 6½ divisions brought in for reinforcement, only one (32nd) closed reserve remained. In the Szurmay group and the V Corps, the 38th and parts of the 27th, in the XVIII Corps the 9th and in the XIX the 41st Division had intervened.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

must be carried out. Despite all these difficulties, the preparation of the Terstánszky Group could be completed as planned by the evening of February 26.

d) The last attempts to relieve Przemysl.

Including maps No. 14, 15 and sketches q, r, s.

The attack of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd and 3rd Army from the end of February to mid-March.

On February 27, the 2nd Army and the right wing of the 3rd could finally advance towards Baligrod and the Lupkow pass crossing; however, they immediately encountered fierce resistance everywhere. The course of the first days already indicated that the attack would fail. Neither the left wing of the 2nd Army against Lupkow nor the right wing of the 3rd Army set against Bidran could make significant progress. The attack starting on February 28 by the center of the 3rd Army and the group Schmidt (27th, 32nd, 43rd Division) advancing against Baligrod of the 2nd Army had only minor success. On the other hand, the XVIII Corps attacking towards Tworylne on the San could wrest some positions from the enemy, visibly then the V Corps in the Chmiel area began bridging the San. To continue the attack with the main focus on Baligrod, General v. Boehm-Ermolli made the 13th and 31st Division available to the Terstánszky Group.

On March 2 and 3, the Russians launched their own attack, both on either side of the road to Baligrod and against the 3rd Army in the Laborcza Valley; however, they were repelled.

The limited successes achieved so far prompted General v. Conrad on March 3 to urgently call on all armies to expel the enemy from West and Central Galicia and thereby bring about the relief of Przemysl. "This relief," as stated in the telegram to the armies, "must be carried out with regard to the fortress's supplies by mid-March at the latest and is of utmost importance for the overall situation. The main thrust towards the besieged fortress is to be led by the 2nd Army. Of the remaining armies, the 3rd should join this attack with its right wing, the 4th should gather as strong forces as possible on its right wing and advance towards Zmigrod. The Southern Army should try to remove the enemy from its front itself, and as soon as it attempted to withdraw forces, also proceed to attack. The Southern Army should reach the Dolina area as quickly as possible."

## The Failure of the Offensive of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd and 3rd Army.

the army group Pflanzer to resume the attack after the arrival of the XI Corps.

However, reality fell significantly short of these wishes of the Austro-Hungarian military leadership. Despite all efforts, the 2nd Army did not make significant progress in the following days. When a new attack attempt on the right wing of the 3rd Army failed with heavy losses on March 5, General v. Boroevic felt compelled to order the cessation of his army's offensive. However, the Austro-Hungarian military leadership ordered on the evening of March 6, based on the advances of the 2nd Army, that the offensive should continue by all means, and the 3rd Army was to attack not only with its right wing but also to bind the enemy to unyielding attacks along the entire remaining front. On March 10, the offensive reached its peak. On the right wing of the 2nd Army, the Russians had been pushed back over the San, and the attack spearhead Terjstianitz had been able to gain ground on Baligrod and Lupkow, but they were still about 50 km away from the outer forts of the fortress Przemysl. However, the enemy seemed to be preparing a large-scale counterattack. Already on March 11, this began east of Lupkow and threw the left wing of the 2nd Army back to its starting position. Nevertheless, the attack on the rest of the army front continued — the fate of Przemysl depended on it! But it still could not break through. All further plans were ended by a new Russian counterattack on March 13. The left army wing was breached; the own attack thus failed, and now everything depended on supporting the front. The 3rd Army helped by extending its section to the area of Lupkow. On March 14, General v. Boehm-Ermolli was forced to order the cessation of the attack.

The 4th Army was also supposed to participate in the general attack. On March 7, Field Marshal Lieutenant v. Arz advanced with three and a half divisions (12th, 1/226th, 8th, 10th) against Gorlice, with two divisions (39th, 15th) against Staszkowka. However, the attack initially remained unsuccessful; its continuation had to be postponed until March 17, pending reinforcements.

## The Battles of the Southern Army.

Attempts by the Southern Army to drive the enemy from the commanding ridge heights had not been abandoned. On February 26, General v. Gerov initiated a new encirclement still east of the south...

## The Carpathian Offensive.

Set in the valley. Despite the unfavorable weather and terrain, the encircling column managed to advance by March 1 to the heights southwest of elevation 1589 and prepare for an attack there. Meanwhile, General v. Pflanzer had requested the German 4th Infantry Division, arriving on March 1, to support his left flank on February 27. However, General v. Linsingen, given the changed situation at the Pflanzer army and the resumption of the offensive by the 2nd and 3rd Armies, believed that the decision now lay with the Southern Army; he therefore rejected General v. Pflanzer's request. The Austro-Hungarian military leadership had also urged a vigorous attack on the same day. On March 3, their previously mentioned detailed instructions for the further conduct of operations on the entire Carpathian front arrived, according to which the Southern Army was tasked with reaching the area around Dolina with all its might.

General v. Linsingen decided to assign the 4th Infantry Division to the Hofmann group and to launch a new attack on the entire army front on March 7. The main thrust was to be led by the 4th Infantry Division west of the Mizunka Valley in a northeasterly direction to gain the road to Dolina. The Gerok Corps was to envelop the enemy from the right in a double encirclement to drive them from their elevated position south of Bzibkow. To the left, adjacent to the 4th Infantry Division, the right wing of the Hofmann Corps was to attack the Russian positions at Tuchla from the right over the Magura (elevation 1365), while the left was to take Klewa southwest of Tuchla and proceed in conjunction with the 1st Infantry Division. This was set to advance in conjunction with the 3rd Guards Infantry Division against the elevation line Ostry—Ostrog—Zwirin. To ensure cooperation with the left wing of the Pflanzer army, General v. Linsingen had once again requested on March 5 the subordination of the Austro-Hungarian 5th Infantry Division or the XIII Corps under his command, but General v. Conrad had rejected the request.

On March 6, the eastern encircling column of the Gerok group failed in its attempt to attack the heights at point 1589. The next day, the Southern Army launched a new attack. It was carried out from the start under unfavorable conditions: the thermometer had dropped below 23°, a severe snowstorm had covered the mountains with a 2 m thick layer. Dense fog hindered any artillery effect. Thus, the attack could not achieve decisive success. Neither the group

---

1) p. 116.

## New Attack Attempts by the German Southern Army.

Gerot and the Hofmann Corps had significant territorial gains to report. On March 10, the 1st Infantry Division managed to establish a firm foothold on the saddle between the two heights of Swinin. To expand this success, General v. Linsingen intended to deploy the 4th Infantry Division here. However, Field Marshal Lieutenant Hofmann reported that due to the general exhaustion of his troops, he could not spare the entire division, so only one brigade was sent. This was not sufficient to bring about a decisive change. On March 13, the Russians launched strong counterattacks, which were generally repelled.

On the same day, General v. Linsingen received an inquiry from the German Chief of Staff about whether there was still a prospect of breaking through the mountains in March, which he affirmed, provided that the attack on the entire Carpathian front continued and milder weather ensued. However, on March 17, the directive from the Austro-Hungarian High Command arrived, stating that the attack should essentially only be continued by the Southern Army and the Pflanzer Army until reinforcements arrived. General v. Linsingen therefore presented his assessment of the overall situation on the Carpathian front to the German Emperor in an immediate report on March 18: Based on previous experiences, a frontal breakthrough through the mountains offered no prospect of success, but an attack conducted with strong forces north of the Carpathians did. He believed that the success of this operation could be secured if a strong army under German leadership was assembled here. For this, the three German divisions of the Southern Army, which were to remain defensive, would have to be detached and, due to unfavorable railway conditions, marched on foot to the left flank of the Pflanzer Army. Their reinforcement by another German division and an Austro-Hungarian corps would be desirable. The deployment would take two to three weeks.

On March 20, the Southern Army, following the instructions of General v. Conrad, launched a new attack, but it only resulted in purely local successes.

## The Events North of the Carpathians with the Pflanzer Army Group until March 22.

In the meantime, a shift had also been brewing on the extreme right flank of the Carpathian front. By the end of February, it was the

---

1) p. 124.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

The Russians succeeded in pushing the XIII Corps on the left wing of the Pflanzer army group back east to the Lomnica<sup>1)</sup>. Fortunately, the first arriving parts of the XI Corps were able to close the gap temporarily; reinforcements were also brought in from the Dniester defense, although the Russians had also attempted attacks here. Meanwhile, the right flank of his western group was strongly threatened, so General v. Pflanzer withdrew the front to the line Ottynia—south of Bohorodczany—Solotwina and southwest of it by March 4. The western wing of the Pflanzer army group had already been pushed into the defensive at the beginning of March. To support his left wing, General v. Pflanzer deployed the newly arrived 30th Division of the XI Corps here and assembled the German 5th and Austro-Hungarian 10th and 5th Cavalry Divisions as well as the Kletterich group for an attack on Tlumacz under General Freiherr Marschall; he also brought the rest of the XI Corps (15th Division) to Obertyn, and the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Cavalry Division only up to Ruth-Wiznitz.

Until March 13, fierce but indecisive battles continued with the western group. On this day, the Russians broke through with four cavalry divisions and a rifle brigade against the Marschall group and pushed them back. However, through counterattacks and quickly brought reinforcements, it was possible to halt the Russian attack. After new enemy advances failed on March 17 and 18, calm ensued. On the right wing of the army, the very weak eastern group was reinforced by the 6th Cavalry Division and the 88th Rifle Brigade<sup>2)</sup> and placed under the command of the leader of the XI Corps, Field Marshal Lieutenant Ljubicic. By March 22, the Dniester was reached at Zaleczczyki here. Southeast of it, the Russians retreated across the border.

## The Fall of the Fortress Przemysl.

The hopes that General v. Conrad had pinned on the offensive launched at the end of February along almost his entire front south of the Vistula had not been fulfilled. The situation of the fortress Przemysl became increasingly precarious. On March 11, the fortress command reported that with the utmost stretching of all available food supplies, the fortress could only be held until March 24. In a wire from March 14 to General v. Falkenhayn, General v. Conrad was forced to admit the failure of the previous operations

## General v. Conrad Again Requests German Reinforcements

forced. Nevertheless, he held on to the idea of continuing the attack: "Regarding the situation in Przemysl, I ask you to note that the breakthrough attempted by our own 2nd Army with all available forces has not been able to penetrate far enough, because the abnormal, extraordinarily unfavorable weather conditions with temperatures down to 23° and meter-high snow, and the resulting difficulties in progress and supply, as well as enormous losses due to illnesses, especially frostbite, made rapid advancement in the already difficult mountainous terrain impossible, as is the case with the Southern Army; since yesterday, further decrease in cold; also, the troops exhausted by the battles of the last 14 days under difficult conditions are being provided with replacements and reinforcements in every possible way, to be able to continue the attack. I cannot make reliable predictions regarding further developments of the events, naturally, both in view of the difficulties still to be overcome in the attack and the condition of the fortress garrison holding out under the greatest deprivations. However, nothing is left untried to break through with the attack and, in conjunction with mobile forces, to relieve the fortress."

To this presentation of his own intentions, General v. Conrad attached the request for the provision of further German forces: "Any increase in strength for the attack in the shortest direction towards Przemysl would naturally be of the greatest value, provided it can be brought in and deployed quickly. Should — which I cannot judge — the German Supreme Army Command have ready-to-use forces, possibly two to three divisions, which could be quickly brought into the area of the 2nd Army by rail, I would ask Your Excellency to consider whether it would not be possible and appropriate to immediately set these forces in motion to support the relief of Przemysl, which is of great importance as the foundation of our joint position, and to temporarily make them available to the Imperial and Royal Army Command, but also for the case that relief of Przemysl is no longer possible in time, to definitely consider continuing the offensive from the Carpathians and from Eastern Galicia, and for this too, any increase in strength would be very desirable, which would either directly or via the Army Group Pflanzer be provided to the Southern Army, whose reinforcement in this case is also intended from here."

## The Carpathian Offensive.

In view of the heavy fighting in Champagne and the expectation of English attacks, which was out of the question, General v. Falkenhayn again approached the Commander-in-Chief East on March 14 with the inquiry whether two to three divisions from the 9th Army could be made available, if necessary, by foregoing the offensive on the Pilica. The Commander-in-Chief East immediately declared himself able to relieve the Austro-Hungarian XII Corps still with the Böbrich Army. However, he did not consider the dispatch of two divisions of the 9th Army to Hungary possible if the previously captured Polish territory was to be held in the event of a possible Russian offensive. In his view, the fall of Przemysl was inevitable. Before General v. Falkenhayn made a decision, he directed a further inquiry to the Austro-Hungarian Chief of Staff, asking "until what day Przemysl could still hold out, considering the supplies available there, according to the commanders' reports." General v. Conrad replied on March 15 that the fortress had supplies only until March 24. Since the attack of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army had come to a halt before the enemy's fortified positions and could only be resumed in a few days, a relief of the fortress Przemysl was "hardly to be expected anymore." The deployment of German forces would therefore likely only be considered as a reinforcement of the German Southern Army. Meanwhile, General v. Falkenhayn replied: "Since further German troops could not possibly be operationally ready in the Carpathians by March 24, their dispatch for the purpose of relieving Przemysl is unfortunately no longer possible... I have serious concerns about reinforcing the German Southern Army with German troops due to our inadequate equipment for mountain warfare and our lack of greater acclimatization to it."

General v. Conrad countered these objections on March 16 by reiterating his proposal made two days earlier to provide the desired reinforcements to the German Southern Army "less directly through the mountains, but mainly via the Pflanzer Army Group, which had already crossed the mountains and currently required more mountain equipment." He pointed out the great importance of the actions of the Pflanzer Army Group in Bukovina both from an operational point of view and with regard to Romania's stance in the next critical period, and again asked to "seriously consider whether it might not be..."

## The Fall of the Fortress Przemysl.

The German forces ready for deployment were to be moved to the Army Group Pflanzer as soon as possible and brought to the eastern wing of the Southern Army via this route. At the end of his telegram, General v. Conrad referred to a communication received from Field Marshal Lieutenant Count Stürgh, stating "that the German Supreme Army Command actually had newly formed divisions." In his response on March 17, General v. Falkenhayn explained that the units being formed were far from operational readiness. In discussing General v. Conrad's proposal, he had not considered a shift of forces from the west to the east, which was currently completely ruled out, but only such a shift from the German to the Austro-Hungarian officer. According to the opinion of the Commander-in-Chief East, this was unfortunately not feasible at the time given the situation north of the Vistula. As important as the designation of Romania through military successes seemed to him, he was currently unable to provide further forces for this purpose.

As the hope for timely relief of the fortress Przemysl was dashed, General v. Conrad temporarily did not return to his request. He decided to at least save the mobile forces trapped there. In telegraphic discussions with the commander of the fortress, General of Infantry Kusmanek, it was agreed that the entire fortress garrison should attempt to break through towards Sambor on March 19. General v. Boehm-Ermolli was to carry out an advance to the northeast with the reinforced V Corps on March 21 to assist the fortress garrison.

On March 18, the breakthrough attempt by the fortress garrison of Przemysl failed, while simultaneously the offensive of the 4th Army at Gorlice also failed. The fortress had to capitulate on March 22 after all supplies were nearly exhausted and all ammunition was fired and the works destroyed. For almost five months, the fortress had held out in brave combat and tied down strong enemy forces.

The fall of the fortress Przemysl presented the Austro-Hungarian Army Command with a changed situation: the main reason for the constant urging to proceed against the Lisko-Sanof line now fell away.

---

1) The Austro-Hungarian plenipotentiary general at the German Supreme Army Command. — 2) p. 304. — 3) p. 117.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

The release of the Russian siege army, however, brought the danger of increased force deployment at the battlefield alarmingly close. General v. Conrad had been determined to continue the offensive, even if the fortress could no longer be relieved. In this sense, he had already issued instructions for future operations on March 17: After the completion of the reinforcement units, the attack on the entire Carpathian front was to be resumed. "...This attack, however," it continued, "is no longer under the pressure of time, which had previously been dictated by the unsuccessful relief of Przemysl, and is therefore to be conducted with tenacity and in a systematic manner." However, it was initially limited to the eastern wing of the army front: the task of the Pflanzer army group, which was to be reinforced as much as possible, was to open the way through the mountains for the neighboring armies from the east. For the time being, however, they were only to continue attacking with strong offensive spirit, securing against the east and holding Czernowitz, and to behave defensively on the western wing. The southern army was to continue the attack, the 2nd to involve its right wing, to strengthen its positions on the left; the 3rd army was to prepare its eastern wing for the resumption of the offensive, otherwise it, like the 4th army, was to connect enemy troop movements. In addition, two infantry divisions, two infantry brigades, and a cavalry division were to be held in reserve behind the front by the 2nd and 3rd armies. General v. Conrad sought to adhere to these intentions even now after the fall of Przemysl.

Meanwhile, on the night of March 20, a massive Russian attack broke out against the 3rd army from the direction of the Dukla Pass. In four days of bitter fighting, the front was pushed in up to 6 km deep on the right wing. The reserves designated for the Pflanzer army group had to be held back, and the 2nd army was instructed to support General v. Bojevovic. But this army too had already become the target of Russian attacks; in fierce battles, the Russians succeeded in significantly pushing back the front. There was no longer any doubt that the enemy had launched a decisive offensive. It was no longer about continuing the own attack, but only about holding the already wavering front. Once again, the 4th army had to hold out and give another division (26th) to the 3rd army. The Russian attacks continued unabated; on March 23, the attack group of the 2nd army had to return to its starting positions before the beginning

## The Russian Offensive at Dufla Pass.

to retreat from the offensive. Thus, simultaneously with the fall of the fortress of Przemysl, the attack of the 2nd and 3rd Army, which had been mainly undertaken for its relief and repeatedly attempted anew, had finally collapsed.

e) The events on the Carpathian Front after the fall of Przemysl until mid-April 1915.

Including maps No. 14 and 15 and sketches q and s.

The events with the Army Group Pflanzer.

The Russian offensive, directed mainly against the front of the 2nd and 3rd Army since March 20, had also destroyed the hopes of General v. Pflanzer for reinforcements and thus for a promising resumption of his attack. He was now forced for the foreseeable future to engage in a difficult defensive battle on three sides, which was hardly connected with the operations of the rest of the front. As reinforcement, only the 8th Cavalry Division arrived at the end of March.

When the Russians began to advance again from the east against Bukovina in mid-March, probably also for political reasons, to persuade Romania to join the Entente, General v. Pflanzer was forced to strengthen the forces stationed here. On March 23, the Marschall Group (German 5th and Austro-Hungarian 10th Cavalry Division) was moved to the northeast, followed by additional forces, the 8th Cavalry and 42nd Infantry Division. On March 26, General v. Pflanzer transferred command of the front from Czernowitz to the Dniester to General Freiherr Marschall; under his command now were: Group Ljubicic (combined 30th Division) in front of Zaleszczyki; 42nd Division (84th and 83rd Brigade), 19th Cavalry Brigade (former 5th Cavalry Division), 6th, 8th, and 10th as well as German 5th Cavalry Division. On the western front of the army group, the situation remained relatively unchanged. There were no major battles until mid-April. Russian advances from the east over the national border and from the north over the Dniester could be repelled, although own attempts to capture the bridgehead of Zaleszczyki failed. By mid-April, the army group generally held the national border between Pruth and Dniester, then the southern bank of this river to Niezviska. From here, the front ran in a southwesterly direction over Ottynia to Porohy. Parts blocked the upper Lomnica Valley.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

### The Battles at the Southern Army.

The cessation of the offensive on the Austro-Hungarian front west of the Uzsok Pass, as well as the precarious health condition of his own army, prompted General v. Linsingen on March 23 to again contact the German Supreme Army Command with the report that overcoming the Carpathians by the Southern Army in March would also be impossible, after the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army had completely abandoned the offensive and the attack by the Pflanzer Army had also become unfeasible. He saw the only possibility of success in an operation north of the Carpathians, as he had already proposed on March 18. At the same time, he submitted a request to General v. Conrad to relieve the Southern Army with weaker Austro-Hungarian forces and to assemble them, reinforced by an Austro-Hungarian and a yet-to-be-requested German corps, behind the right wing of the Pflanzer Army Group for a new attack north of the mountains; these would have to be subordinated to the Southern Army. Simultaneously, the other armies should also attack, which would then have been given enough time to recover through the three to four weeks of the new advance of the Southern Army.

This proposal became obsolete due to the large Russian counteroffensive against the 2nd and 3rd Armies that had meanwhile begun. On March 24, General v. Conrad inquired with the Southern Army whether and how many forces it could withdraw for a front for the 3rd Army. The same inquiry was received from the German Army Command the next day. General v. Linsingen resisted any withdrawal of troops to remain combat-ready for his own operation, but ultimately had to give up the 48th Infantry Division on March 26 by higher order.

On March 31, the order from the Austro-Hungarian Army Command arrived that the Southern Army should also limit itself to defense and, in agreement with the 2nd Army, should free up the western flank to release as many strong parts as possible. This required the following reorganization of the Southern Army: Corps Gerok from the eastern Swica River to Szyrak, followed by Corps Hofmann to the main road Munkacs-Stryj and on the left flank to Stryj the just-arrived General Command of the II Bavarian Reserve Corps under

---

1) Alone from March 11 to 23, the loss of sick amounted to 6758 men. From January 16 to April 30, replacements arrived from the Reich: 923 officers, 47,999 men, 4190 horses, and 461 vehicles to the 2nd Army and to the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army (Possession Corps, p. 129).

## Positional Battles of the Southern Army. The Capture of Jninin.

General of Infantry, Count v. Bothmer, with the 1st Infantry and 3rd Guard Infantry Division.

A few days later, it became known that the 2nd Army wanted to abandon the Uszok Pass. General v. Linsingen immediately lodged strong objections to this in Teschen, as he feared that the entire position of the Southern Army would become untenable. Consequently, on April 2, General v. Conrad placed the right wing of the 2nd Army, the Szurmay Group, under the command of General v. Linsingen, with explicit instructions that the Uszok Pass must be held at all costs. Then the left wing of the Southern Army extended to the area south of Uzszyki grn. To ensure possession of the Uszok Pass, General v. Linsingen ordered the Szurmay Group once again to hold their current positions at all costs and further reduced their sector by placing the right wing division, the Austro-Hungarian 38th Infantry Division, under the Bothmer Corps, which then extended to the Hnyla-Bach. On April 4, a brigade of the 38th Division was withdrawn and positioned as an army reserve behind the left army wing.

General v. Linsingen immediately went to the front of the Szurmay sector and arrived just in time to prevent the retreat. However, when the now right wing of the 2nd Army retreated behind the stream section at Patafokalu and on April 6, heavy attacks were launched against the Szurmay Group, their left wing was also bent back to the commanding height of Ceremcha, northeast of Patafokalu. Fierce battles took place here well into April, as the Russians relentlessly struggled to get the important pass into their hands. On April 8, they succeeded in pushing the center of the Szurmay Group south to the pass entrance.

On April 9, heavy Russian attacks were launched against the center and left wing of the Bothmer Corps. On the right wing of the corps, however, the 1st Infantry Division was finally able to take possession of Jninin after eight days of fierce fighting. General v. Linsingen hoped to exploit the success and ordered General Count Bothmer to "immediately provide strong reserves for an offensive in a northwesterly direction" that same evening. However, the attempt to expand the success towards Stole failed the next day, as the Russians had immediately entrenched themselves behind the lost positions in new strong positions. Against the left corps wing, they launched another attack on April 11 and pushed the Austro-Hungarian 38th Division stationed here back south on both sides of the Stryj.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

Against the Szurmay group, the Russians continued their attacks in the following days. The situation became so critical here that General v. Linsingen once again approached the Austro-Hungarian military command to obtain reinforcement by German troops from General v. Falkenhayn; General v. Conrad could only respond that he was already in negotiations, but no decision had yet been made. In contrast, the 2nd Army, at the request of the Southern Army, provided forces to support the left wing of the Szurmay group. With their help, it was finally possible, after fluctuating battles, to at least hold the heights directly covering the Uzsok Pass. After the Russian breakthrough on the left wing of the Bothmer Corps was balanced out by parts of the 3rd Guard and 1st Infantry Division, the entire front of the Southern Army was able to confidently maintain its positions.

## The Defense of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd and 3rd Armies until the Beginning of the Easter Battle.

The main objective of the Russian attacks remained, even after the fall of the fortress Przemysl, the breakthrough through the front of the 2nd and 3rd Armies. Their efforts repeatedly targeted their inner flanks, where the commanding height of the Beskid Ridge south of Lupkow formed the cornerstone of both armies. The complete exhaustion of the 3rd Army's troops made it impossible to counter the Russians' intentions with their own attack, as repeatedly demanded by the 2nd Army's high command. The following days shook the entire structure of the 2nd Army's defensive front. Already on the night of March 23, the important height of Stoly north of Kalnica was taken from their left flank. The right flank of the 3rd Army also had to be supported; both the Szurmay group and the 4th Army sent additional forces there. However, they were unable to prevent new setbacks. In fierce battles on the night of March 24, the eastern flank of the 3rd Army was thrown down from the Beskid Ridge, and in the following night, their left flank was also breached and withdrawn to a new position on both sides of Iwonic. Reinforcements sent by the 4th Army (parts of the 8th Infantry Division) had to be deployed here to prevent a complete breakthrough.

The situation had become so critical that General v. Conrad once again turned to General v. Falkenhayn to request support from the German divisions for the front of the 2nd and 3rd Armies. After lengthy negotiations, an agreement was reached on March 26 and 27.

---

## Critical Situation of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd and 3rd Armies.

Under the command of General of Cavalry v. der Marwitz, a German corps, the Beskiden Corps, was to be formed from the 35th Reserve Division of the Woysch Army, the 25th Reserve Division of the 9th Army, and the 4th Infantry Division of the Southern Army, and additionally, forces from the 2nd Army were to be assigned to the officer of the 3rd Army.

Meanwhile, the Russians continued to relentlessly attack the fronts of the 2nd and 3rd Armies. Important sections were lost again on the left wing of the 2nd and in the center of the 3rd Army. On March 28, General v. Boehm-Ermolli was forced to withdraw the front of his left wing into a chord position. The situation remained critical for the 3rd Army as well. On March 30 and 31, the left wing of the 2nd Army was breached again and had to be withdrawn to the line Jablonki—Toust Dil. A serious crisis also arose on the right wing: the entire front wavered here and, with the approval of the army commander, retreated to the heights just north of the Wolosate—Wetlina Valley. On March 31, General v. Boehm-Ermolli was forced to issue orders for a possibly necessary retreat behind the Carpathian Ridge: the new front was to connect to the Southern Army south of Jaworka and then extend over Liskowra—north of Tisza—southwest of Fernyesvölgy—Harczos—Nagypolany—Teles—north of Birada into the old position.

On the evening of the same day, General v. Conrad ordered that the 3rd Army, upon the arrival of the German Beskiden Corps, should deploy it as a "unified whole" on the eastern wing of the battlefield and withdraw at least three Austro-Hungarian divisions from the front. At the same time, the extension of the left wing of the Southern Army to the west was ordered to free up reserves here as well.

On the evening of March 31, the front of the 2nd and 3rd Armies withdrew from west of Jaworka, where there was a connection to the Southern Army at Klewa, over Wisłok nż.—Riczera połtika—Kalicz—Ustrzyki grn.—Berechy grn.—Stoly south of Jablonki—Wola Michnowa—south of Birawa—just north of Stropko—east of Kurima—Zboro—Regetow. South of this place, there was a gap between the 3rd and 4th Armies.

## The Relocation of the Front of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army.

The danger to the front of the 2nd Army was by no means eliminated. As early as April 1, the Russians were able to achieve further successes here.

---

1) p. 126. 2) World War VII. Vol. 9

## The Carpathian Offensive.

attack: once again the center of the 2nd Army was thrown; quick help was needed. General v. Conrad sought to obtain it from the 3rd Army: the divisions<sup>1</sup> to be relieved from the Beskiden Corps were to be quickly freed and ready for transport by April 4. However, General v. Boehm-Ermolli could no longer wait, and by the afternoon of April 1, he had to order the withdrawal of his army behind the Carpathian ridge. Due to urgent representations from the Southern Army and the 3rd Army, which demanded the holding of the Uszok Pass and the Beskid Ridge, General v. Conrad ordered that the Uszok Pass be held under all circumstances and that the western flank could only be withdrawn to the line Nagypolany—Telepocz—Bilag. The 3rd Army was instructed to free up another division<sup>2</sup> after deploying the Beskiden Corps to support the western flank of the 2nd Army. The withdrawal of the 2nd Army's front was to take place on April 2 from the right flank, but the advance of the enemy against the Gorlice—Uszok railway in the Wolosate area was to be prevented and therefore initially had to come under the command of Group Szurmay.

To resolve the repeatedly highlighted disagreements<sup>3</sup> about holding the Uszok Pass and ensuring its secure possession, General v. Conrad subordinated Group Szurmay to the Southern Army<sup>4</sup>. The left wing of the group was also to bend back according to the retreat of the 2nd Army to ensure connection.

The relocation of the 2nd Army's front took place as planned from April 2 to 4: the western flank (29th and 34th Divisions) remained, according to the wishes of the 3rd Army, on the Beskid Ridge; rearguards held the border ridge on the rest of the front until April 5.

## The Easter Battle and the Consolidation of the Front at the Austro-Hungarian 2nd and 3rd Armies.

Due to the renewed Russian attacks in the Laborcza Valley on April 2, the hope of the Austro-Hungarian military leadership that the Russian offensive in front of the 3rd Army had come to a halt was shattered. The Russians succeeded in pushing the X Corps about 4 km south in and east of the Laborcza Valley. On the afternoon of this day, the leader of the right Beskiden Corps, General of Cavalry v. der Marwitz, was at

## The Counter-Offensive of the German Occupation Corps.

arrived at this corps and had immediately advanced the forward regiments of his German 25th Reserve Division, which had already reached south of Bilag.

General v. Boroevic ordered the counterattack and subordinated the Austro-Hungarian X Corps to General v. der Marwitz for this purpose. He ordered that the divisions of the corps should initially hold their current positions, with the German 25th Reserve Division to support the inner flanks of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd and 24th Divisions. The additional German forces — 35th Reserve and 4th Infantry Division — which were still arriving, were to close up in the Laborcza Valley. On the night of April 3, the wing of the X Corps standing west of the Laborcza also gave way to connect with the center, as did the right wing of the VII Corps standing to the left of it. On April 3, the Russians unsuccessfully attempted to press in the left flank of the 2nd Army and thus decisively expand the success of the previous day. Simultaneously, however, the German 25th Reserve Division launched a counterattack and by evening regained the old positions of the Austro-Hungarian 24th Division west of Birawa. The previous day, the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Division, reinforced by parts of the 128th Brigade, had already moved to the left, recaptured the height lost on the previous day east of Ulschsebny, and advanced westward to this location. On the west bank of the Laborcza, the Austro-Hungarian troops were also able to gain further ground to the north. For Easter Monday, April 4, General v. der Marwitz ordered the recapture of the old positions of the X Corps northwest of Birawa. The German 35th Reserve Division, which had meanwhile arrived, was deployed for this purpose just east of the Laborcza between the Austro-Hungarian 2nd and 21st Divisions. On this day, the allied troops worked their way up to the heavily fortified heights north and northeast of Ulschsebny; on the afternoon of the next day, April 5, they were stormed after the Russians had unsuccessfully attempted counterattacks in the morning.

Meanwhile, on April 3, the extreme left flank of the 3rd Army had been attacked and thrown back; only the intervention of the right flank of the 4th Army could prevent serious consequences. Two days later, the center of the army also suffered a severe setback, and the front had to be withdrawn almost 10 km to halfway between Ztropko and Turany. As the attacks against the inner flanks of the 4th Army continued, General v. Boroevic, who arrived on the battlefield in the Laborcza Valley on April 5, was forced to

## The Carpathian Offensive.

To set up Group Marwitz. On April 6, however, the newly deployed German 4th Infantry Division, positioned hard west of the Laborcza, together with the 35th Reserve Division, which also included Austro-Hungarian regiments, managed to wrest considerable territory from the Russians.

Thus, the Easter battle concluded. The withdrawal of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd, 21st, 24th, and 45th Divisions was now ordered and carried out smoothly by April 10. The Beskiden Corps took over the positions of the X Corps and easily repelled Russian attacks on April 11 and 13.

Against the new front of the 2nd Army, the enemy had meanwhile pressed sharply. On April 6, the Russians appeared with strong forces also in front of the left wing of the Southern Army, before the Szurmay Group. Their inner wing had to be withdrawn to the Ceremcha<sup>1</sup>, and there were also minor breaches in the middle of the 2nd Army. The 3rd Army could not assist, but the 4th Army again provided a division<sup>2</sup>. This left it stripped of forces to the limit of possibility. Significant battles had not taken place on their front. The Russians did not exploit their favorable position in West Galicia in the future either and focused all efforts on gaining the Ung Valley at the junction between the 2nd and Southern Army. On the advice of the Southern Army's high command, stronger forces of the 2nd Army had been assembled behind the inner wing. On April 7 and 8, heavy attacks began here, through which the Kiczera was suddenly wrested from the middle of the Szurmay Group. Three days later, the Russians also managed to gain a foothold on the important Ceremcha, the apex of the front. Only after the intervention of reserves from the 2nd Army (65th Brigade, 33rd Division) could the enemy be driven back here in two days of fighting. To ensure unified leadership in this important front section, the Ceremcha was incorporated into the command area of the 2nd Army.

From April 10, the fighting also began to gradually subside on the rest of the front. Some crises arising on the left wing of the 2nd Army could be resolved by the timely arrival of the 51st Division of the 4th Army.

Despite all setbacks, the Carpathian Front had stabilized again by mid-April to the extent that upcoming tasks were faced with confidence.

---

<sup>1)</sup> G. 127. — <sup>2)</sup> 51st Division.

## The Consolidation of the Carpathian Front.

### 3. The Operations on the Left Wing North of the Vistula.

At the front north of the Vistula, there had been calm since the turn of the year. The Austro-Hungarian 1st Army had settled at the Nida. After the 37th Infantry Division, the 33rd Infantry Division was also transferred to the Carpathian Front in the early days of January. The German Landwehr Divisions of the northern adjoining Woorsch Army (Division Bredow, 3rd and 4th Landwehr Division) had, at the beginning of January, generally returned to the positions they had held before their advance on December 30 and 31. Calm had also set in with the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army. According to agreements between the army commands, the Posen Corps and the Higher Cavalry Commander 3 with the 5th Cavalry Division — but without the Austro-Hungarian 7th Cavalry Division, which joined the Hauer Cavalry Corps — were reassigned to the 9th Army. The following weeks were mainly devoted to the expansion of positions. The Russians made several thrusts hard north of the Vistula but were repelled.

During the offensive that began at the end of January on the Carpathian front, the armies north of the Vistula were tasked with "always being ready to respond to any withdrawal of enemy forces with an immediate attack and to follow immediately in the event of an enemy retreat." Reconnaissance units found the enemy everywhere in undiminished strength in their positions. As new offensive operations were imminent in the area of the German Supreme Commander East at the end of January, the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Cavalry Division was transferred there to participate in a possible advance into Poland. Simultaneously with the attack of the northern wing of the German 9th Army on January 31, significant artillery activity also began at the front between Pilica and Vistula for deception purposes.

According to reports received during February, the enemy seemed to have withdrawn even stronger forces from their front. Thus, it was not a concern to weaken the front now as well. On February 7, General v. Gallwitz, with the command of the Guard Reserve Corps, became the Supreme Commander East. Then the Austro-Hungarian army command, under the pressure of the situation in the Carpathians, moved into the

## The Carpathian Offensive.

In the coming days and weeks, the 5th, 106th, and 14th Infantry Divisions were withdrawn from the area of the 1st Army, and from the Boroevic Army, the High Command of the 2nd Army, the command of the IV Corps, and the 27th, 31st, and 32nd Infantry Divisions. The command of the Austro-Hungarian forces remaining on the northern flank of the Boroevic Army was taken over by the leader of the XII Corps, General of Infantry v. Kövess. He was reinforced by the Cavalry Corps Hauer with the 9th Cavalry Division for the 106th Infantry Division, and the 7th Cavalry Division for the 35th Infantry Division. The German troops of Generaloberst v. Boroevic extended their sections to the left.

Bringing relief to the Carpathian front, embroiled in fierce battles, through a major offensive of their own was ruled out in view of these continued troop withdrawals. However, when Generaloberst v. Boroevic learned on February 28 that the 9th Army was planning an offensive in the near future, he realized that it might still be possible to drive the Russians from their positions on his front as well. At the Landwehr Corps, which stood in a broad front in the area west of Kielce, a local success seemed possible if a few days were allowed for the preparation of the attack. This was scheduled for March 6, one day after the 9th Army's advance.

On the morning of March 6, the Landwehr Corps advanced on both sides of Lopuszno. In the first rush, the Russian positions were taken. Then the troops pushed forward in heavy snowfall against a strong wind, approaching the main position by evening. The frozen ground made it difficult to dig in at the reached lines, and in many places, the troops encountered groundwater and swamp after breaking through the frost layer. On the morning of March 7, the attack was to be continued with special emphasis on the left wing of the 3rd Landwehr Division near and south of Lopuszno, which had advanced the furthest. However, since the enemy obstacles had not yet been sufficiently destroyed by artillery fire, the infantry remained in the rather unfavorable position, the ammunition for the heavy artillery became scarce, and the prospect of resupply was low. An attempt to advance late in the evening failed. There was still hope that the pioneers would succeed in destroying the enemy obstacles at individual points during the night; however, the enemy's attention made it impossible to approach them. The intended assault also had to be abandoned on March 8. The leader of the Landwehr Corps, General of Cavalry Freiherr v. Böhn, decided, with the approval of Generaloberst v. Boroevic, to attack

---

1) p. 292.

---

### Local Battles North of the Vistula.

to continue in fortress-like operations using pioneer-technical means. This necessitated a delay. In the meantime, the troops were to dig into the positions they had reached and only abandon them where the swamp made digging impossible.

The operation seemed to have shown some success insofar as the opposing enemy was forced to deploy reserves. However, the attack was not continued in the planned form. Due to the unfavorable terrain, even in some places the lines reached in the attack had to be abandoned again. Russian advances in the near future were repelled everywhere, especially on the night of March 15, a stronger attempt to cross the Pilica northeast of Inowlodz against the Austro-Hungarian 7th Cavalry Division, which had been temporarily moved there.

On March 10, Generaloberst v. Böhm-Ermolli received new orders from General v. Conrad to bind as strong enemy forces as possible. He then called on the Landwehr Corps to continue the attack. However, this did not happen. On March 16, an intelligence report indicated a strong Russian attack against the Kövess group was imminent for the last days of March. Generaloberst v. Böhm-Ermolli, who moved his headquarters from Czentochau to Nezawlowice on March 20, prepared stronger forces of his Landwehr divisions to intervene in the north, as the report was later confirmed and the attack was now announced for March 26. The Austro-Hungarian military command also brought in five marching battalions. However, the expected attack did not occur. Instead, on the evening of March 26, General v. Conrad urgently requested stronger forces for immediate support of the heavily fighting 2nd and 3rd Army in the Carpathians. He was provided with the German 35th Reserve Division, but without the battalions and heavy artillery. The section was divided between the Landwehr Corps and the Kövess group. The previously still held idea of an offensive by the Landwehr Corps had to be finally abandoned.

In the following period, the Russians, especially at night, conducted a series of more or less strong advances against individual parts of the entire front, without achieving significant successes. In the first half of April, signs seemed to indicate a Russian offensive in the Vistula bend. The construction of positions was then vigorously promoted. However, an enemy attack did not occur this time either.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

### 4. The Russian Supreme Command and the Operations of the Southwestern Front until Mid-April.

#### Situation and Intentions in January 1915.

Maps No. 9, 14, and 18.

At the beginning of 1915, Russia was suffering from severe concerns. The battle was ongoing on the European front. In the Caucasus region, the Turks were advancing; the Grand Duke had therefore suggested in England an undertaking against a "sensitive spot of the Ottoman Empire." The Serbs had been suffering since the heavy fighting in the late autumn from such a lack of weapons, ammunition, and supplies that they were incapable of larger combat operations.

The losses of the Russian army in the first half-year of the war had been severe. To compensate for them, there were plenty of replacement troops ready, but only a very small part could be equipped with rifles. The shortage of artillery ammunition seemed to be growing into an immediate danger. About 45,000 rounds were calculated as the daily requirement for the field guns, but the factories delivered only 13,000, and from late autumn, they hoped for 20,000 daily. Therefore, the Chief of the General Staff, General Januschkewitsch, informed the French military attaché General Laguiche on December 26, 1914, that real offensives could not be carried out before July 1915 unless Russia could count on foreign ammunition. Negotiations soon began with the Western powers about the delivery of rifles and ammunition, but even if they were available abroad in sufficient quantities, they could only be transported via the frozen port of Archangelsk in winter and then on less efficient, partly narrow-gauge railways or through Siberia. It became increasingly apparent that they were almost cut off from the allied Western powers, while Russia itself could not meet the enormous demand for war material in any way.

In the country and in the army, the mood was no longer the same as at the beginning of the war. Sacrifices and disappointments had been too great. The first signs of peace propaganda began to become noticeable.

How the situation on the European front was viewed at the beginning of the year is evident from a memorandum from mid-January 1915, which

which the Quartermaster General of the Supreme Army Command, General Danilow, had composed. It stated<sup>1)</sup>:

"In East Prussia, our 10th Army, whose fifteen infantry divisions faced eight German ones, had halted its advance before the enemy's fortified front behind the Masurian Lakes. Since the army, according to the Commander-in-Chief (General Sievers), does not possess sufficient flexibility and means for maneuvering, he sees the only way of active engagement in a slow advance supported by the work of sappers. In the direction of Mlawa, the troops of the fortified area of the fortress Nowogeorgiewsk (four infantry divisions) are in relatively successful combat with comparatively weak German forces (two divisions). It appears that the enemy can be pushed back here through vigorous pressure on his territory.

To the left of the Vistula, in the section up to the Pilica, the 1st, 2nd, and 5th Armies (33½ infantry divisions) have taken positions behind the Bzura and Rawka rivers after stubborn fighting, which they have fortified and expanded over the course of a month. Against these armies, about 25 German divisions are operating, which have worn down their forces so much in continuous attacks that, if the German High Command does not succeed in bringing reinforcements from the west, we can expect that the 1st, 2nd, and 5th Armies will be able to maintain their current position for the foreseeable future.

In the south from the Pilica to the overflow of the Vistula, the enemy facing our 4th and 9th Armies (17½ infantry divisions) (17 divisions) apparently does not have the opportunity for a broad offensive, but relies on strong rearward positions established in time (Czestochowa—Krakow) and has also strongly fortified its current position. The 4th Army secures the left flank of the northwest front by its deployment and simultaneously covers the shortest roads to Ivangorod; the position of the 4th Army, advanced compared to the general front of the northwest armies, also offers it a favorable starting position for transitioning to the offensive, but its forces are not sufficient for this (8½ infantry divisions), moreover, the opposing enemy has made use of the defensive line of the Pilica and fortified it strongly.

---

<sup>1)</sup> Danilow, p. 407 f.; the blockings (underlinings) have been made by the Reichsarchiv. — Njesnamow, I. p. 35 ff.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

In Galicia, the 3rd, 8th, and 11th Armies (29 infantry divisions) finally secured the conquered territory of Galicia and Bukovina after successfully repelling the third Austrian offensive (31 divisions). However, it is not assumed that these armies are strong enough to inflict a decisive defeat on the Austrian troops, who are always able to retreat behind the Carpathians.

In total, the armies listed above have 99 infantry divisions, opposed by about 83 divisions (41 German and 42 Austrian). Additionally, two army corps, the Guard Corps and the IV Siberian (4½<sup>1</sup>) Infantry Divisions, are available behind the front to the supreme commander and can be moved as reinforcements to any section of the northern half of our front at any time.

Regarding these statements, General Danilow wrote after the war: "In summary, one can say that I considered our strategic position on the Western Front to be quite stable and the risk of a setback in terms of the results achieved so far to be completely excluded." However, considering the internal state of the army, one should not have expected "to achieve a decisive success over the enemy in the foreseeable future. The army's manpower shortage was about half a million, and the artillery lacked more than 200,000 rounds. "A partial satisfaction of the most essential needs could only be expected in the course of the second half of February; however, a noticeable improvement in this regard only in April." Thus, one was initially forced to adopt a waiting stance.

Nevertheless, General Danilow had already set the goals for future operations in his memorandum, "in case, of course, the enemy gave us time to organize our armies." There was every reason to indulge in "a certain optimism in this regard: the Austrian armies were defeated; as for the Germans, we had to determine the character of their future operations depending on the events in the West (where our allies had gone on the offensive (Somme and the first Bornachst in Champagne), which led us to assume that this offensive would be carried out with increasing energy and determination."

---

1) The Guard Corps included the Guard Rifle Brigade.

2) Danilow, p. 408 ff.

## Situation and Intentions of the Russians in January 1915.

In the memorandum itself, it continued: "We are naturally not in a position to deliver a decisive blow simultaneously along the entire front against both our opponents." One must decide on the direction towards Vienna (Budapest) or towards Berlin. The way to Vienna is shorter, and one would only have to deal with the Austrians weakened by previous defeats. The offensive on Vienna would also incline Romania and Italy to side with Russia, which could then "even cause the complete internal collapse of the entire Austro-Hungarian monarchy." On the other hand, the advance on Vienna (Budapest) would only strike the "second-rate opponent" and appears "from the standpoint of common alliance interests, which require a concentric blow against our main opponent, the Germans, disadvantageous."

In this regard – as General Danilow explained after the war – the conditions had fundamentally changed since the beginning of the war. At that time, the army of the Danube monarchy had been the strongest opponent for Russia. In January 1915, however, it could no longer be assumed that it was still capable of independent offensive. The Germans, however, had meanwhile brought their forces on the Eastern Front from five to fifteen army corps (not counting the individual brigades and divisions) and had since then, "in terms of their strength, stood first among all our opponents." If one pushed with full force initially into Austria-Hungary, one would no longer have been able to simultaneously fend off a major German attack, which was still considered quite possible despite the battles in the West. Therefore, the advance on Vienna was only considered if the Danube monarchy could be dealt a "deadly blow in a short time." However, this was very uncertain. Finally, even the successful execution of this operation would not have meant the end of the war for a long time.

In his memorandum, General Danilow concluded that only one possibility remained: a decisive blow against the Germans. However, this appeared difficult, as the German border areas had an extremely well-developed railway network. The opponent thus had the possibility of rapid troop movements, through which he could halt the Russian attack at any time or strike from the flank.

---

1) In the book of General Danilow, it is not always clear what was in the memorandum itself and what the author subsequently added as explanations.

2) That is, compared to the railway network of Russia and Austria-Hungary.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

Danilow saw the situation in East Prussia as particularly favorable for the Germans. "We could hardly make the decision to penetrate deep into the interior of Germany without securing ourselves against a flank, or even rear threat, which East Prussia with its railway bridges over the Vistula would have posed if it remained in German hands. Such a decision could have put us in an extremely dangerous position." But otherwise, the conquest of East Prussia was of great importance: "The war will be carried into Germany, the inevitable flight of the population must cause unrest throughout the German Reich, while the conquest of one of the most important territories of the Prussian crown would have meant compensation for the loss of part of our Vistula territory to the Germans." Finally, the area of East Prussia was the only section of the entire northwest front where actual successes could still be hoped for.

For all these reasons, General Danilow was in favor of attacking Germany, specifically East Prussia, as soon as circumstances allowed. All available reserves — the Guard Corps, the IV Siberian Corps just arrived from the Far East, and the reconstituted XV Corps — were to be used. The Grand Duke and the Commander-in-Chief of the Northwest Front agreed. According to the calculations made, the attack could begin in the second half of February; by then, the arrival of the newly drafted recruits of the 1914 class and an improvement in the ammunition situation were also expected.

## The Battles on the Southwest Front.

In January 1915, the army group of the Southwest Front under General Iwanow stood with the 4th and 9th Army (17½ infantry divisions) on the left bank of the Vistula. The 3rd, 8th, and 11th Army (29 infantry divisions) were in Galicia, mostly under extremely difficult conditions in the snow-covered Carpathians. The left wing of their main forces stood south of the Austro-Hungarian fortress of Przemyśl, which was surrounded by three Landwehr divisions; east of the Uszok Pass to the Romanian border, about four divisions in total, three of them from Landwehr, were positioned along a 250 km wide front.

General Iwanow initially had no knowledge of the intentions of the Supreme Army Command. He remained convinced: "The way

## The Russian Carpathian Attack.

to Berlin leads via Vienna" and initially wanted to invade Hungary. The first target was to be the line Neu-Sandec—Kassa—Marmaros-Sziget—Romanian border. This would allow them to emerge from the mountains and perhaps even redirect towards Romania's stance. The Carpathian front was to be reinforced for this attack at the expense of the right wing of the army group directed westward by 4½ divisions. For the main attack, which General Brusilov, the commander-in-chief of the 8th Army, was to lead against the enemy front southwest of Przemysl, three corps (XXIV, XII, and VIII) were designated, which were already in this area.

The attack of the allied opponents called the implementation of these intentions into question. On January 24, General Ivanov wired to the Chief of the General Staff, General Januschkewitsch, that the enemy in the area north of Munkacs was strengthening and attacking; German troops were identified there, German officers reconnoitered. General Ivanov expected a major attack in the direction of Sambor and Stryj, where their own forces were only weak. As the most effective defense, he proposed a large-scale counterattack and demanded four to five infantry divisions for this. He especially needed this reinforcement if he remained on the defensive, as the fronts were very extended, and the losses due to the difficult conditions of the Carpathian winter were significant. "In Galicia, things are taking a serious turn; the enemy is apparently preparing a strong, energetic — but as I hope, last — attempt to liberate Przemysl and reach Lemberg." Galicia urgently needed reinforcement, as a rapid development of events was to be expected.

The Supreme Army Command could not completely ignore these statements. The offensive against East Prussia could not begin until later anyway; there was still time. Thus, on January 26, the Grand Duke ordered the XXII Corps, which was stationed with the 10th Army before Lötzen, to be transferred to the southwestern front.

Meanwhile, the battle on the Carpathian front had flared up in full. From January 26, the troops of General Brusilov advanced on both sides of the Ujfa Pass in a broad front, crossed the mountain ridge, captured a "large number" of prisoners, and advanced beyond Mezőlaborcz. Further to the left, however, the simultaneous attack of the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army

---

1) Njesnamow, I. S. 51.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

and the German Southern Army was seriously felt. The Russian 2nd Cavalry Corps could only hold southwest of Stary-Sambor with difficulty, further east at the Beskid Pass were the VII Corps (with only one active division, otherwise Landwehr), the XXX (Landwehr) Corps north of the Jablonica Pass, and other Landwehr troops in Bukovina had even retreated northwards under pressure. The first parts of the XXII Corps, rolling in from the Northwest Front, were thrown into battle north of the Beskid Pass.

At the beginning of February, General Ivanov expected 13 to 15 enemy divisions along the entire front from Baligrod south of Przemysl to the Romanian border. On February 5, he traveled to the Supreme Army Command to personally request reinforcements from the Grand Duke. He was given hope for the deployment of the XV Corps, which had been intended for the Northwest Front. However, General Ivanov pressed further. On February 10, he reported that the troops could no longer be left without support in the winter in the Carpathians and that the enemy must be lured down from the mountains, as "military, political, and sanitary considerations" now weighed in. Meanwhile, the German attack in East Prussia was in full swing, and the situation on the Northwest Front had become so serious that the Grand Duke personally issued a clear refusal. The Southwest Front had to help itself and, if necessary, shift further forces from its right to its left wing. General Ivanov therefore ordered the transfer of the XVII Corps from the left bank of the Vistula to the area north of the Dukla Pass. He wanted to continue the attack in the general direction of Kaschau-Ungvar. The right wing of the 8th Army was to advance on Bartfeld, the left of the 3rd on Alt-Lublau and Neu-Sandec. The 11th Army was to act with more emphasis against Przemysl and to enclose the fortress more tightly, especially on the west side.

The enemy seemed to be constantly reinforcing and also drawing troops from the Balkan Front. General Ivanov reported to the Grand Duke on February 13 that he had a total of 45 Austro-Hungarian infantry divisions in front of him, plus about 100,000 German troops on the Carpathian Front alone, of which four divisions had already been identified. He therefore again requested four divisions of reinforcements, but was refused and had to give up the III Caucasian Corps to the Northwest Front from southern Poland the next day.

Nevertheless, General Ivanov had suggested to the XXX Corps to retreat in Bukovina to behind the Pruth. The situation there became serious, as the left wing of this corps did not hold at the Pruth,

## The Russian Offensive Stalls.

but retreated before the attacks of the Austro-Hungarian army division Pflanzer right behind the Dniester. The entire Russian front in Galicia was threatened with encirclement from the east. The situation at the Beskid Pass, which had previously been held against the German Southern Army only with difficulty, seemed immediately threatened on the flank and rear. General Ivanov found himself compelled to further troop movements from the right to the left wing of the army group and finally, on February 23, on the orders of the Supreme Command, to reorganize all his forces. All troops left of the Vistula were to join the 4th Army, the 9th Army with the newly formed two and five cavalry divisions were to be reformed on the left wing of the army. The commander-in-chief of the 9th Army, General Letschizki, was tasked with attacking after assembling his forces, but parts of the 3rd and 8th Armies were also to attack again after replenishing the troops. This regrouping meant a decisive weakening of the previously planned breakthrough over the Ujfa Pass to Kaschau—Ungvar through the middle of the enemy front.

Meanwhile, the local battles had continued. No decision had been made anywhere, but by the end of the month, despite all setbacks, 59,000 prisoners, 24 guns, and 129 machine guns had been captured.

How the Russian Supreme Command assessed the overall situation in February is evident from their exchange of ideas with the Western powers. Above all considerations stood the firm will of the government to fight the war to a victorious end despite previous disappointments. "I could not imagine a more determined language," wrote the French ambassador Paleologue with satisfaction about the declaration that the government had made in the Duma on February 9 and which had been enthusiastically received by the deputies.

Due to the situation at the front against the Central Powers, however, there was increasing concern at the Supreme Command. The plan for the spring offensive against East Prussia, like the German attacks at Lowicz and the subsequent winter battle in Masuria, had been thwarted, and at the same time, the planned

---

1) XI Corps of the 3rd Army, XVII and XVIII of the previous 9th Army, XXX Corps of the 8th Army.

2) XXIV, XII, VII, VII Corps.

3) Walentinow, p. 35.

4) Paleologue, German edition, p. 272.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

The advance over the Carpathians was questioned by the counterattack of the Central Powers. The Grand Duke had explained to the English General Paget, who had just arrived at the beginning of February, that the situation of the Russian army was "very critical" until the end of April. The situation with rifles and ammunition was becoming more serious every day. To be able to attack, they needed a million rifles, as the replacement troops could not otherwise be deployed to the front. It was therefore primarily a matter of gaining time. They sought the help of the allies.

In a telegram sent on February 21 to General Joffre and Field Marshal Lord Kitchener to the Western Powers, the overall assessment of the situation on the Russian front was summarized in the following statement, which showed how correctly the events were judged: "Towards the end of January," Germany had significantly strengthened its forces on our front, partly through new formations, partly through troops from the Western Front. This remark of that force on our front gave it the opportunity to concentrate considerable forces in East Prussia as well as in Eastern Galicia by exploiting its railways. At the same time, a large part of Austrian troops was brought from the Serbian theater of war. The assembly apparently aimed to exert serious pressure on our two army wings, with the main force being deployed on the East Prussian front. Unfortunately, we suffered a serious setback there, and the new situation forces us to regroup our forces to strengthen both wings, which at the same time inevitably leads to a weakening of our forces on the left bank of the Vistula." — At the same time, the Grand Duke also let the French ambassador in Petersburg "know in a delicate manner that he would be happy if the French army took the offensive to bring the transport of German forces to the Eastern Front to a standstill."

The Grand Duke had gradually abandoned the idea of conquering East Prussia in view of the changed situation and had "partly for political reasons, partly under the influence of reports from the commander of the Southwestern Front, more inclined towards the plan of a large-scale offensive on the Austro-Hungarian theater of war,"<sup>4)</sup> which, however, could not begin before May at the earliest. The differing opinion of General Danilov was rejected.

---

1) Walentinow, p. 36 and 59. — 2) Printed in Walentinow, p. 36. — 3) Russian date. — 4) Danilov, p. 439 f.

## Resumption of the Russian Offensive.

On March 2, General Ivanov stated in a memorandum that he no longer saw any serious danger on the East Prussian front. However, in Galicia, it was different. Although the attack of the Central Powers over the Western Carpathians, which was aimed at relieving Przemysl, was of only local significance, the advance of the enemy in the Eastern Carpathians could, with one blow, destroy the fruits of the entire campaign so far and force the evacuation of Galicia under the most difficult conditions. To prevent this, one must continue to attack there, and for this, he needed reinforcements. The Grand Duke agreed and wanted to send reinforcements as soon as the situation on the Northwestern front allowed. When he inquired on March 3 which division they could spare, General Danilov assessed the situation in the Eastern Carpathians as favorable; the Austro-Hungarian armies, he said, were only making their last desperate efforts there; Przemysl would soon fall as well. "The help of the allies and the possibility of winning over neutral states to participate, if realized, give hope that it will be possible to overthrow Austria." Then, however, there would be no need to conquer East Prussia to advance into the interior of Germany.

Meanwhile, on the Southwestern front, the eastern flank had been reinforced to such an extent that it pushed back the Austro-Hungarian forces advancing northward beyond Stanislau. On the other hand, at the beginning of March, a significant reinforcement of the enemy was detected between the Dufla and Uszok Passes, especially in the area of the main railway line from Budapest via Miskolcz to Przemysl; it seemed to be an initial relief attempt for the fortress. General Ivanov gathered reserves behind the threatened section and ordered a counterattack on March 10 by the left wing of the 3rd Army, which was to concentrate as strong forces as possible in the Mészö-Laborecz-Lupkow-Sanok area; the 8th Army was to remain on the defensive and only proceed offensively at the Uszok Pass, the 9th Army was to hold the Beskid Pass, but further east to advance over the Jablonica Pass to the decisive attack. General Ivanov could only set the start of this attack for March 20.

During these days, the Tsar and the French ambassador were at the Russian headquarters. The latter declared to the Grand Duke on March 16 that "the immediate cooperation of Italy and Romania is of undeniable necessity"; otherwise, the war would drag on for a long time. On March 19, the Grand Duke issued a general directive on the next tasks. He ordered for the north-

## The Carpathian Offensive.

The western front was to be "pure defense"; the decisive task fell to the southwestern front, which was to "advance from the left wing, moving forward in the direction, for example, towards Budapest and further to encircle the entire front Krakow—Poznan—Thorn." Accordingly, the southwestern front had to be reinforced. The decision was made for this operation to establish contact with the Romanian army, should this country join. The operation was not only approved by the Tsar, but he emphasized that it was precisely what he himself would order as commander-in-chief.

On March 22, Przemysl fell, more than 120,000 prisoners and 900 guns were captured, about three Russian divisions were freed for deployment in the Carpathians. The Grand Duke informed the General Staff that the intended major operation could begin. General Ivanov, however, did not want to encircle the enemy's entire front from the east anymore, but — according to his earlier plan — to break through the Carpathians south of Przemysl, taking advantage of the current increase in strength. This was a completely different operation than what the Supreme Army Command intended; however, it accepted General Ivanov's decision, as it increasingly became dependent on the army group commanders equipped with great powers. Apart from the combat situation at the front, the difficulties in this case may have contributed to the inability to reinforce the extreme left army wings in Eastern Galicia in time, as the task originally assigned to them would have required.

At this time, the army group counted (apart from territorial troops) 46½ divisions, plus 116 border guard battalions; furthermore, 18 battalions from the Amur region were on their way to join.

On March 25, General Ivanov set the left wing of the 3rd Army and the 8th Army for a breakthrough. The 8th Army was to swing left to reach the line Czap—Ungvar—Turta and then turn against the enemy in front of the 9th Army; this army itself was to initially remain in place and strengthen its left wing, to later, closely along the Hungarian border, also encircle the opponent standing before it on the left. Shortly before the start of the major offensive, the chief of staff of the southwestern front, General Alexeyev, was dismissed and appointed commander-in-chief of the northwestern front for the ailing General Ruzski. General Dragomirov became chief of staff of the southwestern front.

The great Carpathian offensive of the Russians advanced only slowly in the mountains and against enemy resistance in winter weather.

## The Russian Carpathian Offensive Comes to a Standstill.

The 3rd Army attacked with three corps already positioned south of the Dukla Pass (XXIV., XII., and XXIX.), but achieved only local successes; four corps of the 8th Army (VIII., XXVIII., XVII., VII.) crossed the main ridge, but in fourteen days of fighting, they advanced only about 20 kilometers in total. Together, both armies reported about 14,000 prisoners as spoils, with Germans (35th Reserve Division) identified as opponents at Mezőlaborcz on April 2. South of the Uzsok Pass, the success was even less; on the Bukovina front, it initially retreated further back to the Romanian border, until reaching Russian territory. Here, strong Russian cavalry made a counterattack at the end of March, capturing a total of 2100 prisoners, but failed to drive the enemy from Russian territory at Dnovo. The Supreme Command therefore demanded on March 30 "for political reasons" strong measures for this flank; however, the forces were temporarily lacking. On April 6, it ordered the Northwestern Front to provide a corps as an army reserve.

The major offensive of the Southwestern Front, begun with ambitious goals, had essentially come to a halt when the German Beskiden Corps was deployed at Mezőlaborcz<sup>1)</sup>. In General Ivanov's order of April 10, it stated: "Our troops, who advanced through the Carpathians with so much heroism and have already pushed the enemy back over the main ridge in many places, ... have encountered an enemy." Enemy counterattacks had also pushed back the XXII Corps, which at that time faced the German Southern Army. "Under these circumstances, we are forced to temporarily halt the attack to reorganize the troops, supply them, and await reinforcements." The 3rd and 8th Armies were to switch to defense, the 9th – if possible – to restore the initial position.

The Supreme Command was displeased and asked General Ivanov the next day when he thought he could continue the "still unfinished operation"; because "the interruption is politically and militarily extremely disadvantageous." General Ivanov, however, could not offer any hope for the time being, pointing to terrain and weather difficulties, heavy losses, and a lack of weapons and ammunition, and requested a division as a backup for what he considered the most threatened position, the Dukla Pass. The Supreme Command, however, had no more reserves available and believed that even the Northwest-

---

<sup>1)</sup> p. 129 f.

## The Carpathian Offensive.

front — despite the large number of units still deployed there — should not be further weakened for the time being; because all the units there had shrunk alarmingly in combat strength and numbers.

### 5. Reflections.

General v. Conrad had a great goal in mind when planning the Carpathian Offensive. He wanted, as he informed General v. Falkenhayn, "to achieve a positive, decisive success through the thrust to the north with the strongest possible forces," "a blow whose effect he estimated to be far greater than mere territorial gain up to the San-Dniester line." The deployment of the fortress Przemysl was initially only a secondary purpose.

The offensive was intended as an encirclement operation against the left flank of the main Russian forces, which stood in a closed front with a strength of 24 divisions from the Vistula to the Solinka in the area of Baligrod. General v. Conrad refrained from a far-reaching strategic encirclement against the left flank of the entire Russian forces in Galicia, as it could have been carried out by advancing from Bukovina and from the southern tip of Galicia via Stanislau towards Lemberg. Certainly, quick and easy initial successes against the comparatively weak Russian forces, which were distributed in a broad formation, could be hoped for on this path with significant reinforcement of the Pflanzer-Baltin army group. However, given the very limited capacity of the only full railway line via Maramaros-Sziget—Körösmezö—Delatyn, which General v. Conrad had already identified before the outbreak of war as the main obstacle to the assembly of strong forces in Eastern Galicia, it seems very questionable whether it would have been possible to maintain this offensive by bringing in further fresh forces in an uninterrupted flow until the German southern army deployed further west had overcome the Carpathians. But even if that succeeded, it was certainly to be assumed that the enemy, by virtue of its two favorable railway and road lines, would establish a superior strong defensive front in Eastern Galicia, perhaps even offensively against the open right flank of the Austrians. The decision of General v. Conrad, to forego uncertain strategic long-range effects and to direct the planned encirclement operation directly against the left flank of the main Russian forces and thereby also to aim for the deployment of the fortress Przemysl in the shortest possible way, therefore seems entirely justified. While the eastern flank of the 3rd Army

## General v. Conrad's Plan and Force Distribution.

The thrust intended for Lisko—Sanok was to ensure that the deployment of the German Southern Army east of the Uzsok Pass met the dual possibility of either intervening comprehensively and decisively in the battle of the 3rd Army via Drohobycz—Boryslaw or, if no longer necessary, acting against the flank and rear of the Russian overall front in Galicia via Stryj. However, in the considerations regarding the deployment of the German Southern Army east of the Uzsok Pass, another thought played a determining role, which was not in harmony with the planned encirclement operation. In the event that the enemy concentrated strong forces on its eastern flank at Stanislau—Nadworna—Kolomea, the German Southern Army was to cooperate with the Pflanzer-Baltin army group, thus eccentrically to the 3rd Army. This already revealed a certain ambivalence in the direction of the objective, which then repeatedly manifested itself in the later course.

A prerequisite for the operational thought processes of General v. Conrad and the far-reaching hopes arising from them was a rapid and successful course of tactical combat operations with the 3rd and Southern Army. If the breakthrough through the at that time only weakly occupied Carpathian front of the Russians succeeded before they had significant reinforcements in place, the encirclement operation certainly opened up great prospects of success for gaining the San line. However, it can hardly be denied that General v. Conrad underestimated the difficulties of the impending combat tasks of his assault group, particularly the German Southern Army. The hardships of the winter weather created extremely unfavorable combat, traffic, and living conditions for the attacker in the already difficult-to-navigate mountainous terrain, which east of the Uzsok Pass has partly alpine character. The enemy, who had significantly better road and accommodation facilities in the hinterland of his combat area, was able to defend the few pass roads, which were the only ones suitable for larger troop movements, long and tenaciously with far inferior forces. It soon became apparent that the most essential prerequisite for the success of the encirclement operation, which General v. Conrad had so highly anticipated, the rapid breakthrough through the Carpathians, was not given.

The question arises whether the Austro-Hungarian Chief of General Staff, in striving to muster as strong forces as possible for the offensive he planned, was sufficiently cautious. After drawing on reinforcements freed from other fronts and the German forces made available by the supreme commander, the 30/34 divisions standing between the Vistula and the Reich border east of Czernowitz could be

## The Carpathian Offensive.

Infantry divisions of the Russians had a superiority of more than ten divisions to counter, although it should be noted that the combat strengths of the Austro-Hungarian army at that time were lower than those of the Russians. Whether the other army fronts not involved in the offensive were weakened to the limit of possibility is questionable. In any case, by mid-March, nine divisions from other fronts had been transferred to the Galician theater of war, whose immediate deployment would have enabled a stronger concentration of forces at decisive points and thus probably greater and lasting successes.

The 3rd and Southern Army, designated as the assault group for the encirclement operation, together numbered 20½ infantry divisions, thus only about half of the total force available on the Galician theater of war. Undoubtedly, a stronger concentration of forces would have been possible and necessary. If, for understandable reasons, one did not want to weaken the army group Pflanzer-Bal tin (with a strength of about 5½ infantry divisions), which was to follow as flank protection for the right wing of the assault group, the 4th Army (15½ infantry divisions), which was prevented from a purely frontal approach against the main Russian forces between the Vistula and the Beskids, could have been relieved of a number of divisions from the start, as later had to be done in the course of events.

But even within the assault group itself, a more appropriate distribution of forces could probably have been achieved if the eastern wing of the 3rd Army (six infantry divisions), which was deployed against the front between the Uzsok Pass and the Solinka, identified as very weakly occupied, had been strengthened. This could have been achieved either by forces from the 3rd Army itself at the expense of its western wing, tasked with a frontal attack against the Baligrod—Banica line, or by a concentrated deployment of the German Southern Army at the Uzsok Pass, as envisioned by General v. Falkenhayn and General v. Freytag. The immediate pressure on the flank of the main Russian forces could have been significantly increased in this way, aside from the fact that this would also have secured the shortest route for the relief of Przemysl. That General v. Conrad did not follow General v. Falkenhayn's suggestion is explained partly by his far-reaching operational plans, but also, as already mentioned, by his underestimation of the difficulties of offensive combat-

## Reasons for the Failure of the Offensive.

conduct in the Carpathian winter. Incidentally, it is noticeable that General v. Conrad completely abandoned the idea expressed in mid-January to involve the garrison of the fortress Przemysl in the operations of the field army by early February at the latest, either through sorties or an attempt to break through.

If the failure of the first offensive, initiated at the end of January, must already be attributed mainly to insufficient

focus at a decisive point, this applies even more to the later course of operations.

These repeatedly restarted operations broke down into a series of more or less unconnected sub-operations. However, it must not be overlooked that General v. Conrad was already

severely restricted in his decision-making and freedom of action by the very rapid Russian counteraction against the 3rd Army from early February.

Thus, the loss of the area around Mezőlaborcz, which was indispensable for the resumption of the offensive, initially thwarted Conrad's intention to support the envelopment operation of the 3rd Army with a concentrated advance of the 4th Army along the Galician river line south of Gorlice.

The advance of the inner wings of both armies against Banica, finally initiated in mid-February, had only the purpose of restoring the situation

at the 3rd Army. The strong forces used for this purely local, albeit unsuccessful, advance could have been more appropriately, at least partially, used to reinforce the newly formed 2nd Army, to which the previous operational

task of the 3rd Army, the advance over Baligrod to Lisko-Sanok, had been transferred. However, this advance could no longer

act as an envelopment operation against the left flank of the Russian main forces; it was rather initially a purely

frontal attack against a strong and closed front, thus a tactical breakthrough. Since General v. Conrad, in his considerations about

the restart of the offensive, now placed his originally much broader operational goals behind the intention to relieve the fortress Przemysl, it would have been so necessary for him to make the 2nd Army, entrusted with the breakthrough in this direction, as strong as possible from the outset. Due to its insufficient strength, the new offensive begun at the end of February failed very quickly. By mid-March, the 2nd and 3rd Armies were finally pushed back to defense under the simultaneous Russian counterattack. Shortly thereafter, a final attempt by the 4th Army to advance near Gorlice also ended without success. Operational significance

## The Carpathian Offensive.

was not to be measured by the limited forces with which it was undertaken.

Meanwhile, without any internal connection to these battles, the German Southern Army continued to struggle in vain with the increasingly difficult task, due to the new deployment of Russian forces, of securing the exit of the Carpathian passes in their sector. The flank attack of the western wing of the Pflanzer-Baltin army group towards Dolina, repeatedly requested by their high command, which could have significantly eased the task of the Southern Army, only had a very temporary and incomplete effect due to the fan-shaped deployment of the army group. By early March, even the western wing of General v. Pflanzer-Baltin was completely pushed into the defensive.

The question arises whether, after the failure of the first Carpathian Offensive, which became apparent at the beginning of February, instead of resuming the attack at the same place and in the same directions as in the first attempt, a new offensive operation on a changed basis would have been preferable. Given the already expressed concerns against a wide-ranging encirclement movement from Eastern Galicia, only an offensive of all available forces from the area of the 4th Army in the Galician plain between the Beskids and the Vistula was considered, thus a purely frontal approach against a position that perhaps was no longer occupied by such strong troops as at the end of January, but certainly still possessed considerable resistance strength. It might have been possible to gradually push the enemy back a bit to the east, but further-reaching operational successes, such as the relief of Przemysl, which was now entirely the focus, were hardly to be hoped for under the present circumstances at this location either. A simultaneous breakthrough of the Russians through the now weakened Carpathian front into Hungary would have created an extremely difficult situation for the Austro-Hungarian army in Western Galicia and would have brought its offensive to a standstill.

Retrospective consideration leads to the conclusion that it would have been best, after the failure of the first Carpathian Offensive, to refrain from resuming the attack altogether and to leave Przemysl to its fate. The relief of the fortress should never have become the guiding principle of the operations. If General v. Conrad then insisted on continuing the offensive, even after the hopeless situation of the fortress Przemysl, indeed even after its fall, albeit in a more methodical combat procedure, this corresponded to

## Were there other possibilities for action?

Decision no longer based on hope for success of operational significance, but on the belief that the efforts the enemy made to break through into the Hungarian plain could be most effectively countered with counterattacks. However, the actual situation not only completely ruled out the execution of larger-scale counterattacks, but even forced the withdrawal of the 2nd and 3rd Armies behind the Carpathian ridge. Thus, the offensive, which began with great hopes, ended with severe tactical setbacks that could only be partially compensated by the Easter battle. The Austro-Hungarian military leadership could breathe a sigh of relief when, after a weeks-long severe crisis, the enemy's onslaught could at least temporarily be considered repelled by mid-April.

And yet, from the previous efforts of the allies, a great gain for the overall situation on the Galician battlefield could be recorded: The Russians had gradually become so entangled with the main forces of their southwestern front in the mountain battles that their right flank between the Beskids and the Vistula had been significantly weakened. This now held the seed of a great success for the allies. If it succeeded in overrunning this right flank of the enemy with a surprising thrust of strong forces, the entire Carpathian front was threatened with the danger of collapse.

## B. The battles on the German Eastern Front until the end of April 1915.

I. The deployment of the new corps in East Prussia.

Map 19 Volume VI and Map 9 Volume VII.

On the German Eastern Front, in West Poland and east of the Vistula, all attacks by the enemy, weather, own exhaustion, and ammunition shortages had gradually come to a halt by December 1914. Repeatedly, the German Chief of General Staff had demanded the continuation of the offensive to "wear down" the Russians and push them out of the Vistula bend, but on December 24, he explicitly declared that any forces from the west should be added; instead, a transfer of strong forces of the 9th Army to the right bank of the Vistula was considered. The prioritization of this idea

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

However, Field Marshal v. Hindenburg considered it only possible with the deployment of new forces and suggested using the newly formed corps for this purpose. For the first time, the idea of deploying new troops in East Prussia was mentioned here.

The question was whether the development of the situation on the Austro-Hungarian front would allow the implementation of such intentions. Field Marshal v. Hindenburg had doubts about the resilience of the allied army. As he no longer expected major offensive successes from the 9th Army at the end of the year, he wanted to transition them to defense in the coming days and free up forces for other uses. As he wrote to the Supreme Army Command on December 30, he only expected success from the deployment of these "small forces" in East Prussia if the difficult situation of Austria-Hungary allowed such use at all. In contrast, General v. Falkenhayn still maintained that it was necessary and achievable by the end of January to push the Russians back over the Vistula or at least into the bridgeheads. In this sense, he also expressed himself to General Ludendorff during the meeting on January 1 in Berlin, where he again emphasized the impossibility of sending reinforcements from the west to the east. In the telegram summarizing the outcome of the meeting to the Commander-in-Chief East on January 3, it was stated: "Reinforcements can no longer be sent to the Eastern theater of war from the west, as Your Excellency knows, and can only be supplied from new formations at the earliest in early February. A final decision on the use of the new formations can only be made about three weeks after the current general war situation. The conditions for transitioning to defense with the Mackensen army are therefore not yet given. If it came to that, according to our war experiences here in the west, not three to four, but at least six to seven divisions would have to be freed up. They would certainly be advantageously used on the extreme left wing of the Eastern front in East Prussia or on the right wing of the Carpathians. In this case, however, the consequence would be that the enemy would have to be completely freed from his predicament in Poland. It is certain to assume that he would use the time given to him to take effective countermeasures that are obvious. In

---

1) Volume VI, pp. 357 to 364. — 2) Volume VI, pp. 363 to 364. — 3) For more details, see the letter from the Commander-in-Chief East dated December 30, p. 75. — 4) p. 6.

## Use of the New Formations.

In the most favorable case, the operation towards East Prussia would lead to the highly desired liberation of German soil from the enemy, while the Austrians would inevitably be defeated in Hungary. However, the Carpathian expedition, faced with enormous difficulties due to our unsuitable vehicles, would have to come to a standstill in Galicia at the latest, while no changes in our favor would be likely in the situation in East Prussia and Poland. Therefore, I must strongly advise against the two discussed operations." Hence, the Chief of the General Staff wished to continue the attack of the 9th Army in West Poland. "To do everything on my part," he continued, "to ensure success, I have ordered the rapid transfer of 8000 shells for heavy field howitzers and 4000 shells for light field howitzers with the brand new T-filling<sup>1</sup> to the 9th Army. These shells, when used properly, will also drive the enemy from their fortified trenches in an area of 4 km width and 2 km depth. His Majesty has agreed to the views presented here."

At the headquarters in Posen, the intention was initially to take a position again on this wire from Mézières, in which the proposed operations for the eastern theater of war were rejected. There is a draft of a letter to the Chief of the General Staff from January 4, which, as it was "overtaken by new communication with General v. Conrad," was not sent, but is significant insofar as it already shows further considerations about future operations. The draft states: "My cipher telegram of December 30, 1914, was based on the view that the Austro-Hungarian army would not succeed in holding the Dniester and the Carpathians, and that immediate support by the Austro-Hungarian army would soon be necessary. According to the reports of General v. Conrad, this necessity does not currently exist. However, the basis for the use of the 9th Army has been postponed for the time being. The 9th Army will continue to attack. However, there can be no talk of a surprise strike at any point. The attack will bring a decision. It can only be maintained, Austria-Hungary is not in a position to bring about a turnaround in Galicia in favor of the allied forces, it asserts itself at best. The operation of the allied armies against Russia thus comes to a halt. Both opponents hold firm. — An end-

---

<sup>1)</sup> Tear gas.

### The Winter Battle of Masuria.

Decision on the eastern theater of war, which is necessary with regard to the neutrals, can only be achieved by deploying reinforcements. An operation against Serbia is out of the question. The deployment of reinforcements in Galicia on the right wing of the Austrians could bring the decision. If the Russian army has to retreat behind the San and Przemysl is relieved, the Russian army is defeated and the decision against Russia is achieved. Romania will also not move then. — Deploying reinforcements in East Prussia would likely have a quick and full tactical success, which would favorably influence the overall situation. A decision would be reached with the continuation of the operation over the Narew. — Since reinforcements cannot be freed from the west, the deployment of neutral formations will be necessary in the east at the beginning of February. I do not conceal that a decision cannot be made at present, as it is not clear where and to what extent the deployment should take place. Nevertheless, I considered it necessary to lay down my views on the war situation on the eastern theater of war as stated above. I do not overlook whether a quick and decisive success in the west can be achieved with the reinforcements."

It should quickly become apparent that General Field Marshal v. Hindenburg's view of the reduced capability of the allies was correct. On the night of January 5, General v. Conrad asked the Supreme Commander East for four to five divisions for deployment with the 3rd Army in the Carpathians). This initially rendered the prerequisites for the remaining plans obsolete. General Field Marshal v. Hindenburg decided to transfer 2½ infantry and one cavalry division to the Carpathian front. In the report submitted to the Supreme Army Command on January 6, it was stated regarding the continuation of operations<sup>2)</sup>, the 9th Army remained strong enough to hold the enemy forces west of Warsaw through attack and to prevent troop movements from there to Galicia, but it was said: "The frontal attack of the 9th Army with and without the transfer to Austria can always only cause a more or less slow pushing back of the opposing Russians. A surprising breakthrough is excluded due to the many successive Russian positions and the short days. The Russian always has time for troop movements in front of the 9th Army's front." A "pushing back of the Russians or a pushing back to the Vistula line by the end of January,

## Contributions to the Southern Army.

As intended by General v. Falkenhayn, the Commander-in-Chief East was therefore not considered reachable.

On January 8, the subsequent approval of the Supreme War Lord for the transfer of troops to the Allies and the formation of the Southern Army under the command of General v. Linsingen was received; Lieutenant General Ludendorff was appointed as the first Chief of the General Staff, whose representation in the staff of the Commander-in-Chief East was to be taken over by Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmann).

In the already mentioned letter<sup>2)</sup> from January 9, Field Marshal v. Hindenburg expressed the view that the deployment of German units on the right wing of the Allies in Galicia would lead to success in a few weeks, which must be combined with a decisive blow in East Prussia. The deployment of the four new corps in the East was a necessity. With them, it would not be difficult to quickly inflict a decisive, probably devastating defeat on the enemy standing in East Prussia and to advance with full force on Bialystok. He saw this operation in the East "as decisive for the outcome of the entire war."

On January 11, the Commander-in-Chief East learned confidentially that, contrary to General v. Falkenhayn's view, several army leaders of the Western Army and their chiefs had considered the transfer of significant forces to the East very possible given the current situation, if the Commander-in-Chief East deemed it necessary for the success of the operation he planned. On January 12, General v. Falkenhayn, as mentioned, paid a short visit to Posen. During the presentation, which he had given by the acting Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmann, this<sup>4)</sup> plan and layout of the intended operation in East Prussia was developed for the case that the necessary forces would be transferred to the Commander-in-Chief East. The intention was to deploy three of the corps on the left wing of the 8th Army just south of the Memel to roll up the free Russian northern flank. At the same time, the fourth corps made available, reinforced by an infantry division of the 8th Army, was to advance south of the Augustówka lakes and throw the apparently weak flank of the Russian 10th Army over the Sauten. Thus, a double envelopment of this army was planned. A great success against the forces opposing the 8th Army and the liberation of East Prussia was expected.

---

<sup>1)</sup> G. 81. — <sup>2)</sup> G. 11/12. — <sup>3)</sup> G. 13. — <sup>4)</sup> "The Records of Major General Max Hoffmann", Volume 2.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmann appeared confident based on previous experiences. How the operation would develop further, he could not predict to the Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army. However, he believed that even with a devastating defeat of the Russians, the German Eastern Army would probably not be strong enough to carry the operation against the fortress line Grodno — Kowno further; however, it was hoped that it would be possible to cross the Bobr south of Augustów and take the important barrier Osowiec from behind. A prerequisite for the success of the operation would be the successful defense of the southern border of East Prussia.

A General Staff officer, whom Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmann informed immediately after his discussion with General v. Falkenhayn about its course, noted in his records shortly thereafter that Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmann also described it as "very desirable" "if there were the possibility of bringing in about two more corps from the west to advance them right backwards (along the attack front) on Ostrolenka." Then "a decisive success of the planned operation would be guaranteed." General v. Falkenhayn did not comment on Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmann's statements, nor did he express himself on the intended use of the newly formed corps on this occasion, as he had not during the previous discussion with Field Marshal v. Hindenburg. The Chief of the General Staff sent his own instructions immediately after General v. Falkenhayn's departure again to the Supreme War Lord with the request for the transfer of all available reinforcements, both the new formations at home and all forces dispensable on the Western Front for the planned operation in East Prussia.

---

1) The letter from the Field Marshal to the Supreme War Lord dated January 12 has not been found either in draft or in the fair copy — both originate from the hand of the Field Marshal. The exact wording is therefore not ascertainable. According to an oral communication from the Field Marshal to the Director of the Historical Department of the Reich Archives on February 27, 1930, he believes that the content of the report was as reproduced above. This is also supported by a letter from Generaloberst v. Moltke to the Kaiser dated January 17. Generaloberst v. Moltke, who, with the approval of the Field Marshal, had been instructed by the Chief of the General Staff to draft the letters of January 12, subsequently wrote to the Supreme War Lord on January 17 that a prospect of "decisively defeating the Russians and coming to peace with them only existed if all dispensable forces were also brought in from the west to force the superior enemy mass, which according to previous experiences repels all our attacks, even at the risk of coming into a difficult situation, into the encirclement of our line."

## Exchange of Opinions between Falkenhayn and Conrad.

A few days later, on January 16, the Chief of the General Staff of the allied armed forces also took the opportunity to once again advocate to General v. Falkenhayn the deployment of the new German formations on the Eastern Front in a detailed presentation. General v. Conrad assumed that the next common goal must be "to defeat the Russian army with all our might so that its renewal of the offensive is made impossible for a long time and we are given the freedom to use our forces against other enemies." This purpose was to be served by the upcoming Carpathian Offensive. However, General v. Conrad did not yet expect sufficient impact from it alone. "Even after reaching the San Line, strong Russian forces in the Vistula bend, approximately in the line Sandomierz—Kielce—Konskie—Opoczno and west of Warsaw, would always pose the latent threat of another enemy offensive. To connect this and gain the desired freedom of action, it is absolutely necessary to also defeat the Russian northern flank and force them back behind the Vistula for good." This requires the unified deployment of the new German corps. In this respect, General v. Conrad's view was completely in line with that of the Commander-in-Chief East. Only in the question of where the deployment of the new formations should take place did opinions differ. Although General v. Conrad now rejected his proposal made around the turn of the year to deploy reinforcements in West Poland south of the 9th Army on the northern flank of the Bohemian Army, he recommended, deviating from the view of the Commander-in-Chief East, an offensive in the direction of Makwa—Pultusk over the Narew, from which he hoped, in connection with his own offensive, to force the retreat of all Russian forces behind the Vistula. It was the same "Polish pincer" from which he had already expected victory at the beginning of the war.

General v. Falkenhayn replied on January 17: "I fully agree with the next common goal set out in the first sentence there. However, I consider it unlikely that the Russians, if they should be pushed back over the Dniester and San sections in Galicia, would remain with significant forces on the left bank of the Vistula in Poland. This does not prevent me from firmly adhering to the intention to deploy the new German corps in the East. Only a very unlikely shift in the situation here in the West could change that. The deployment of the new corps in

---

1) p. 13.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

Poland to the left of the Vistula was never intended, rather always such against the Russian northern flank to the right of the Vistula either from Mlawa or from East Prussia. This will only be decided when the deployment transports of the corps can begin, which will be the case in the first third of February."

Through the intention of deploying the new corps in the east expressed for the first time in this presentation, General v. Conrad was pleasantly surprised. It is not known why General v. Falkenhayn did not simultaneously inform Field Marshal v. Hindenburg of this decision. He was only relieved of his uncertainty by the Emperor's decision on January 20th. The question of the upcoming operation was thus initially decided in the sense of the leaders in the east.

In the directive of the Supreme Army Command of January 20th, which made the newly formed 10th Army from four corps available to the Commander-in-Chief East, it was stated: "Information requested by the 26th, where the deployment is mentioned. He could easily deploy with three corps in the first line, with one corps in the second line in the area of Lötzen—Insterburg within six days from February 3rd. The second line corps or a corps of the 9th Army can also be transported simultaneously to the area of Gumbinnen—Ortelsburg." Thus, the question of the direction of attack was also decided; an offensive over Mlawa was no longer under discussion.

In his response, the Commander-in-Chief East requested on January 25th the deployment of the 10th Army with three army corps, including the XXI., in the area of Insterburg—Lötzen—Stallupönen, with one corps, the XXXIX. or XXXX., in the area of Ortelsburg. Additionally, the Commander-in-Chief East considered the transport of an army corps from the 9th Army to the southern border of East Prussia; because securing the right flank of the 8th Army advancing along the southern border of East Prussia had to gain more and more importance as the offensive progressed.

General v. Falkenhayn agreed with the proposed deployment on the same day and gave the detailed orders for the railway transports. All other measures were left to the Commander-in-Chief East.

---

1) p. 14.

## 2. Battles on the Secondary Fronts until Early February 1915.

### a) In West Poland.

Maps 19 and 20 Volume VI as well as Map 9 Volume VII and Sketch n.

The Battles of the 9th Army from January 1 to 18.

At the turn of the year, the 9th Army stood with 23½ infantry and six cavalry divisions<sup>1)</sup>, front facing east, between Pilica and Vistula in combat. The position generally ran along the Rawka and lower Bzura. The right wing was bent back at the Pilica up to and including Inowlodz, the left stretched along the Vistula to Wloclawek. On the north bank of the river, only weaker troops of the Thorn fortress secured the line Wloclawek—Lipno. The long flank of the 9th Army from Wyszogrod to Wloclawek was therefore all the more endangered, as the freezing of the Vistula was to be expected.

In front of the 9th Army, the Russians held a position with numerous strongpoints and several rear lines. They were estimated at 38 infantry and seven cavalry divisions, thus being superior to the 9th Army by 14½ infantry and one cavalry division.

The Army High Command 9 had formed the two attack groups Scholz and Linsingen<sup>2)</sup> at the end of December 1914, to advance the stalled attack by combining forces. At this time, there was hope to break the resistance of the enemy at the Rawka and lower Bzura despite its tenacity and to push it back to Warsaw. Given the extraordinary strength of the enemy positions, the persistent adverse weather, and the shortness of the days, this frontal attack operation was bound to cost a lot of time and ammunition. The Commander-in-Chief, Generaloberst v. Mackensen, hoped, after a pause deemed urgently necessary, to soon proceed with the continuation of the attack on Warsaw, provided that the southern flank of the army was protected at the Pilica and the army remained at its previous strength. General v. Falkenhayn, to whom this view was presented in a report by the Chief of Staff of the 9th Army, Major General Grünert, on December 31, agreed not to impose any restrictions on the army regarding time and strength, and to ensure better supply of ammunition in quantity and quality.

---

1) Including the Posen Corps and the Higher Cavalry Commander 3, which were temporarily subordinated to the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army. Posen Corps is counted as two divisions. — 2) Volume VI, C. 359.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

On January 2, the Army High Command was informed by General Ludendorff, as a result of the Berlin meeting held the day before, that the Austrians wanted to hold in the Carpathians on their own strength. For this, the continuation of the 9th Army's offensive was necessary. If possible, a cavalry corps should already be taken as a reserve behind the center, and the Austro-Hungarian 7th Cavalry Division should be returned to the Austrians.

The Pilica henceforth formed the dividing line between the Woysch Army and the 9th Army. The Posen Corps again came under the direct command of the 9th Army High Command and took over the security and defense of the Pilica on both sides of Inowlodz. On January 2, the 9th Army High Command moved its headquarters from Lenczyca to Lodz due to the danger of cholera and typhus.

Meanwhile, the 9th Army continued the attack as planned. It led to partially bitter and bloody battles, but brought only minor local successes, such as with the Linsingen Group at Borzymow, where the 36th Infantry Division pushed the enemy back to the eastern edge of the village. In other places, territorial gains were lost again due to strong Russian counterattacks. A total of about 3000 prisoners were brought in. General v. Morgen's troops were able to take and hold Mogily. The Scholz Group, given the low combat strength of the infantry, focused on artillery combat to bind the enemy's forces; the result was that the enemy apparently reinforced north of Rawka from the 37th Infantry Division. The situation on the rest of the front had not changed anywhere from January 1 to 6. The accumulation of stronger enemy forces at Nowe-Miasto seemed to be confirmed. After a Russian radio message intercepted on January 5, it was assumed that it was the newly established XIII Corps or a division of this corps. The newly arrived Russian XVI Corps entrenched west of Orzyszwoł; it did not seem to want to attack.

On January 6, General v. Linsingen reported on the situation with his group that the attack over the Mogily—Dachowo line could not be attributed to the prospect of decisive success under the circumstances, because the enemy would repeatedly find new sections east of Wislitki, behind the Pilica, and further east, which would favor the defender during the short foggy winter days.

---

1) P. 6/7 and 75/76.

## Contributions to the Southern Army.

considerably greater prospects than the attacker. General v. Linsingen therefore suggested holding the gained front with the weakest possible forces and relocating the freed parts "to a more operationally effective area."

The Scholz group essentially faced the same conditions.

General v. Linsingen's view on the situation at the 9th Army coincided with that of the Supreme Commander East<sup>1</sup>).

As it was now a matter of transferring forces to the allies in the Carpathians<sup>2</sup>), they were taken from the 9th Army. Thus, the continuation of a decisive offensive by the 9th Army was deliberately abandoned, but it was to prevent the enemy facing it from moving troops to Galicia through attacks.

On January 6, 2½ infantry and one cavalry division had to be transferred to the Austro-Hungarian front: General commands of the II Army Corps and the XXIV Reserve Corps, 1st Infantry Division, ½ 3rd Guard Infantry Division<sup>3</sup>), 48th Reserve and 5th Cavalry Division.

A report requested by the Army High Command on the losses of the infantry of all subordinate corps in the days from January 1 to 10 showed a total of over 7000 men. The I Reserve Corps suffered the most in the attack battles at Mogilydi — a total of 2238 —, followed by the Fabeck Corps with 1869 men. This corps suffered the most losses at the bridgehead at Kozlow Biskup, which was therefore abandoned on the order of the Beseler group on the night of January 15 to 16.

From January 10, combat activity was generally limited to the sections at Rawa and Bolimow—Borzymow. The assault of the 4th Infantry Division on the Russian position south of Borzymow on January 16 failed with considerable losses. The main reason for this failure was seen in the too narrow attack front, which allowed the enemy to flank the attack from both sides. In view of the other unsuccessful individual operations, the Supreme Commander East requested on January 19 that the Army High Command "not leave the course of operations too much to the agreements between the army corps, but rather regulate it more through orders and, if necessary, through personal intervention"<sup>4)</sup>.

---

1) G. 76 f. and 154 f.—2) G. 76/77 and 83 f.

3) The ½ 3rd Guard Infantry Division was reinforced by the allocation of the Grenadier Regiment 9 from the 8th Army to three regiments.

4) Wording according to the war diary of the Supreme Commander East.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

Diversionary Attacks of the 9th Army at Bolimow — Borzymow January 19 to February 5.

The Army High Command then decided to repeat the attack on a broader front. Therefore, on January 19, it ordered a "decisive attack" to be undertaken by the reinforced I Reserve Corps and the XVII Army Corps against the Russian positions at Mogily—Wola Szydlow—Humlin for the end of January. The exact timing and leadership of the operation were reserved by the army command. The two corps were to continue preparing for the attack in their current sectors by all means until then.

The front of the 9th Army now comprised the following sections:

Group Frommel held with Corps Posen, Division Menges, 1st Guard Reserve Division,  $\frac{1}{2}$  3rd Infantry Division<sup>1)</sup> and Cavalry Corps Richthofen the Pilica and the northern adjoining section;

Group Scholtz was to continue its offensive east of Rawa with the XI and XX Army Corps;

XXV Reserve Corps (without the 49th Reserve Division, but with the attached 8th Cavalry Division) was to establish a stubborn defense in its section east of Skierniwice.

Following were:

I Reserve Corps with attached 49th Reserve and  $\frac{1}{2}$  3rd Guard Infantry Division;

XVII Army Corps with attached 4th Infantry Division;

Group Beseler (Corps Fabek, 4th Cavalry Division, III Reserve Corps, Westernhagen Detachment and the reinforced 21st Landwehr Brigade) was to relieve the XVII Army Corps as much as possible during its attack, to hold the enemy forces at the Bzura, and to protect the left army flank at the Vistula.

No significant changes were observed in front of the army front. However, north of the Vistula, it developed active operations. Also, more and more reports came in these days that strong troop concentrations of the Russians were being assembled between the lower Narew and the southern border of East Prussia. This increased the concern for the Vistula flank of the 9th Army and the only weakly protected southern border of East Prussia. The reserves available were

---

1) The 5th Infantry Brigade (six battalions) with II./F.A.R. 2 had already been transferred to East Prussia on December 15, 1914.

## Preparations for the Attack.

Army High Command 9 did not. Therefore, it initially withdrew the 1st Guard Reserve Division of the Frommel Group. On January 20, the Commander-in-Chief East informed Army High Command 9 of the planned offensive in East Prussia and the intention to deploy parts of the 9th Army there. The planned attack against the Russian position west of Sucha was in line with the intentions of the Commander-in-Chief East, who wanted to distract the enemy from the front in East Prussia and connect them, moving troops ahead of the 9th Army. In consideration of the offensive in East Prussia, the timing of the 9th Army's attack was postponed. On January 24, the Commander-in-Chief East ordered the deployment of another corps to protect the southern border of East Prussia. For this, Army High Command 9 designated the XX Army Corps; its transport was expected in the first days of February. Under these circumstances, Army High Command had to forgo any serious attacks in the Rawka area. On January 27, the Commander-in-Chief East requested another corps. From the Guard Reserve Corps, which was designated for this, the ½ 3rd Guard Infantry Division (5th Guard Infantry Brigade) had to be transferred to the 8th Army by January 30. The attack preparations at the I Reserve Corps and XVII Army Corps had progressed so far that Army High Command 9 set January 29 as the attack date, which was postponed to January 31 at the request of the XVII Army Corps "in consideration of success and to avoid unnecessary losses." General v. Pannewitz, the commanding general of the XVII Army Corps, considered the capture of Borzymow necessary even before the main attack. However, an operation initiated for this purpose by the 36th Infantry Division on January 28 did not achieve its goal. The enemy had, as balloon observation showed, brought in considerable reinforcements. In general, the frequent operations at Borzymow had attracted his attention. Weakened by heavy losses, the 36th Infantry Division was not allowed before the main attack. Whether this would occur unexpectedly at Russin had to appear at least questionable based on all previous observations. According to the attack directive of the Army High Command from January 27, the three corps, I Reserve, XVII Army Corps, and Corps Fabek, were to break through the enemy position and then push beyond Sucha. The reserves, 1st Guard Reserve Division and 74th Infantry Brigade of the XX Army Corps, were released for the attack by the Commander-in-Chief East but were soon to be transferred to East Prussia.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

The artillery preparation included 18,000 gas shells available.

In clear frost weather, the attack took place on January 31. After almost three hours of artillery preparation by about 100 batteries, including about 40 heavy ones, the infantry advanced over snow-covered ground. The main focus of the attack was at Wola Szydłowo-Borzymow. Consequently, the divisions deployed there, the 49th and 1st Reserve, and again the 4th and 36th Infantry Division, bore the brunt of the battle. In the first attempt, the foremost enemy trenches were taken, but they were partially lost again due to counterattacks after close combat. After the limited successes of the first day, the attack stalled completely in the following days against the reserves brought in by the Russians, especially since the higher command had to emphasize the most economical use of ammunition. The capture of the estate of Wola Szydłowiec was the only gain. On the third day of battle, Sumlin was taken and held by the 4th Infantry Division. On February 3 and 4, the Russians responded to the attacks, especially those of the Morgen Corps, with strong counterattacks; they were bloodily repelled, but the own infantry could not make any significant progress. It was found that the enemy had newly deployed the 3rd and 6th Siberian Division, the 25th Infantry, 59th Reserve, and 13th Siberian Rifle Division. The Russian artillery had also been reinforced. In view of this situation, the attack was halted by the German side on February 5.

The terrain gain allowed under heavy losses was small and tactically insignificant. The fact that the attack did not surprise the Russians had a detrimental effect. Informed in time by prisoner statements, agents, and aerial reconnaissance, the Russian command had enough time due to the twice-postponed attack to prepare for the defense. Moreover, the enemy had apparently only weakly manned or even completely vacated the foremost trenches and awaited the attacker in densely manned rear trenches. That cold and snow did not negate the effect of the gas was not known at the time; thus, it is understandable that the attack did not succeed from the start despite the use of what was then considered an "unusually strong artillery mass." Another reason was the considerable numerical superiority on the enemy side. Also, the attacks at Bolimow had indeed caused a significant disruption to the Russian transport from West Poland to the Narew.

### The Battles at Bolimow—Borzymow.

In total, eleven Russian divisions were thrown into battle in the section only 10 km wide. The loss of 7000 prisoners may not have weighed as heavily on the enemy as the bloody sacrifices in the repeated, densely massed counterattacks, which were extraordinarily high even by Russian standards; eight divisions alone lost a total of 40,000 men in the first three days of fighting; ten regiments, as reported by the Russian sector commander, ceased to exist; his proposal to withdraw the front here was rejected. Operationally, the vigorous German advance at the Rawka and the binding of strong Russian reserves at the attack front achieved a gain that had to benefit the upcoming battles in East Prussia.

Apart from the combat situation at the Rawka itself, it was also the withdrawal of troops that forced Army Command 9 to halt the attacks. In total, there were six infantry and two cavalry divisions that the 9th Army had released for use on other battlefields from January 1 to early February. In return, it was only reinforced with the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Cavalry Division from the Bugnyik Army, which was used to strengthen the Vistula defense.

After this weakening and the protracted, costly battles that led to the complete exhaustion of the deployed troops, the 9th Army could initially not be expected to undertake any far-reaching offensive operations. Therefore, on February 5, the Commander-in-Chief East ordered it to hold the Russian forces standing before the army front and to reinforce the captured positions as sustainably as possible, since "the possibility of withdrawing even more forces from the 9th Army had to be reckoned with" and "the positions once gained must not be given up under any circumstances." Furthermore, the army was to prevent any enemy crossing of the Vistula on the Wyszogrod—Mloclawek stretch and to bind the attention of the enemy troops north of the river through active operations on the southern bank.

Limited combat activity by the 9th Army from February 6 to 27.

In the further course of the month of February, no major combat operations took place. East of Bolimow, the fighting soon subsided.

---

1) p. 262. — 2) p. 170.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

The army leadership aimed to withdraw additional forces, preferably three divisions, as reserves from the front. The high command intended to prepare for the transport of another corps to East Prussia, which it anticipated based on the overall situation, although corresponding orders from the supreme commander East had not yet been received.

On February 10, the high command ordered the withdrawal of the troops of the II Army Corps ( $\frac{1}{2}$  3rd and 4th Infantry Division) and the entire I Reserve Corps. The parts of the army remaining at the front were instructed to defend the currently held positions with utmost determination. Their expansion was promoted with special emphasis, and the obstacles in front of the front were reinforced. To hold the enemy, the high command recommended smaller infantry attacks, which could not be sufficiently supported by artillery, as extreme frugality in the use of heavy artillery ammunition was required. The high command did not expect a Russian offensive "on a large scale" at the time, as stated in an assessment of the situation on February 12. The idea of becoming offensive again was not abandoned despite the heavy losses, only postponed to "slowly conserve ammunition," and also to "give the extraordinarily weakened 4th Infantry Division an opportunity for some recovery." On February 15, the high command faced the enemy at the army border with a strength of 30 infantry and five cavalry divisions. On the German side, after the transport of the I Reserve Corps and a cavalry division, there were still  $15\frac{1}{2}$  infantry and three cavalry divisions. It was certain that the transport of the Russian II and XIX as well as the XXIII Corps had already taken place.

In view of the progress of operations in East Prussia and on the northern Vistula bank, where the Dickhuth Corps reached the Ploß-Bielsk line on February 15, the army high command deemed it necessary in mid-February to resume attacks to tie down the opposing enemy forces and requested the supreme commander East for the allocation of heavy artillery ammunition. However, the next day it received the response that the 9th Army was to cease its offensive and withdraw as many forces as possible from the front, as the transport of the 4th Infantry Division to the Carpathians was expected soon. More ammunition was not to be expected.

But the enemy also withdrew additional forces. The army command temporarily had the impression that it intended to,

## Continued Tasks of the 9th Army.

to retreat to his rear positions. In any case, he moved his 1st Army entirely to the right bank of the Vistula. This was associated with a considerable weakening of the left wing of the 9th Army. Around February 19, the withdrawal of the Russian V and I Corps from the Rawka front became known.

In view of the continuous weakening of the enemy on this front, the Commander-in-Chief East was able to withdraw another 2½ infantry divisions and one cavalry division from the 9th Army unnoticed from mid to late February. The calm at the front was only interrupted on February 22 by stronger Russian attacks in the sector of the XXV Reserve Corps on the right bank of the Rawka. While weaker attacks south of Wola-Szydłowo were unsuccessful, the Russians managed a breakthrough at Mogilë on the 24th in greater breadth. However, a breakthrough was thwarted in heavy, nocturnal fighting with the use of reserves; the involvement of their own artillery was limited due to a shortage of ammunition.

According to reports, the 9th Army comprised 10½ infantry and two cavalry divisions at the end of February, but only 13 infantry and two cavalry divisions remained. Opposing them, according to estimates by the army command, were 18 infantry and 1 to 2 cavalry divisions. This significant reduction in enemy forces led the high command to decide at the end of February to "undertake another breakthrough attempt."

### b) In West and East Prussia.

Maps 19 and 21 Volume VI as well as Maps 9 and 13 Volume VII.

At the front from the Vistula to Memel, after the temporary resurgence of fighting around Christmas, calm generally returned with the beginning of 1915, apart from some local violent reconnaissance operations. Only in three places, at Sierpc, Löbau, and Lasdehnen, did Russian attacks seem to pursue more far-reaching goals.

On January 1, 1915, the fortress of Thorn, with its combat resources, again came under the direct command of the Commander-in-Chief East. The troops located outside the fortress on the southern bank of the Vistula were to remain under the command of Army Command 9. The command of the security detachments of the fortress on the northern bank of the Vistula was taken over in the first half of February by the previous governor, Lieutenant General v. Dickhuth-Harrach, himself. Under his command were

---

1) 2/3 3rd, 4th Infantry Division, 11th Reserve, 21st Landwehr Brigade, 6th Cavalry Division. — 2) War Diary A. O. R. 9.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

now the troops of the fortress, eleven battalions, three squadrons, two field and seven heavy batteries, furthermore the 75th Infantry Brigade of the XX Army Corps stationed there at the beginning of February at Stempę, as well as parts of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Cavalry Division at Włocławek on the Vistula.

The troops of the fortress Graudenz (Corps Zastrow) with assigned formations stood around the turn of the year under the command of Lieutenant General Surén in the line Sierpc—Biezun—Radzanowo about 15 km south of Mława—Janowo, in front of the right wing in the area of Racionz the 2nd Cavalry Division under Major General Baron Thumb v. Neuburg. Within this section, the western wing from Sierpc to Radzanowo was held by the Landsturm. In the middle, the Corps Zastrow formed the core on both sides of the road Mława—Giechanow, while the left wing behind the Drzyc was formed by the Leib Hussar Brigade of the 2nd Cavalry Division. The Russians stood with combat contact directly opposite. Their operations were mainly directed against the weak western wing at Sierpc, Biezun, and Radzanowo. On January 3, the 2nd Cavalry Division was forced by a superior enemy advancing from four directions against Drotin—Racionz to retreat to the line of the Landsturm. On January 12, it had to withdraw from Sierpc and on February 5, despite reinforcements in Landsturm and Landwehr from the Corps Zastrow, closer to Rypin. In January and early February, the Corps Zastrow's combat activity was limited to mutual minor raids, violent reconnaissance, and insignificant artillery battles. The Corps was therefore able to send infantry to the threatened positions of the 2nd Cavalry Division. From February 4, with minor shifts in the following days:

Guard-3) and 8th Cavalry Brigade about 10 km south of Rypin, ½ 5th Cavalry Brigade at Biezun, ½ 5th Cavalry Brigade with Jäger Battalion 4 at Radzanowo, the bulk of the Corps Zastrow between Radzanowo and the Drzyc, the Leib Hussar Brigade at Drzyc.

Eight battalions of the Corps Zastrow were deployed as a reserve with the 2nd Cavalry Division, in addition to about 13 Landsturm battalions distributed across the entire front of the Graudenz section.

---

1) p. 167. — 2) Despite a change of leadership, this designation was retained. 3) Two squadrons each of the 2nd Guard Uhlan Regiment and the Leib Guard Hussar Regiments and three squadrons of the 3rd Hussar Regiment.

## Battles between Vistula and Orzyc. Situation at the 8th Army.

About four infantry and 4½ cavalry divisions of the enemy were identified in front of the line, along with border guards and militia. On February 5, the 2nd Cavalry Division and Corps Zastrow came under the command of General of Artillery v. Scholtz. On the same day, the Leibhusaren Brigade was relieved by parts of the 41st Infantry Division of the XX Army Corps and reached its division southeast of Rypin on February 8.

At Janowo, the command area of the 8th Army's High Command was established. Between Janowo and the Nieder-See, the Landsturm border guard of the Deputy General Command of the XX Army Corps secured with the 3rd Cavalry Brigade. It was generally successful in keeping German soil free from the enemy. The combat activity was more intense at the front from Lötzen; presumably, the Russians wanted to gain ground against the fortified field position, especially at the Paprovker Mountains. Another focal point of the fighting was further on the extreme northern flank of the 8th Army. Here, the calm at the 1st Cavalry Division in its position from Maulwischen to Trappönen (ten battalions, 35 squadrons, 50 guns) was only occasionally interrupted by insignificant, smaller operations in January. The larger Russian attacks that began at the start of the month only culminated on January 25, with the main focus south of Lötzen, where the enemy's 56th and 73rd Reserve Divisions, along with parts of the 27th Infantry Division, were completely engaged. The attacks continued on January 26 and 27 but subsided on the 28th, after the enemy failed to achieve any success other than the expulsion of weak German outposts.

At Tilsit, the troop command Tilsit under Colonel Hoffmann<sup>1)</sup> had been in place since the end of 1914, consisting only of nine Landsturm companies with auxiliary weapons. It secured from the Seztruppen mouth to Tilsit up to the Memel delta west of Tilsit. Rail and road crossings over the Memel lowlands near Tilsit were in German hands; similarly, weak security was maintained on the railway from Tilsit to the northwest. South of the city, the security was continuous on the southern bank. Additionally, three Landsturm companies remained in the northern mouth area of the Memel. The Memel was firmly frozen and could also support artillery. North of the river, directly opposite the German security, stood Russians of the 68th Reserve Division, militia, and border guards. A stronger enemy detachment was positioned opposite the Tilsit bridgehead at Pitupönen.

---

<sup>1)</sup> See pages 173 and 184.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

By order of the Commander-in-Chief East, a brigade was relocated to Tilsit on February 8, which was formed in Königsberg from replacement troop parts of the I Army Corps and placed under the command of Major General Freiherr von Esebeck.

### 3. The Winter Battle in Masuria.

#### a) Preparations, Deployment, and Setup of the Battle.

Maps 9, 11, and 12.

General von Falkenhayn had refrained from issuing directives for the new operation in East Prussia and did not even consider General von Conrad's idea of advancing over Mlava against the lower Narew. In the headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief East, the objective from the beginning was clearly the destruction of the Russian 10th Army. As this plan took firmer shape, preparations were made more purposefully, in which Lieutenant General Ludendorff was involved again from January 24 after his return from the Southern Army.

In the staff of the Commander-in-Chief East, the idea was temporarily considered not to form two armies for the planned offensive, but to place the newly transferred corps alongside the 8th Army directly under the Commander-in-Chief East. It was believed that this would allow for a more sustainable influence on the course of the battle and avoid frictions that might arise from the insertion of a new army command. However, this structure would have meant a significant burden on the Commander-in-Chief East and likely tied his strength in a way that would not have been advantageous for overall leadership. On the other hand, the experiences from Lodz were also daunting; the division into two armies made leadership more flexible. After a new army command was transferred by the supreme army command, Field Marshal von Hindenburg granted his army leaders the greatest freedom of movement within the framework of the given orders. On January 28, the Commander-in-Chief East laid down the foundations for the setup of the battle in his "Instructions for the 10th Army. "I intend," it said, "to deploy the 10th Army with its left wing towards Tilsit—Wylkowyszki to envelop the northern enemy wing, to engage the enemy with the Königsberg Landwehr Division of the 10th Army and the left wing of the

## Operational Plan of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief.

To engage the 8th Army in frontal combat and to have the right wing of the 8th Army attack Arys-Johannisburg and southwards. The protection against the enemy north of the Njemen is assigned to the 10th Army. The crossing point at Surborg is to be occupied. The 10th Army is also to secure itself strongly during the operation against Kowno. For this, the reinforced brigade of the Guard Reserve Corps is to be used and the Königsberg Landwehr Division is to be freed later. The introduction of further parts of the Guard Reserve Corps towards Insterburg for protection against Kowno is intended. To secure the 8th Army against the south, the XX Army Corps will be used at Willenberg-Neidenburg. The Eastern Commander-in-Chief does not hold back reserves. He intended to later rely on the forces that would be freed in the front by pressing the wings towards the center.

On January 29, the Eastern Commander-in-Chief issued the "Instructions to the 8th and 10th Armies for the War Organization". It determined that the Königsberg Landwehr Division, the reinforced 1st Cavalry Division, and the Litfft Troop Command were to transfer from the 8th to the 10th Army. All previously assigned units were withdrawn from the two divisions. In particular, the 1st Cavalry Division had to give up temporarily assigned troops of 8½ infantry battalions, three light, three heavy batteries, and the 10th Horse Jäger Regiment. In return, on February 1, the 5th Guard Infantry Brigade (six battalions, three light and two heavy batteries)<sup>1)</sup> from the 9th Army joined the 1st Cavalry Division. The entire Landsturm was to remain behind during the advance, with part following later as a staff troop, the rest occupying the field position Lößen. Furthermore, the newly transferred heavy artillery, four 10 cm batteries, four 21 cm mortar battalions, two Austro-Hungarian mortar (30.5 cm) batteries, were distributed along the army front. At the request of the 8th Army Command, the Landwehr and Reserve Brigades were consolidated into divisions.

On January 31, General v. Falkenhayn requested from the Eastern Commander-in-Chief "a statement of his operational intentions in general for the near future and an opinion on whether he also considered the long-standing hints in the enemy press of a major Russian offensive in East Prussia and the recent Russian attacks there as deception maneuvers". On the evening of the same day, the Eastern Commander-in-Chief shared his operational intentions in broad outlines with the Chief of the General Staff and added: "To a

---

1) p. 165.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

I do not believe in a Russian attack in East Prussia. However, stronger Russian operations across the Vistula in the Plock area are possible if the river freezes. Defensive measures taken." This view of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief about the enemy could not be maintained a few days later, when an intercepted Russian radio message on February 4 confirmed that a new, the 12th Army, was being formed in the Vistula-Narew area north of Nowogrodek, which was to comprise at least six corps and 6½ cavalry divisions. The Eastern Commander-in-Chief considered an attack by this army in a northerly direction more likely than its advance westward across the Vistula. The grouping of Russian forces accounted for both attack possibilities. This must reflect the significance of the events on the East Prussian southern front. A prerequisite for the success of the planned major offensive action in East Prussia was the feigned attack carried out here, the duration of which was, however, the weak border defense, whose backbone was formed by the 2nd Cavalry Division and the Zafrow Corps, in its wide deployment notwithstanding the Russian pressure. Units from the 9th Army were brought in around the turn of the month. The front of this army became a secondary theater of war. But before the reinforcements from West Poland could be deployed east of the Vistula, considerable time had to pass. Meanwhile, new Russian divisions were constantly being identified on the front north of the Narew, and all reports, especially the intercepted radio messages, pointed to the concentration of significant forces on this front, so that the Eastern Commander-in-Chief had already had to order the detachment of the XX Army Corps from the 9th Army on January 28, which was to be assembled for the protection of the 8th Army against the south at Willenberg-Neidenburg. But as early as February 2, the foremost transports, the 75th Infantry Brigade, had to be unloaded at Gollub and deployed at Stempke<sup>1</sup>). After the attacks of the 9th Army at Bolimowo-Borzynow subsided, the Eastern Commander-in-Chief was determined to withdraw further units from the 9th Army. Nevertheless, the front should be sharpened before a front.

In view of this alarming development of the situation on the southern Prussian southern front, all troops east of the Vistula up to Pisa were placed under the unified command of General of Artillery v. Gallwitz on February 9, whose general command had been detached from the Borsigow Army since February 7<sup>2</sup>). His mission was: Covering the offensive of the German 8th and 10th Army against the Russian 12th Army

---

<sup>1)</sup> See p. 165 and 170. — <sup>2)</sup> C. 133 and 248. The troops of the corps were distributed across the various theaters of war.

## Structure of the Assault Armies.

north of Warsaw and unconditional protection of West Prussia. The order was to be publicly resolved after the completed deployment of the army group – 1st Guard Reserve Division and XX Army Corps were still in transit. Thus, for the time being, the security of the connections from East Prussia across the Vistula and the flank protection of the 8th Army seemed to be ensured.

Another concern of the Commander-in-Chief East was the reorganization of the 8th Army. The previous organization might have sufficed for the positional battles, where active and reserve troops, Landwehr, Landsturm, and replacements, were only occasionally grouped from the smallest units and equipped with auxiliary formations, fighting side by side. However, for the impending attack and subsequent mobile warfare, a strict organization had to be established. Troops hastily withdrawn from positions, barely mobile, had to be equipped for use in the open field, numerous detached small units had to be reintegrated into their higher formations according to military organization, and makeshift new formations had to be dissolved again.

It was a serious decision to place the fate of the impending operation primarily on the shoulders of the new corps, which had been welded together under the most difficult conditions in a few weeks. At the beginning of December, the young recruits had been enlisted, and by the end of the month, the general commands had convened. At the beginning of January, the divisions were in full training at the troop training grounds; this was carried out under considerable friction, mainly due to the limited available time and the scarcity of war materials. Not all gaps could be closed in the short training period. A compensation for deficiencies, which always adhere to young new formations, was created by using the experiences made with the new formations of the past autumn, by assigning a strong core of seasoned men, 300 men per battalion, to the troops. Thus, the young corps consisted at least one-third of war-experienced replacements. The intended number of eleven active officers for each battalion was not reached everywhere, but in both lower and higher leadership positions, only men who were already familiar with the war were present.

---

1) More details will be provided in the forthcoming Volume II "War Armament and War Economy".

## The Winter Battle of Majur.

The new divisions had only three infantry regiments, which could be subordinated to a general as "infantry leader" in combat. There were twelve batteries of field artillery, but only four guns each, assigned to the division. Additionally, the corps had a battalion of heavy field howitzers and ample other heavy artillery assigned; an air squadron was promised to them. The staff of Army High Command 10 assembled under Generaloberst v. Eichhorn on January 28 in Cologne. Colonel Hell was appointed as Chief of the General Staff.

The orders of the Supreme Commander East anticipated the start of operations on February 6 or 7 and determined that the newly arriving units should be used at the front in the utmost emergency by then.

The deployment of the 10th Army proceeded as planned. By February 6, the three corps of the 10th Army arrived and were stationed on both sides of the Inster between Insterburg and the Memel, namely: the XXXVIII Reserve Corps north of the Eichwald Forest, to the left the XXXIX Reserve Corps west of the XXI Army Corps south of Tilsit-Ragnit-Trappönen. By February 8, the troops advanced so far forward that all six divisions could begin the advance from the line Gr. Pillkallen (6 km southeast of Stallupönen) - Rautenberg - Gallwoszen (on the Sziesuppe). On February 3, Generaloberst v. Eichhorn had arrived in Insterburg with his staff and took command the next day. Just in these days, the situation on the northern flank took a serious turn: on February 3, Russian attacks began against the front of the 1st Cavalry Division during heavy snowstorms.

Although the Supreme Commander East wanted to limit the use of the newly arrived troops to the utmost emergency, Army High Command 10 deployed an infantry regiment of the XXI Army Corps with the 1st Cavalry Division to prevent a threat to the deployment by yielding the front. As the Russian attacks ceased on February 6, the danger of disrupting the deployment was overcome, but it remained uncertain whether these enemy advances were due to reports about the deployment of the 10th Army.

During the deployment of the 10th Army, General of Infantry Otto v. Below led the ordered reorganization of his 8th Army.

---

1) Cf. "The German Field Railway System", Volume I, p. 181 f. — 2) p. 171.

## Deployment of the 10th Army.

Units moved through, so that by the evening of the 6th they were ready for attack in their previous positions, with the 10th Landwehr Division under Lieutenant General Clausius on the left flank, followed by the 3rd Reserve Division on both sides of Darkehmen, the 1st Landwehr Division under General of Infantry v. Jacobi up to the Genetke; in the field position Lötzen the 11th Landwehr Division, the Fusilier Regiment 33 of the 2nd Infantry Division as well as Landsturm. The command over the occupation of the field position Lötzen was led by Lieutenant General Kosch over the general commands of the I Army Corps. The 2nd Infantry Division (without Fusilier Regiment 33) marched on February 6 into the area north of Rudczanny, where it joined the XXXX Reserve Corps on the 7th. By the morning of February 6, this had taken quarters east of Ortelsburg. Its commanding general, General of Infantry Riemann, was given command of the right wing of the 8th Army advancing south of the Spirding Lake (2nd Infantry Division, XXXX Reserve Corps, and 3rd Cavalry Brigade). These troops positioned themselves on February 6 behind the Nieder Lake and the Belbahn Lake ready to advance. Further southwest, the border guard of the Corps v. Scholz joined.

The reports about the enemy from the 8th Army, which the planned strike was to hit, were favorable insofar as the Russian 10th Army standing here was weakened by the transfer of the 25th Infantry Division, the XXII (southern Russian) Corps, and the 1st Independent Cavalry Brigade. In total, about 52 infantry and 14 cavalry divisions could stand in front of the front of the Commander-in-Chief East from the Pilica to the Baltic Sea, of which about 35 infantry and 3½ cavalry divisions were west of the Vistula opposite the 9th Army. General Field Marshal v. Hindenburg could only oppose them with a total of 37½ infantry divisions, including many Landwehr, and replacement formations, and 7½ cavalry divisions. Of these, he had assembled 15½ infantry divisions and two cavalry divisions for the strike against the Russian 10th Army, which stood with eleven infantry and 2½ cavalry divisions between the Pißtel and the Baltic Sea.

The Commander-in-Chief East had arrived with his staff in Insterburg on the evening of February 4. Here he gave orders the next day, as the deployment approached completion and serious frictions were no longer

---

1) Strength of the German 8th and 10th Armies: 180½ battalions, 98½ squadrons, 154 light and 48½ heavy batteries. In contrast, on the Russian side: 192 battalions (the division with 16 battalions!!), 95 squadrons, 77 light and 22 heavy batteries (Ramenstift, p. 170—172). Additionally, 78 siege guns in front of Lötzen (p. 262).

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

were expected, following his previous instructions with the following order: "8th and 10th Army attack, and initially proceed as follows: 8th Army on February 7 with its right wing over the line Kurwien—Rudczanny to Kolno—Johannisburg; 10th Army on February 8 with XXXIX, XXXVIII, and XXI Army Corps over the line of the reinforced 1st Cavalry Division, with the right wing approximately on Kussen, with the left wing widely encompassing or north of the Memel." Thus, the armies were given their next goals and tasks, and all forces were fully deployed, except for a reserve of some heavy batteries, whose use could only be considered later during the attack on fortified positions. The idea of a double envelopment was clearly expressed. For the southern attack wing, the broad, marshy Bobr lowland with the fortress Osowiec formed a barrier that set a limit to the outflanking movement. In the north, the Njemen (Memel) was initially expected to have a similar significance. The 10th Army was left to decide whether it wanted to cross the river. In view of the poor road conditions, it decided to keep its outermost wing south of the river. The envelopment groups could not be staggered sideways from the outset but had to first break the resistance of the opposing enemy front from their assembly behind the wings of the previous 8th Army, and only then break into the flanks. Therefore, the envelopment columns faced long marches, which had to be carried out in sequence and also independently of time, as the weather conditions threatened to cause the greatest difficulties. A winter campaign was imminent, in which weather influences could place unforeseen obstacles in the way of the operation.

For several days, there had been a fierce snowstorm. Roads and railways were drifted over, making progress outside the paths almost impossible for the individual man. On the roads, thick, hard-to-cross snow masses alternated with mirror-smooth, ice-covered surfaces that denied any hold to man and beast. Although snowplows and work teams were carefully prepared to overcome the marching difficulties, light sleds were brought in to transport supplies and ammunition from the rear area, and sled runners were available to secure under the wheels of vehicles. Whether all this would suffice in the current weather conditions was quite questionable. Serious concern was caused by the lack of communication connections. It was doubtful whether the telephone and telegraph lines would withstand such weather. With some certainty, one could only rely on radio communication.

### Difficulties of the Upcoming Battle.

and even there, axle breaks of the radio vehicles were already to be lamented.

In addition, preparations were made to counter potential difficulties through couriers and relay posts. The Commander-in-Chief East was fully aware of these difficulties. The plan could only succeed if every man gave his utmost strength. With strong hearts and trusting in the often-proven spirit of sacrifice of the troops, Field Marshal v. Hindenburg undertook the risk of leading the divisions against the enemy in icy frost and snowstorms. The outcome of the first two days had to be awaited with great tension. Their course was decisive for the outcome of the operation.

#### h) The Battles of the 8th Army around the Pißtef Section on February 7 and 8, 1915.

##### Maps 9 and 12.

The headquarters of the 8th Army Command had been located in Sensburg since February 3. Here, the army leader, General of Infantry Otto v. Below, issued the army order for the attack and a special "directive" for General Rißmann, the leader of the southern wing positioned at Lake Spirding. His advance against the Pißtef section held by the enemy was to be regulated so that the tips of the columns reached it as simultaneously as possible. After forcing the crossing, the northernmost, the 2nd Infantry Division, was to turn sharply right, advance on Arys, and with the main forces encircle the Roß Lake, the XXXX Reserve Corps was to proceed more northeast over Bialla to Drygallen and thus encircle the enemy. The army command already pointed out the early blocking of the important road junction

Lyck, possibly by sending forward the 3rd Cavalry Brigade, as well as the interruption of the railways leading from Ostrowe and Grodno. It placed no value on an attack against the reinforced enemy position south of the border at Kolno. Rather, the army leadership wanted to wait here and manage with as few forces as possible. The troops initially designated for the attack (1st, 10th, 11th Landwehr, and 3rd Reserve Division) were not to change their behavior towards the enemy. The army command intended, from February 7 onwards, to gradually move parts of the 1st Landwehr and the 3rd Reserve Division, which would become dispensable in the army center as the attack progressed, by rail behind the right army wing.

The secrecy of the deployment of the Rißmann attack group in and behind Johannisburg was pursued with all means.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

The heath was significantly eased by the wide forest, traversed by a chain of lakes, whose accesses were blocked by border defenses reinforced with wire obstacles and blockhouses. Russian aerial reconnaissance was nowhere to be seen; it was hoped that the advance of the right wing of the 8th Army on February 7 would surprise the enemy. General Litzmann's attack order positioned the 79th Reserve Division in two columns along the border towards Gehlen (on the Piss River), the 80th Reserve Division north of it in a column over Prytzdorf towards Brobeln and Kallenzinnen, and the 2nd Infantry Division over Rudzanny for a flanking attack on Johannisburg. The 79th Reserve Division was tasked with securing the right flank against Kolno, and the 2nd Infantry Division with blocking the Johannisburg—Arys road to protect the northern flank. The 3rd Cavalry Brigade was initially held back until a crossing over the Piss River was opened for them. The Landsturm border guard was instructed to advance southeast to Demby (on the Szkwa)—Leman in line with the progress of the attack. General Litzmann's intention to reach the Piss River section, where he expected the first sustained resistance, simultaneously with his three divisions was challenged by snowdrifts. The marching columns advanced very slowly on poor forest paths. Vehicles got stuck in the snow or slid into ditches. The roads were snowed over, and orders were only carried out with difficulty. Rapid transmission of orders and timely supply of ammunition and provisions were impossible. The continuous snowfall made the prospects appear increasingly unfavorable. The efforts and hardships of the troops had to increase day by day. Especially the columns of the 79th and 80th Reserve Divisions marching farthest south along the border suffered from this adversity from the start. Only in the afternoon of February 7 did they reach the Piss River section and engage with the enemy, who had destroyed all crossings and held the east bank. The fear that he might have withdrawn to escape the recognized danger was unfounded.

Only in the center with the 80th Reserve Division was it possible on February 7 to gain a foothold on the other bank and occupy the village of Brobeln. After a night bridge strike, Major General Bockmann was able to have his division cross the next day at 8 in the morning. South of there, Major General Boës encountered serious resistance with the 79th Reserve Division at Gehlen. However, some troops managed to crawl over the unoccupied ice cover,

### Corps Litzmann Forced the Crossing over the Piss River.

To establish on the east bank. By noon on February 8, the division was able to gain ground south of Gehlen on the east bank. With the village itself, 500 prisoners and five guns fell into their hands. Meanwhile, the left column of the division had already begun building a bridge north of Gehlen in the morning; by noon, the advancing infantry turned southeast and occupied the heights east of the village. A weak advance by the enemy from Kolno was repelled.

Meanwhile, Johannisburg had also fallen. Here, on February 7, Lieutenant General v. Falk, advancing with the 2nd Infantry Division in numerous columns, was only able to break enemy resistance in the average, extremely favorable terrain for defense on the Rudczanny-Johannisburg road about 3 km west of the town; the remaining columns were stuck in front of Russian positions in hard-to-oversee sections. Only the deployment of heavy artillery early on February 8 paved the way for the infantry into the Russian main position. At noon, the infantry attack began. After three hours, the position defended by two Russian regiments was taken; 2600 prisoners and eight guns were the division's spoils. Johannisburg was occupied without a fight, a security was pushed to the road to Arys. The Piss River section was now firmly in the hands of the XXXX Reserve Corps. The total booty amounted to 3800 prisoners, mostly from the Russian 57th Reserve Division, and 13 guns.

Relentlessly, General Litzmann pushed forward. By 10:30 a.m., he had set Bialla as the target for the XXXX Reserve Corps. The 79th Reserve Division could only resume at 6:00 p.m.; a weak security remained south of Gehlen against Kolno. Laboriously, the division worked its way forward through snow and storm. At night, it set up a local bivouac at Kumilsko. The 80th Reserve Division had already marched on by 2 p.m., had to break enemy resistance along the way, and reached the plundered and partially destroyed town of Bialla shortly after midnight following the enemy's withdrawal. A side column heading north managed to reach the Johannisburg-Bialla road during the night with great difficulty, but it was not possible to intercept the enemy thrown out of Johannisburg.

The 3rd Cavalry Brigade had followed the infantry on February 7. It was tasked with advancing via Brobeln to occupy the road junction at Lyck. Since the bridge at Brobeln was only

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

after the 80th Reserve Division could cross, it advanced only a few kilometers beyond the section the following day.

During these difficult but successful battles of the assault wing on the first two days of the attack, the rest of the army front was ready to tackle the enemy as soon as he moved, or to stop him prematurely. The longer he remained calm, the more effective the planned encirclement operation had to be. On February 7, no changes in the enemy could be detected in front of the center and the northern wing of the 8th Army. Observation was severely hampered by snowstorms. Defectors and intercepted Russian radio messages confirmed, however, that no significant shifts had been made so far. If the enemy withdrew, an attempt should be made to pin him down with artillery fire and attack. For February 8, the army command ordered the opening of artillery fire along the entire front. The Russian batteries responded quite vigorously in part. Nothing indicated a weakening of the enemy forces. A radio message from the Russian 57th Reserve Division stated that, in view of the advance of the German 8th Army, the situation was threatening; no conclusions about the intentions of the Russian leadership could be drawn from this. The next day, too, the enemy was to be tied down as much as possible by artillery fire.

Of the reinforcements that the 8th Army Command brought up to the right wing, parts of the 5th Infantry Brigade<sup>1)</sup> arrived in Rudczanny on February 8 with considerable delay due to snow drifts<sup>2)</sup>. From the 3rd Reserve Division, the 6th Reserve Infantry Brigade<sup>3)</sup> was in transit. Furthermore, from February 9, the 4th Cavalry Division, made available by the Commander-in-Chief East, was to be unloaded at Ortelsburg.

### c) Advance and Swing of the 10th Army from February 8 to 10, 1915.

Map 11.

On February 5, the 10th Army Command in Insterburg received the attack order from the Commander-in-Chief East. The Russian advance against the 1st Cavalry Division<sup>4)</sup> had not changed the overall situation. In the open terrain between Pissa and Schorellen Forest, in front of the front of the 16th Landwehr Division and the XXXVIII Reserve Corps, sustained resistance was to be expected.

---

1) Previously "composite infantry brigade" (Grenadier Regiment 2 and mobile Ersatz Regiment Königsberg II) of the 1st Landwehr Division.

2) p. 179. — 3) p. 171.

## Considerations of the High Command of the 10th Army.

since the enemy there had at least one infantry division and numerous prepared positions. Cautious handling was required here to tie down the Russians while sparing one's own troops unnecessary casualties. The situation was different in the northern part of the attack area, where the enemy positions were significantly weaker and mainly cavalry was opposed. Here, faster progress of the attack movement could be expected, especially since the crossings over the lower Sziespuppe were already in German hands. It was important to quickly bring one's own superiority to bear. Surprise seemed assured, as the enemy's radio messages revealed complete security. In the interest of speed, however, it was necessary to forgo the otherwise desirable outflanking north of the Memel. The Russian 68th Reserve Division stationed there was less to be feared, as it was spread out over 60 kilometers; but an extensive movement across the Memel would have placed enormous marching demands on the flank columns in the swamp and forest terrain there and brought them too close to the fortress of Kowno, located 60 kilometers behind the border. Thus, it seemed advisable to stay on this side of the Memel to prevent the enemy from having the time and opportunity to "pull their head out of the noose in time." Even on the day of the attack, the Commander-in-Chief East warned "against too strong a strategic encirclement, the main thing is tactical victory." As the operation progressed, the relentless advance of the corps forming the main strike force in a southeasterly direction had to remain the guiding principle. For observation and defense against Kowno, the 16th Landwehr Division and the 5th Guard Infantry Brigade could be withdrawn once the Russians had begun to retreat.

The most dangerous enemy here also seemed to be the weather. Already, the snow drifts were so strong that the last unloaded transports could no longer reach their corps, which were moved forward on February 7 to continue the attack up to the line Gr. Pillkallen—western edge Torwirt north of Königshuld—Gallwoszen.

Since the assigned air units of the 10th Army had not yet arrived by air due to bad weather, it was necessary to rely on the results of reconnaissance flights by the 8th Army, which brought no change to the overall picture. The enemy maintained their old positions with snow cleared from the trenches.

On February 7, the army was ready and waiting behind the position of the 1st Cavalry Division for the order to attack.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

was issued by Army High Command 10 only at the last hour on the evening of February 7. While the 16th Landwehr Division (Königsberg), forming the southern wing of the army, initially had the task of binding the opposing forces, the three adjacent corps, the XXXVIII, with the XXXIX Reserve Corps to its left and the XXI Army Corps in the north, were to make a large right swing to the southeast against the 30-kilometer-wide line Stallupönen—Wyłkowiszki and thus against the main retreat route of the railway of the Russian northern wing. The right wing was to proceed southwest past Pillkallen, the left along the border over Wladyslawow. Too sharp an advance, especially by the XXXVIII Reserve Corps, was to be avoided on February 8 if the enemy did not retreat, to allow the encirclement to take full effect. On the other hand, the XXI Army Corps was tasked with "unstoppable advance." The 1st Cavalry Division, which was to assemble on the outer army wing on February 8, was subordinated to the XXI Army Corps. Extensive reconnaissance on the rear of the enemy army and on Kowno, as well as the early and sustained destruction of the railway Stallupönen—Kowno in the area of Pilwiszki, was demanded. The 5th Guard Infantry Brigade was to assemble at the disposal of the Army High Command in Lasdehnen; parts of the 1st Cavalry Division and the Tilsit Troop Command were to cover the necessary connections of the army in their previous positions. Army High Command 10 initially wanted to remain in Insterburg.

The advance of the first day took place under considerable friction and did not nearly achieve the result that the leadership had hoped for.

Against the 16th Landwehr Division, the Russians opened artillery fire at dawn. As the infantry of the northern wing developed against the enemy trenches, they found them strongly occupied; retrograde movements of the Russians were nowhere to be seen. The divisions of the XXXVIII Reserve Corps, under the command of General of Cavalry v. der Marwitz, advanced only slowly in a heavy snowstorm. Three kilometers per hour were peak performances for infantry and guns; field kitchens and baggage trains lagged behind. Only around 2 p.m. could the divisions

---

1) G. 171/173.

## The First Day of Attack.

To launch an attack against the enemy positioned between Rutschén and the Tilsit—Pillkallen railway and to enter the previous positions of the 1st Cavalry Division between 4 and 5 p.m., while the others had to maintain security over long stretches between the attack sections of the Infantry Division. The short winter day was coming to an end. Carrying out the attack was no longer feasible. In full combat readiness, the divisions rested close to the enemy.

The conditions were even more difficult for the XXXIX Reserve Corps. Here lay a large swampy forest area in front of the front, which had to be bypassed. The commanding general, General v. Lauenstein, ordered the 77th Reserve Division to initiate the attack from Löbegallen against the forest section of the Schoreller Forest protruding to the west, but to first obtain instructions from the general command in case of strong resistance. The 78th Reserve Division was to bypass the forest area northwards via Lasdehnen and gain space as quickly as possible in the direction of Schillehnen. By 10 a.m., it was already apparent that the set goals would not be reached anywhere near. The vanguard of the 77th Reserve Division, after barely a two-hour march, having covered only five kilometers, had to take a two-hour rest to close up the completely dispersed marching column. Only from 11 a.m. did Major General Broitzus deploy his division against the forest corner south of Löbegallen, but initially only sent patrols against the forest edges to make the encirclement of the 78th Reserve Division effective. This division faced even greater difficulties. As it had to swing far to the north, it was unavoidable that its advance led through the accommodation area of the left neighboring corps via Lasdehnen. However, the columns had not yet cleared the paths, which were therefore blocked. When the head of the column approached Lasdehnen at 2 p.m., a rest was necessary until 4 p.m. due to complete exhaustion and disintegration of the marching column, and an effective encirclement of the enemy held by the 77th Reserve Division at Löbegallen was no longer to be expected from the 78th Reserve Division for that day. General v. Lauenstein therefore sent Major General Broitzus the order to attack at Löbegallen. However, this came on February 8 due to the advanced time of day, which made an attack feasible. The 78th Reserve Division resumed at 5 p.m. and, after a short march along the marching road, with the foremost parts four kilometers south of Lasdehnen, went to rest.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

While the delay of the 78th Reserve Division was already concerning, the course of February 8th at the XXI Army Corps threatened to call the success of the entire offensive operation into question. General Fritz v. Below had ordered that at 6 a.m. the 42nd Infantry Division, stationed behind the 31st Infantry Division, should pass through Malszüten and continue marching uninterrupted to Schillehnen. The 31st Infantry Division was directed over Slowiki to Ruksine, thus on the north bank of the Sziesztuppe, and had to detach a battalion to block the Memel crossing from Turborg. Furthermore, the corps order stated: "Any resistance by the enemy is to be broken by attacking the flanks and rear, the march is to be continued relentlessly and by all means — adding snowplows to the vanguards, frequent relief of the leading companies, inserting infantry into the artillery marching column — to the designated marching objectives." Although this order was issued before the arrival of the written army order at 7 p.m., it only reached the divisions around midnight. Many troop units had not yet reached the quarters assigned to them for February 7th at that time. Particularly from the 42nd Infantry Division, which was now to position itself next to the 31st Infantry Division, very strong marching performances were demanded. For many units, the last night's rest before the start of the operation was completely lost.

The general command of the XXI Army Corps had left Szillen by sled at 4 a.m. to reach its command post three kilometers north of Lasdehnen on snow-covered roads, passing laboriously advancing columns. On the way, Lieutenant General v. Bredow, the leader of the 42nd Infantry Division, reported that the advance had started with a six-hour delay; it was therefore impossible to reach Schillehnen, at most one could still reach the Sziesztuppe. Around noon, General v. Berrer reported that the bulk of his 31st Infantry Division had halted and been organized west of Lubinehlen at 9 a.m., while the vanguard had reached the crossing of the Lubiner Forest at 11:30 a.m. Since neither the 42nd Infantry Division nor the 78th Reserve Division was yet present, General v. Berrer advised a waiting stance. However, this did not serve the overall operation. Pressed by the army high command, General v. Below ordered at 2:30 p.m. that the 31st Infantry Division continue as far as possible to Slowiki, while the 42nd Infantry Division should at least reach Szaganten. Shortly thereafter, a new telegram from the army high command again instructed the XXI Army Corps...

## Advance of the XXI Army Corps.

that the success of the entire operation depended on reaching its marching goals. The 42nd Infantry Division was then ordered to reach Weszkallen with as strong forces as possible and at least one battery, and to advance cavalry towards Schillehnen.

However, this division had been on the march since midnight and was in such a state of exhaustion when its vanguard arrived over the Szeszuppe northwest of Lasdehnen at 2:30 PM (instead of 6:00 AM) that a several-hour rest had to be taken. At 5:00 PM, a detachment formed from some companies, guns, and squadrons of the division under Major Breydin was set in motion over the Szeszuppe northeast of Lasdehnen towards Weszkallen, in the middle of the large forest. The detachment crossed the Szeszuppe at 9:00 PM and reached Weszkallen at 8:00 AM on February 9. Occupying Schillehnen was not possible. Towards evening, Lieutenant General v. Bredow moved his division with the beginnings to the north bank of the Szeszuppe north of Lasdehnen. By midnight, not all parts of the division were under cover. Enormous efforts were demanded here from a troop that had been continuously on the move since the early hours of February 8.

The situation was almost even less favorable for the 31st Infantry Division. It had attacked the enemy at Neu-Stardupönen and thrown them at 4 PM. After crossing the border, it found the terrain such that finding a path was impossible. There were no trees that could mark a road or carry a telephone wire. Orientation at night was completely out of the question. While the vanguard sent out security over the Sothja, the bulk of the division was still deep in the Dubiner Forest. To now overcome the Sothja section, whose impassability the vanguard had just learned, was completely impossible. Late in the evening, the division went to rest in the widely scattered farms between Szeszuppe and Niemen on both sides of the national border. In the area of Niemen, a side detachment reported at 10 PM that it was in combat with Russian cavalry south of Sudargen.

The evening report of the XXI Army Corps to the Army High Command mentioned, in addition to these events, that enemy forces were advancing north of the Memel on Schmallenkanten and that the corps intended to move forward on February 9 at 6:00 AM towards Wladislawow – secured on the left by the 1st Cavalry Division. However, shortly thereafter, the 1st Cavalry Division reported that

## The Winter Battle of Majur.

Only four squadrons from the previous combat front could have been withdrawn, two reconnaissance squadrons were to depart tonight, but the division as a whole would not be ready for deployment before February 10.

The Army High Command 10 had been able to keep informed of all events until the afternoon, as the troops had hardly crossed the previous security line of the 1st Cavalry Division and the telephone connections to the staffs were working flawlessly. One thing seemed certain: the enemy was not yet aware of the danger he was in. Reconnaissance had detected no retreating movements by the enemy until 4 p.m.; only a Russian radio message at 3 p.m., which became known in Insterburg at 5 p.m., indicated that the enemy was beginning to sense the start of a major battle. Under the given circumstances, withdrawing the 1st Cavalry Division was not yet conceivable, nor was concentrating the 5th Guards Infantry Brigade. It was foreseeable that only weak parts of both formations would be available on February 9.

The Army High Command did not need to issue new orders for February 9. The marching routes were distributed over days, and nowhere had the initial situation changed so decisively that intervention would have been necessary. The guiding thought remained: holding the enemy on the southern flank, gaining as much ground as possible on the northern flank.

The XXXVIII Reserve Corps used the night hours to work its way up to the enemy positions. At dawn, Russian positions were stormed; by 11 a.m., the enemy had been thrown back with a total loss of 1900 prisoners and four machine guns. Even laterally from the breach points, he only cleared his front line and tried to reposition further back, with Russians and about 5 km northwest of Pillkallen. On the instructions of the Army High Command, the commanding general, General of the Cavalry v. der Marwitz, who was originally inclined to clear the right division, ordered the general pursuit of Pillkallen in the afternoon. Russians, that the enemy cleared there, was occupied by the 75th Reserve Division. The 76th Reserve Division, advancing on both sides of the railway to Pillkallen under Lieutenant General Elstert, encountered only slight resistance. All prisoner statements confirmed that the enemy in front of the XXXVIII and XXXIX Reserve Corps was not stronger than a division.

## Minor Battles, but Great Efforts on the Second Day of Attack.

From the XXXIX Reserve Corps, the 77th Reserve Division under Major General Brüsíss advanced into the Schoreller Forest at 8:30 a.m. after two hours of artillery preparation, without encountering significant resistance. They followed the enemy, estimated at a regiment and two batteries, to the southern edge of the large forest area. Meanwhile, the 78th Reserve Division under Major General v. Müller had moved south along the railway towards Willuhnen after a light skirmish. The General Command urged faster progress; if the XXI Army Corps did not join, the march would have to be directed eastward. The division stayed on the heels of the enemy, repeatedly shelled by its rear artillery.

The two divisions of the XXI Army Corps were to advance on both sides of the Sejstuppe to reach Wladyslawow. The 42nd Infantry Division approached Schillehnen at 3:30 p.m. Weak enemy cavalry had retreated eastward. The advance of the 31st Infantry Division experienced significant delays at the Jothja section. The 30 m deep cut banks were so frozen that guns and vehicles had to be lowered individually on ropes. They could not keep pace with the infantry. Only by 11:00 a.m. had the vanguard overcome the Jothja section. Resistance from strong enemy cavalry with artillery was quickly broken at several points by an infantry regiment marching as a left flank cover. The division's lead reached Slowitzi around 3 p.m. Russian cavalry with weaker infantry and artillery withdrew southwest on both sides of the Sejstuppe. The blocking detachment at the Niemen was brought up by the division after driving off the enemy at Swargi and initially took over the rear cover of the division at the Jothja, to follow later.

The General Command had learned of the successes of the two adjacent corps on the right during the morning battles shortly before noon and passed the reports on to the divisions to encourage them in their particularly difficult fight against roads and weather; since the enemy had still installed heavy artillery in front of the 16th Landwehr Division, the advance of the army corps could show even more brilliant results. Both divisions absolutely had to reach Wladyslawow, all enemy detachments appearing west of their march route had to be dealt with, without the advance suffering. This order took four hours to reach the 31st Infantry Division, and the reports from the divisions to the General Command at Lasdehnen even took nine hours.

### The Winter Battle of Masuria.

The Army High Command had still had the impression in the morning hours that the enemy was holding their ground everywhere and only giving up terrain when forced. By 3 p.m., the line reached by the divisions could be described roughly through the locations of Rußsen—Schillehnen—Slowik. However, in the afternoon hours, reports accumulated suggesting general retreat movements of the enemy. It became known from a radio message of the Russian 28th Infantry Division, which was stationed south of Darkehmen, that the division would withdraw sharply southeast during the night. Particularly the aerial reports available by 4 p.m. reinforced this impression to the certainty that the enemy was in retreat in the area of Kattenau—Rußsen—Pillkallen. Now it was important to also strike vigorously on the southern flank.

In the headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief East, the concern for the success of the operation came to the forefront again. An early retreat of the enemy, combined with the unusual marching difficulties of the encircling columns, could jeopardize the desired success. Further expansion of the attack wing was discussed on the telephone by the Army High Command, with repeated emphasis that, despite all consideration of the encirclement idea, the tactical success must always remain secured. At 4 p.m., Colonel General v. Eichhorn ordered by telephone that, in view of the retreat movements of the enemy from the line Pillkallen—Schillehnen in a southerly and southeasterly direction, a persistent advance was necessary. The XXXVIII Reserve Corps was to advance beyond Pillkallen, and the XXXIX Reserve Corps with the main body was to reach the road Pillkallen—Willuhnen. General v. der Marwitz passed on these orders at 5 p.m. The 75th Reserve Division had already gone to rest at Rußsen by 4 p.m., while the 76th Reserve Division with the vanguard advanced beyond Pillkallen, which the last parts of the enemy had left by 7 p.m. The young troops had proven themselves brilliantly on their first day of battle.

General v. Lauterstein received the army order around 4 p.m. He ordered the divisions to march on to the utmost limit of their capacity. The 77th Reserve Division occupied Willuhnen during the night without a fight; the main body remained northwest of the town. The 78th Reserve Division had already issued the rest order by 3:30 p.m. and occupied the area south and southwest of Schillehnen. The omission was to be made up for the next day by an early departure.

## Relentless Advance of the 10th Army to the Southeast.

The General Command of the XXI Army Corps had maintained contact with its divisions advancing to Schillehnen and Slownik until about 3 p.m., then it ceased. At the corps headquarters in Lasdehnen, the unfavorable situation of the troops, whose supply and replenishment began to fail, was admonished. General v. Below therefore requested the Army High Command to have control over the road Ragait—Lasdehnen—Schillehnen to keep the 31st Infantry Division operational and reminded of the timely utilization of the narrow-gauge railway Pillkallen—Willuhnen—Schirwindt.

The 42nd Infantry Division continued its march from Schillehnen just west of the border towards Schirwindt at dusk. Several weaker enemy columns with artillery were sighted marching east. At 5:30 p.m., Lieutenant General v. Bredow ordered the main body north of Schillehnen to rest, and the vanguard to occupy Schirwindt and Waldylankowo. However, the troops' strength was no longer sufficient to meet this demand. The vanguard reached Losz zahlen, eleven kilometers north of Schirwindt, at 11 p.m. There it became known that enemy troops of all arms had been passing through towards Schirwindt all day until 7 p.m. After a 1½-hour rest, a detachment was set in motion towards Schirwindt, which it reached on February 10 at 3 a.m. The Russians had destroyed the place from the ground up, but Waldylankowo was almost intact. There was lively activity under bright lighting, and the Sejzuppe Bridge was occupied. Despite the enormous efforts behind them, the troops engaged in battle. Gunfire also echoed from the other riverbank; the 31st Infantry Division was also on site.

It had received the last corps order just as the order to transition to rest was being prepared. Now, despite the troops' fatigue, the march continued; a large part of the guns and vehicles was still far behind. An enemy attempt to destroy the Sejzuppe Bridge was thwarted. With concern, each of the new stream sections that crossed the march road was anticipated. The bridge over the Alupka was, however, undamaged. At 7 p.m., the vanguard entered the northern section, which the enemy vacated after a brief firefight. From here, the available cavalry was advanced to Waldylankowo, followed by the division fighting in deep snow and against the icy wind. The cavalry soon reached just before Waldylankowo shortly after midnight.

---

1) p. 189.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

slawow against the enemy. At 4 a.m., Lieutenant General v. Berrer set up his command post at the crossroads 1.5 km north of Wladyslawow and ordered infantry to advance towards the place. Still in darkness, they entered Wladyslawow; 1100 prisoners, mostly from the Russian 73rd Reserve Division, fell into their hands. However, the bulk of the enemy withdrew southeast under the protection of their artillery firing on the city.

On the evening of February 9, the army command received an intercepted Russian radio message, which prompted it to radio the XXI Army Corps at 10 p.m.: "Eliminate the enemy higher cavalry leader in Wladyslawow!" The message no longer reached the troops, but they had already done everything humanly possible.

General v. Below had ordered the subordinate 1st Cavalry Division to cross the Russian border towards Wladyslawow on February 10. Lieutenant General Breck, its commander, had already dispatched some squadrons with destruction and reconnaissance missions, but reported that the main body of the division could only be relieved during the day. On February 10, he wanted to gather the division at Schillebenn and attempt to advance towards Wladyslawow.

The aforementioned Russian radio message had confirmed the aerial reports of the enemy's beginning withdrawal. The 16th Landwehr Division was also informed that Borunyten was withdrawing in front of their line. This fit well with the fact that the leader of the Russian 68th Reserve Division announced a relief attack north of the Memel for February 10: "Tomorrow I will attack along the entire front. My detachment is so insignificant and dispersed that great hopes for a large-scale result cannot be entertained. Nevertheless, the attack will be conducted vigorously."

The army order radioed shortly after 10 p.m. for February 10 set great tasks for the army. The XXI Army Corps was to "reach Divina-Wylkowsky tomorrow." The reserve corps were ordered: "Tomorrow definitely cross the Borunyten railway line Stallupönen-Kowno in the ordered direction; set out early." The air units were tasked with observing the Gumbinnen-Wylkowsky railway; recognizing the nature and development of the Russian retreat movement was of particular value to the army.

The first two days of operations had brought the attacking front more effort than tangible combat successes. The XXI Army Corps was the first to surprise the enemy in Wladyslawow, who was caught fleeing

## Securing the Main Road Gumbinnen—Kowno.

was captured; otherwise, they managed to escape the impending encirclement, partly with and partly without a fight. On February 10, the German columns, in 10 degrees of cold and an icy east wind, approached the main connection Gumbinnen—Wylkowsky—Kowno. If anywhere, one could expect to encounter the retreating enemy here.

During the day, flyers reported that long marching columns were moving on the roads Stallupönen—Wylkowsky and Wladyslawow—Pilwiszki, that rail and troop transports were rolling east from Kibarty, and that the enemy was also preparing to march off in the area of Darlehen Tollmingkehmen. Between Schottwinen and Würballen, the road seemed completely blocked at 4 in the afternoon. All these reports were passed on by Army Command 10 to the corps and spurred them to give their last efforts.

The withdrawal of the Russians had also been confirmed before the 16th Landwehr Division on the night of February 10. Straw dummies could not conceal the fact for long. Lieutenant General Sommer immediately set his division in pursuit and sought to gain the front to the southeast. The positions vacated by the enemy in front of the right wing of the division were occupied by evening. A Landwehr regiment stormed Jonastal, capturing 650 Russians. The left wing of the division reached the Trakehnen station. Columns of fire marked the enemy's retreat.

The 75th Reserve Division of the XXXVIII Reserve Corps advanced without a fight to north of Stallupönen. There, the vanguard soon encountered strong Russian forces marching east at 5° in the afternoon. In the darkness, Lieutenant General v. Seydewitz entered the burning town with his division, capturing another 1000 prisoners. In front of the 76th Reserve Division, a stronger enemy retreated southeast without being engaged in battle. By 7° in the evening, Lieutenant General v. Elstermann reached the main road east of Stallupönen with his division.

Also, in front of the XXXIX Reserve Corps, the Russians initially retreated without a fight. The 77th Reserve Division, after a brief skirmish, went to rest with its heavily exhausted troops in Schottwinen and Kibarty. Although the enemy had managed to escape, they now fell into the hands of the fleeing neighboring column. General v. Müller had his 78th Reserve Division, considering the poor roads, march almost the entire artillery under the cover of two battalions over Schwirindt. The remaining parts of the division

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

They went east past Willuhnen towards Wirballen. After crossing the Reich border, the marching difficulties grew immense in the dark. The paths, barely recognizable by day, were impossible to find in the dark. A biting east wind made the cold doubly palpable. Additionally, the young troops had to fight an almost unknown enemy, hunger. For two days, they had only consumed the iron rations, mostly cold, the third iron ration was with the field kitchens, which had long been unable to follow. For 24 hours, their stomachs were empty. The general command wanted to take a rest day and wait for supplies. However, Generaloberst v. Eichhorn ordered the march to continue to Wirballen. At 8:30 in the evening, the vanguard reached Wirballen. Shortly after, the rest order was issued. Immediately, a lively firefight broke out in the elongated town with the enemy, who was about to settle there for rest. The bitter house-to-house fighting lasted until the morning hours of February 11; 9000 prisoners, twelve guns, eight machine guns from the 27th, 56th, and 73rd Divisions, three hospital trains, but they captured a well-stocked magazine and 80 field kitchens fell into the hands of the 78th Reserve Division, which had thus secured not only itself but also the neighboring troops' continued viability. This first major success was bought with the minor bloody losses of five officers and 60 men. Finally, it seemed they had reached the bulk of the enemy.

The XXI Army Corps, previously only with the foremost parts of its divisions in Wladyslawow, had to take a short break after a 36-hour march and battle. Due to the road conditions, the marching columns of the divisions were spread out at a day's march distance; they had to regroup before it could be seen if and when the troops could at least advance with parts. By noon, they approached the city, and General v. Below hurried ahead. Individual brigades reported: "March capability exhausted for today, all iron rations used up. Nothing to be found in the country. Morale good." But already the army command signaled again: "Enemy not retreating, proceed quickly in the ordered direction!" Furthermore, flyers reported that an enemy column of all arms was marching from the beginning halfway between Wyszkowynski—Marjampol, their trains even passing through the latter place by 11:30 in the morning. Every minute was therefore precious. At 2:00 in the afternoon, the general command ordered the march to continue to Olwita and Wyszkowynski, as soon as closed troop units

## Capture of Wladyslawow.

were gathered and cared for. The cavalry was sent ahead to block the retreating enemy's path over Wyklowyszki. At 4 p.m., the 42nd Infantry Division arrived again. They encountered no significant resistance. Larger and smaller enemy units surrendered. The number of prisoners, mostly from the 73rd Reserve Division, rose to 1300 men; a battery that could no longer be moved was captured. In the early hours of February 11, the division reached Olwita, where significant military supplies fell into their hands.

The 31st Infantry Division, however, encountered the enemy about 3 km southeast of Wladyslawow, who soon retreated. In the evening, the leading brigade charged a position stretching from Szejmena to Gszczupa. Troops and leaders were determined to quickly break this resistance as well, especially since the findings of Army Corps Command 10 repeatedly pointed to the importance of Wyklowyszki. The extraordinary cold, the icy southeast wind, snow, and darkness posed almost greater obstacles to the brave troops than the ever-extending enemy on both flanks. The entire infantry of the division, as well as two battalions of the 42nd Infantry Division, were deployed. At 4 a.m. on the 11th, the enemy position was stormed, over 1000 men from four infantry regiments and a cavalry division were captured. But the own losses were also significant.

Northeast of the 31st Infantry Division's march route, the weak security and reconnaissance units of the 1st Cavalry Division were temporarily in an unfavorable position against stronger Russian cavalry, which only improved when the bulk of the division set out from Lasdehnen to Schillehnen on the morning of February 10. After a strenuous ride through occasionally meter-high snow, Schillehnen was reached at 3 p.m. When Lieutenant General Brecht received the news that the XXI Army Corps had taken Wladyslawow, they continued riding in the dark. The division went to rest after a march of about 50 km between Schirwindt and Schillehnen.

During this determined advance of the northern assault wing, lighter battles took place in the rear and on the flank of the army on the Memel. "The Germans are pressing hard on Wladyslawow, provide assistance!" With these messages of February 10 to the leader of the Russian 68th Reserve Division, the call of the commanding general of the Russian III Corps pointed the German

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

Command once again focused on the threat from the north, which was of little significance, as another radio message indicated that parts of a brigade of the division had already departed from Schaulen to Wylkowyszki on the afternoon of February 9. However, weak enemy infantry crossed the Memel above Trappönen.

In view of this situation, the army command instructed the 5th Guards Infantry Brigade, which was gathering around Lasdehnen for further march on Schillehnen, to secure the army flank by attacking and cutting off the enemy who had crossed. The brigade commander, Major General v. Below, then ordered a reinforced battalion to attack the enemy by the next morning at the latest and to follow immediately to Wylkowyszki.

The extraordinary successes of the two corps of the left army wing were not yet known to Command 10 when it issued orders for February 11. However, news of the booty captured by the XXI Army Corps in Wladyslawow in the morning hours had arrived. If the enemy had already been encircled there, even more rewarding targets beckoned further south.

The northern pivot wing had, after unheard-of efforts, reached the connection Gumbinnen—Kowno, the main traffic artery of the Russian northern wing. The result of this powerful blow, hindered more by elements of nature than by the enemy, did not fully meet expectations. The enemy's cavalry, about 2½ divisions, apparently escaped without heavy losses. If it had previously threatened the attacker's flank, it could now become a danger to the rear connections. The infantry of the Russian northern wing, parts of the 27th Infantry, the 56th and 73rd Reserve Divisions, had been engaged. After heavy losses, they hurried as remnants to the Niemen. Pursuing them could not be the task of the assault wing. Rather, it was about trying to capture what was withdrawing from the center of their front to the east.

Russian radio messages revealed that the "Office of Service" of the Russian Army Command 10 had gone to Smalley, that the command of the III Corps had been withdrawn to Wylkowyszki, and that of the XX Corps to Goldap. Energetic advance of the northern wing, outflanking, encircling, was all the more necessary as the southern assault wing of the 8th Army seemed to find stubborn resistance in a very unfavorable, easily blockable lake terrain near Lyck for its attack.

## Destruction of the Russian Northern Wing.

### d) The Battle of the 8th Army for the Lake Pass Rajgrod—Lyck from February 9 to 14, 1915.

Map 12.

After the Litzmann Group had pushed in the southern flank of the enemy at Pißhof in the first two days of the battle, the "Directive" of the Army High Command aimed to quickly gain ground with the encircling wing against the Lyck—Arys line. General Litzmann set the advance for February 9 at 6 a.m. The 79th Reserve Division was to bypass Bialla to the east towards Mysken, the 80th Reserve Division was to advance over Drygallen to Reuschendorf, 7 km west of Lyck, and the 2nd Infantry Division was to reach the road Drygallen—Arys by circling east of Lake Roß. However, serious difficulties arose in executing this order. The troops of the 79th and 80th Reserve Divisions were so exhausted by the great efforts, almost without night rest and with the failure of supply that further advance before noon was not possible.

Only the 2nd Infantry Division, as ordered, advanced at 6 a.m. over the counter-move east of Johannesburg and reached the pivot section at Rubken by noon, from where it was to march further north. Instead, they were redirected east by General Litzmann to cover the advance of the XXXX Reserve Corps, which was swinging in against the Lyck—Reuschendorf line at Drygallen. Here stood the enemy. The division attacked them during the afternoon but could no longer break their resistance. A mixed detachment left north of Johannesburg to block the road to Arys was also engaged in combat there.

By midday, the two divisions of the XXXX Reserve Corps had also set out. The 79th Reserve Division again faced great difficulties on the field paths south of Bialla. The horses soon reached the limits of their performance in the deep snow. Most of the men had not received warm food the previous day, and on this day the field kitchens could not follow on the snow-covered paths. Major General Boësz therefore intended to advance with his division up to the height of Bialla. The 80th Reserve Division encountered the enemy in the afternoon and was engaged in an attack against a strong position about 3 km south of Drygallen.

---

1) p. 179.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

The Army High Command 8 in Sensburg had by noon gained the conviction that the enemy still held north of Lake Spirding. General Otto v. Below therefore wanted to achieve a tactical success against the III Siberian Corps standing before the field position Bösen. A general staff officer delivered the order to the XXXX Reserve Corps at 5 p.m. in Bialla to advance with stronger forces on Artyz against the line Wiszszellen (northwest of Lyck)–Artyz. General Litzmann therefore had to turn his columns from the previous northeastern direction to the north. The already heavily engaged 79th Reserve Division was now to be taken on the left wing and was sent the order to move into the area of Bialla. A large part of the troops again came to rest only deep in the night. The 80th Reserve Division and to its left the 2nd Infantry Division spent the icy night at 11 degrees cold in their combat positions facing the enemy. The attack was to be continued jointly the next morning.

Meanwhile, the Army High Command had received air reports, agent messages, and intercepted radio messages, which left no doubt that the III Siberian Corps and also the entire remaining enemy front were now indeed in retreat. Nevertheless, General v. Below hoped to still fell the Siberians at Lyck, as per the previous instructions for the Litzmann group. General Koch was ordered to advance with the main forces of the Bösen garrison south of the Angerburg–Marggrabowa railway to cooperate with the swinging right army wing. For the army center and the northern wing, General v. Below demanded the closest contact with the enemy even in darkness and attack, where his withdrawal would be detected.

During the night of February 10, the Russians had vacated the position at Drygallen. As the next target, General Litzmann gave the 80th Reserve Division Lyck, the 2nd Infantry Division Stedden (12 km southwest of Lyck) and ordered the 79th Reserve Division to assemble at Bialla for a rapid advance on Drygallen. These targets corresponded to the wishes of the Army High Command, which sought to encircle the Russians through the pursuit of the right army wing on Lyck. Incoming air reports during the midday hours indicated that the enemy had to be in full retreat from Lyck and Bösen to the lake area south of Lyck. In a semicircle west and south of Lyck, newly established positions between the lakes blocked the approaches to the city. General Litzmann realized that the ope-

## Corps Litzmann Wants to Outflank the Enemy at Lyk.

Operations of the right wing of the army now had to be conducted without delay in a more easterly direction to prevent the escape of the Russians. On his own responsibility, he therefore ordered at 2:30 PM in Bialla: "Reinforced XXXX Reserve Corps continues the advance in an easterly direction with all forces." The following were to march: the 79th Reserve Division from Bialla along the border towards Prostkern, the 80th Reserve Division with the vanguard over the crossing of the Lyk River at Lipinsken (north of Prostkern), their vanguard and the 2nd Infantry Division against the lake positions south and southwest of Lyk. Every resistance was to be broken, the destruction of the Russian 10th Army being the guiding thought of all actions. The 3rd Cavalry Brigade, which had been held up by strong enemy resistance south of Drygallen, was ordered to penetrate between the large lakes south of Lyk, advancing against the roads leading from Lyk to Augustowo and thus blocking them.

The 79th Reserve Division only advanced on Prostkern at 4:00 PM. After a strenuous night march with frequent and long pauses on open roads, during which the stranded vehicles and guns were shoveled out of the snow, the division rested in the early morning hours of the new day with the beginning about 8 km before Prostkern on the march road. The 80th Reserve Division was halted between Drygallen and Lyk by enemies, who offered stubborn resistance a few kilometers northeast of Monethen, and wanted to continue the attack the next morning. It was only through the intervention of the general command at night that they were prompted to set their troops in motion in the new direction in an overtaking pursuit; the previous vanguard, a reinforced infantry regiment, remained in front of the previous enemy.

The 2nd Infantry Division only received the corps order to continue the march when it wanted to rest in the afternoon after a laborious march on bad roads with the beginning at Steden. It was only a few kilometers forward in the direction of Lyk. In their foremost lines, the enemy withdrew by evening. North of Johannisburg, the opponent had withdrawn. The 3rd Cavalry Brigade reached the same level as the infantry tips between the 79th and 80th Reserve Divisions with heavily fatigued horses on this day. The demolition of the Lyk–Opowice railway was successful at three points north of Prostkern.

The troops of General Kosch had launched an attack in the morning when the enemy now also seemed to be retreating in front of their front.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

By midday, General Kosch received the order to advance with his main forces over Grabnick-Neu Jucha to encircle Lyck from the north. By evening, after overcoming some resistance, they reached the line Artys-Neuhof-Widminnen-Siewen in numerous columns.

Opposite the northern wing of the army, the enemy seemed by no means willing to give up their positions. Only after some quite heavy fighting could the German divisions penetrate almost the entire front into the Russian trenches. The reports received during the day at the army headquarters stated that the III Siberian Corps and the XXVI Corps were in full retreat to Lyck and Marggrabowa; the remaining parts of the enemy still seemed to hold strong rearguards in front of the line Goldap-Tolminkehmen. The command of the Russian 10th Army had been moved from Marggrabowa to Suwalki, the general command of the III Siberian Corps from Grabnick to Lyck.

Whether General v. Below had been informed of the independent change in the marching direction of the divisions of the southern assault wing of the 8th Army is not known. He ordered for February 11: "The right wing of the army continues its movement to overtake the pursuit of the enemy's southern wing. The other army units continue their attacks on Schimatsche." For renewed fighting at Lyck, which the commander-in-chief apparently expected, the command authorities were arranged so that all troops south of the lake line Artys-Lyck should come under the command of General Litzmann. He left it at the ordered march direction to the east.

On February 11, the 79th Reserve Division, with its foremost parts supported by the 3rd Cavalry Brigade, took Proßken after a brief skirmish and then, with its troops exhausted from the night march, rested at the Bornarschstraße. The 3rd Cavalry Brigade, marching towards the lake areas of Spirditten, reached the road Aulowen-Rajgrod after a short skirmish with a stronger opponent. The 80th Reserve Division began its rightward march early in the morning. In a snowstorm, the marching columns advanced only gradually with unspeakable difficulties. General Bächmann decided not to use the poor field roads leading directly to Lipniken, but to turn onto the highway to R.-Rogallen to join the 79th Reserve Division there. This change corresponded to the wishes of the commanding general, who considered a rapid gathering of the strongest possible forces necessary to encircle the enemy in full retreat.

## Despite Exhausting Marches, Little Progress.

The enemy's position was deemed necessary. At noon, when the 80th Reserve Division in Kl.-Rogallen encountered the still passing 79th Reserve Division, Major General Bredtmann ordered accommodation along the march route. Thus, the actual territorial gain on the decisive flank of the 8th Army was extremely small despite the troops' tremendous efforts. Successes were also denied before Lyck. Here, the 2nd Infantry Division, with the remaining parts of the 80th Reserve Division, spent the day in heavy combat with an enemy holding the line Baitkowen-Thalussen. The deployment of the not yet fully assembled 5th Infantry Brigade, which had been made available to General Litzmann by the Army High Command and had meanwhile been advanced to Drygallen, only led to the storming of the village of Baitkowen after overcoming great difficulties.

Meanwhile, the 4th Cavalry Division (without the 39th Cavalry Brigade) had reached the area of Bialla and Johannisburg after completing their unloading. General v. Below ordered them to position themselves east of Bialla along the border on February 12.

As on the southern flank, the advance on the rest of the army front was hampered by weather, terrain, and the enemy. On the right flank of Corps Kosch, the columns of the 11th Landwehr Division gradually converged towards the line Grabnick-Neu Jucha. To cut off the enemy advancing southwest of Lyck against the left flank of the 2nd Infantry Division, the Army High Command deployed the 11th Landwehr Division on Lyck. However, they failed to take the strong Russian positions in the lake narrows near Wosyczellen and Neu Jucha. The left flank of Corps Kosch gained Gr. Gablick after a fight; the  $\frac{2}{3}$  1st Landwehr Division,  $\frac{1}{3}$  3rd Reserve Division, and 10th Landwehr Division approached the Goldap River, the town of Goldap, and the Rominten Heath without encountering stronger resistance. The town itself seemed unwilling to be abandoned by the Russians; a few kilometers west of it, they held the advance of the  $\frac{2}{3}$  3rd Reserve Division in a strongly fortified position. This division took the steep hill position by storm during the night.

The situation could not be considered favorable. Although General Litzmann stood with 3½ divisions against apparently only two of the enemy, the latter had all the defensive advantages of the terrain. There was a danger that the mass

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

of the III Siberian Corps withdrew under the protection of the stubbornly holding security forces around Lyk towards Augustow, before the Litzmann group was able to block their path. Everything depended on gaining the lake passage near Rajgrod as soon as possible. Therefore, on February 12, General v. Below ordered the XXXX Reserve Corps to continue the advance under security against the fortress Osowiec in the direction of Rajgrod and, if possible, to take control of the narrow passage there by February 12. The other army units were to continue pursuing, with the northern wing advancing in a southeasterly direction; it could count on the support of the right wing of the 10th Army west of Lake Wysztyer.

On the extreme southern wing of the army, Major General Boehn alerted his 79th Reserve Division on the night of February 12 to intercept the enemy by advancing immediately over Prostken towards Rajgrod, as the enemy seemed to be trying to escape encirclement by marching from Lyk to the southeast. The 3rd Cavalry Brigade was called upon to assist, and the 80th Reserve Division was asked to attack Grajewo, occupied by the enemy, to secure the advance of the 79th Reserve Division on the right flank. General Litzmann was informed of the intention by radio. At 3 a.m., the 79th Reserve Division set out. Thawing weather threatened to increase the marching difficulties. By evening, it was only possible to drive off weak enemy advance troops southwest of Lake Rajgrod; however, the important narrow passage remained in enemy hands. Further to the left, the 3rd Cavalry Brigade had so far unsuccessfully attempted to break through the narrow passage at Spittken. In the evening, it was assigned Marggrabowa as the next target by General Litzmann. Meanwhile, the 80th Reserve Division had been recalled north by General Litzmann early on February 12. The 5th Infantry Brigade had vacated its position at Baitlowen with heavy losses, and a breakthrough by the Russians in a southwesterly direction could not be ruled out. The advance of the 80th Reserve Division, intended to encircle the southern flank of the enemy, was halted east of Baitlowen by enemy forces on the right flank. During the night, all available forces of the division were prepared for an attack in the direction of Neuentendorf. The 2nd Infantry Division had also not advanced further; in the evening, Thalussen was taken after heavy fighting.

Behind the right wing of the army, the 4th Cavalry Division reached the area east of Bialla. Numerous accommodations had to be cleared of enemy cavalry before the places beyond

### Threat to the Southern Flank at Grajewo.

held the border. The division joined Group Litzmann and received orders to advance via Rajgrod to Augustow against the enemy's retreat route.

At the Kosch Corps, the southern flank of the 11th Landwehr Division was positioned north of the lakes at Thalußen and the narrow pass at Woszczellen; its left flank could occupy the passes at Neu Jucha without resistance. The northern flank of the corps advanced to within 13 kilometers of Margrabowa. Far to the north, the pursuing columns encountered little resistance and reached the general line Attentubbe—Dzingellen—Hunting Lodge Rominten with a strength of about two divisions.

Since the beginning of the movement, the total capture of the 8th Army amounted to 8000 prisoners, 21 guns, and 34 machine guns. The intended encirclement of the III Siberian Corps, which still held at Lyck—Rajgrod, had not yet succeeded. However, there was still the possibility of relocating it from the retreat at Augustow. The Russian 57th Reserve Division was cut off at Grajewo. Nothing more had come of the XXVI Corps, which had held the front Lötzen—Angerburg. The retreat direction of the neighboring 28th Infantry Division led south past Goldap, that of the 53rd Reserve Division over Goldap. Through the Rominten Heath, the 29th and 27th Infantry Divisions withdrew to the southeast. Thus, there were eight Russian divisions that were crowding closer together to enter the area Augustow—Suwalki. There was hope that even larger enemy masses would be intercepted. General v. Below left all army units with their previous tasks and, given the increasingly narrowing front space, issued new attack lines.

On the morning of February 13, the enemy finally vacated his stubbornly defended positions in the area of Baitkowen. General Litzmann, who was still intent on cutting off the retreat of the enemy withdrawing over Lyck, instructed the 80th Reserve Division to hold south around Lyck if necessary. To the 79th Reserve Division, which had had no communication since midday the previous day, he had already changed the radio message during the night: "Target for 79th Reserve Division 13. 2. Parishes Also block road Lyck—Goldenaun. 4th Cavalry Division via Grajewo to Rajgrod." Since it was questionable whether this radio message would reach its target, the order was issued again by dispatch officers by midday on February 13 and repeated with a new radio message.

Meanwhile, the 80th Reserve Division, the 5th Infantry Brigade, and the 2nd Infantry Division were

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

Followed the enemy. But already beyond the Lyck River near Neuendorf and at the narrow lakes southwest of Lyck, they encountered new resistance, which they could no longer break that day. The 79th Reserve Division (without 1/4 Battalion, two batteries) was engaged in heavy attacks against equally strong enemy forces from the III Siberian Corps, which defended Rajgrod on both sides. An encirclement of its southern flank around Lake Drewnowo was initiated. Major General Boës wanted to continue marching on Augustów after capturing Rajgrod. In this direction, he saw the main task of the division. To his surprise, however, at 6:30 p.m., the order from the general command to march on Pissanitzen and to block the Lyck-Goldenaŭ road was received. Although Rajgrod seemed on the verge of falling, Major General Boës, in accordance with the corps order, made arrangements for regrouping his division around midnight; at Rajgrod, he only wanted to advance weak forces to continue the attack. The 3rd Cavalry Brigade, which had previously secured the left flank of the 79th Reserve Division, received a radio message from General Litzmann in the afternoon: "Accelerated advance on Augustów. Blocking of the local junction. Enemy is retreating northward." Since the narrow lakes at Spittitten and Rajgrod were still held by the enemy, the brigade had no choice but to move south around Lake Drewnowo. Here, the next day, a detachment of the 79th Reserve Division was to facilitate the crossing over the Jeganzia section. At 4 p.m., a report from the 4th Cavalry Division from the area southwest of Grajewo was received at the XXXX Reserve Corps: "Enemy forces with artillery from Grajewo on Proßitten. Proßitten occupied by the enemy. Enemy troop landings at Grajewo. Enemy marching columns from Grajewo on Popowko (southwest of Grajewo). 4th Cavalry Division advances over Gut Preußisch-Höhe on Grajewo. Connection with the 79th Reserve Division, which is marching on Rajgrod, not yet established. According to a report from a liaison patrol received the previous night, the 79th Reserve Division was engaged in combat above Rajgrod in the evening." The new enemy at Grajewo posed an extraordinary threat to the rear divisions of the XXXX Reserve Corps, especially the 79th Reserve Division. A security detail left by the division south of Proßitten was apparently repelled by the Russians. Whether this involved only parts of the defeated Russian 57th Reserve Division or another enemy was initially unknown. The commanding general decided, in agreement with the army command.

## Battles at Lyck and Rajgrod.

the movements against Lyck, whose evacuation the enemy apparently had already initiated, were initially allowed to run their course, and only the next day did they turn against the new enemy. The 4th Cavalry Division had developed from the west towards Grajewo and had established itself with parts fighting on the outskirts.

At the Roßki Corps, in the lake area northwest of Lyck, the 11th Landwehr Division could only push back the tenacious enemy step by step; the northern wing of the corps approached within a few kilometers of Marggrabowa. The rest of the army front, pressing on the retreating enemy, reached as far as Kowahlen, Filipowo, and east of there after some very difficult marches.

According to the army order for February 14, the XXXX Reserve Corps, with forces that became dispensable at Lyck, was to advance from the north against the new enemy at Grajewo, which the 4th Cavalry Division was to hold until then. General Litzmann ordered the 2nd Infantry Division and the 5th Infantry Brigade, together with a weak detachment of the 80th Reserve Division, to continue the attack in the direction of Lyck. The bulk of the 80th Reserve Division was directed at Grajewo. In response, the 6th Reserve Infantry Brigade was also to advance from Bialla by army order.

On the night of February 14, the Russians evacuated Rajgrod. This finally opened the way for the 79th Reserve Division to march through the lake areas south of Lyck. Major General Boës decided to advance with the 3rd Cavalry Brigade, over Rajgrod, on the next route towards Augustowo, and found agreement with this decision at the General Command and Army High Command. However, the advance came to a halt a few kilometers north of Rajgrod at the northern edge of Lake Drentswo. The 3rd Cavalry Brigade, which was circling south of this, also encountered resistance. An attempt to break through at Spittken also failed. At Grajewo, General v. Schimm held with his 4th Cavalry Division and the left-behind detachment of the 79th Reserve Division against significantly superior enemies in a precarious situation. The 80th Reserve Division and the 6th Reserve Infantry Brigade did not come into combat at all due to the flanking movements.

The command relationships of the General Command were extremely difficult during these days. With about 4½ infantry divisions, the corps fought in three groups: at Grajewo, Rajgrod, and Lyck. Were at

---

1) From the 3rd Reserve Division, previously in border protection south of Bialla.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

Even though the distances were not great, the communication of news and orders was extremely inadequate under the difficult conditions of the winter campaign. Wire and motor vehicles mostly failed, and radio operators and pilots could not always provide full replacements. The day was lost. When General Litzmann arrived at Dummelsheit in Ostrowollen north of Prostken, he could only give orders for the following day.

At Lyck, on February 14, the Russian southern flank, to cover the retreat, resisted at Neuendorf and lost 1500 prisoners. The 2nd Infantry Division and parts of the 11th Landwehr Division occupied Lyck at noon without a fight, which was heavily devastated and partly still burning. The pursuit continued, temporarily halted by the destruction of bridges, until it encountered new resistance from the enemy east of the Gr. Selment Lake. The northern flank of the army followed up to the line north end of Gr. Selment Lake—Raczki. Marggrabowa had already been occupied on the night of February 14. At Raczki, parts of the Russian XXVI Corps offered stubborn resistance to the attacking  $\frac{1}{3}$  3rd Reserve Division. Behind it followed the 10th Landwehr Division, which had been displaced by the right flank division of the 10th Army from the Przerosl—Suwalki road.

Finally, the great lake barrier Rajgrod—Lyck—Marggrabowa had fallen. The battle had already lasted a full eight days. The III Siberian Corps had escaped the intended encirclement, albeit with heavy losses. With astonishing tenacity, the Siberians had held up the pursuer at tactically important points. Whether they had been thrown at Lyck and Rajgrod or had retreated on orders in view of the impending encirclement, the army command did not yet know. It had to try to intercept the enemy now at Augustow; here was the last opportunity to do so. It was known from Russian radio messages that the staffs of the III Siberian and XXVI Reserve Corps were in Augustow, and that of the XX Army Corps in Suwalki. From a position 150 kilometers wide, the 8th Army had launched an attack. The front had changed daily, and units that became available were withdrawn in time by the command. Immediately on the evening of February 14, the army stood from Rajgrod via Sentken to Raczki in a width of about 50 km around Augustow.

### e) The thrust of the 10th Army southward from February 11 to 14, 1915.

Maps 11 and 12.

In the first three days of the battle, the German 10th Army had shattered the Russian northern flank, swung southward to

## The Capture of Lyck and Rajgrod.

had won the railway and road Gumbinnen—Kowno under the greatest efforts and deprivations. It was now necessary to march relentlessly southward to block the retreating center of the enemy's army. A great task and further immeasurable efforts, marches, and battles lay ahead for the 10th Army despite all that had been achieved so far. It had received the front almost directly to the south. Parts now had to be redirected to the southeast to prevent a congestion of masses at Suwalki or Augustow.

The situation behind the front had significantly improved insofar as the supply could now take the shorter, straight route Gumbinnen—Stallupönen—Wirballen instead of making a wide arc to the north. However, a difficulty was that the corps were henceforth dependent on the worst roads and poorest accommodations on Russian soil. The weather change was extremely concerning. The thermometer rose, snow alternated with rain. The troops moved forward in wet thawing snow. Drainage off the roads was almost impossible. Under such conditions, large marching performances in the coming days were hardly to be expected.

On the evening of February 10, Generaloberst v. Eichhorn, still unaware of the day's great successes, ordered by radio: "Enemy retreating eastward, utmost marching efforts to cut him off. General marching direction XXXVIII. Reserve Corps east of Wyshtyter Lake: Suwalki. XXXIX. Reserve Corps: Krasnopol, XXI.: Sejny, 16th Landwehr Division and 5th Guard Infantry Brigade will take over security against Kowno. For this, the 5th Guard Infantry Brigade gathers from February 11 around Wladyslawow. The reinforced 3rd Cavalry Division covers the rear connections north of Wladyslawow, with the main body marching via Wladyslawow—Bialystok to Kalwarya. The railway Gumbinnen—Stumm is to be destroyed as far east and north as possible." In individual orders, the 16th Landwehr Division is instructed to pursue initially towards Grajewo, the 5th Guard Infantry Brigade to move from Wladyslawow against Pilwiszki—Wylkowsky and against the railway Kowno—Kibarty, as the arrival of the Russian ½ 68th Reserve Division at Pilwiszki is to be expected.

As the right wing of the army, the XXXVIII. Reserve Corps reached Wiznize on February 11, where the 75th Reserve Division captured 1500 prisoners of the Russian 27th Infantry Division. The 76th Re-

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

serve division remained north of Wisztniece on the road to Kibarty. They encountered no enemy.

The divisions of the XXXIX Reserve Corps, which had fought until late into the night after strenuous marches, set out again in the morning, allowing an enemy column reported south of Schythuhnen retreating southeast to escape unmolested. The advance guards reached Pojevon and eastward; behind them, the divisions closed in at Schythuhnen and Wirballen.

At the XXI Army Corps, General v. Below had the 42nd Infantry Division turn off from Olwita to Wylkowsky in the morning to engage the reported enemy there, which the 31st Infantry Division was attacking from the north, from the south. However, the opponent of 5000 Russians evaded in time to Marjampol and Pilwiskzi. After a strenuous march in a heavy snowstorm, the division took a rest on the road south of Wylkowsky and pushed a weak mixed detachment to the important road junction at Bartnitzi. The 31st Infantry Division had advanced further after the night assault on the enemy position at Wylkowsky and, after a brief skirmish at the station, captured 2100 prisoners from the Russian 56th and 73rd Reserve Divisions, as well as numerous war materials. The regiments of the 68th Reserve Division transported from Schaulen were also established here. For the first time in days, part of the baggage and field kitchens reached the troops again.

The 1st Cavalry Division took over the security of the army flank for the first time on this day. They left a brigade in the area of the Nawa estuary to cover the rear connection and marched with the main force to Wladyslawow, where they repelled stronger enemy cavalry to the southeast. Reports from patrols and aircraft indicated that the enemy had retreated south and east; strong Russian cavalry on the flank was still to be expected.

Utmost haste, extensive advance to the east seemed urgently necessary if parts of the enemy were still to be intercepted. The army command therefore ordered the XXI Army Corps to deploy the 31st Infantry Division via Audwinow-Krasna to Lodzieje, in order to outflank as far as possible with the extreme right wing in view of the enemy's rapid retreat. The XXXVIII Reserve Corps had

---

1) G. 195/196.

## The enemy retreats everywhere.

On the orders of the Commander-in-Chief East, a detachment was to be sent via Szittkehmen to Przerosl to connect with the left wing of the 8th Army advancing through the Rominter Heide. The 16th Landwehr Division was to reach Wylkowszki on February 13 and secure against Kowno as ordered, while the 5th Guard Infantry Brigade was given Wladyslawow as its target.

February 12 brought strenuous marches for the army. Without significant battles, the six divisions reached the general line Szittkehmen—Wizajny—Autobno—Ludwinowo. Reports of the enemy west of Lake Wysbitzer led General b. der Mauritz to deviate from orders, allowing only a detachment of the main body of the 75th Reserve Division to march west of the lake, while contact was made with the 10th Landwehr Division of the 8th Army. Both army wings had Suwalki as their target. The 42nd Infantry Division could only capture stragglers from a strong enemy column marching from Kalwarja to Simno. General v. Below had urged the 1st Cavalry Division to block the passes at Simno and Seirje as soon as possible. However, an order from Army Command 10 directed them to pursue towards Preny. After a brief skirmish, the prepared brigade of the Marjampol Division occupied the area. Of the units designated for securing against Kowno, the 16th Landwehr Division reached Kibarty, and the 5th Guard Wladyslawow.

In a vast semicircle centered on Suwalki, German forces encircled the Russian 10th Army, whose command was still in the city according to one of its radio messages. The burning question was whether the enemy would manage to escape the pincer movement. For the eastward flanking maneuver of the 10th Army, it was disadvantageous that its inner wing closely joined the 8th Army approaching Suwalki from the northwest. In any case, the 10th Army faced heavy fighting ahead. Army Command 10 issued no special orders. Only the 1st Cavalry Division received the directive: "Relentless pursuit to Preny. Destroy the Wirballen—Kowno railway to the fortress and the Kowno—Wilna railway!"

On February 13, the line Przerosl—Budziska on the Kalwarja—Suwalki road. After a light skirmish east of Wizajny, parts of the Russian 27th Division withdrew southeast. In Przerosl, the 10th Landwehr Division from Rominten had already arrived before the 75th Reserve Division.

---

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

The XXI Army Corps was able to demonstrate significantly greater marching achievements than the two reserve corps. General Fritz v. Below had ordered: "Those weak in marching are to be left behind and the ammunition vehicles thoroughly lightened. From the mounted troops, I expect them to find the means to pursue the march of retreating enemy columns even over long distances."

From the 42nd Infantry Division, a mixed detachment (a company without baggage, one and a half squadrons, a battery with sleds) under Major v. Fabland marched to Sejny early in the morning. After a day's march of 37 km on roads completely softened by the warming sun, they approached Sejny in the afternoon and encountered strong Russian food and livestock transports, which were captured after a brief fight with the escort. Late in the evening, the vanguard under General v. Etorff also arrived in the town; the division took quarters in the Sejny—Widugier area. General v. Etorff reported: "The troops are at the end of their capacity and cannot march before tomorrow noon." However, he could also report further: "It appears that the enemy has crossed the Widugier—Sejny line with all parts and we are now behind the enemy army." A little later, the radio message from the army corps headquarters arrived, pointing to the Russian columns in retreat and concluding with the words: "Great success awaits." The 31st Infantry Division had also sent ahead a detachment that arrived in Serje late in the evening. The bulk of the division reached Lodziemie in complete darkness.

Once again, the troops had worked exemplary in the face of unspeakable difficulties of leadership, even exceeding their demands. The achievements of the XXI Army Corps on this day must be described as the highest in marching capability that can be expected from the infantry. The 42nd Infantry Division had covered 35 to 40 kilometers on the worst roads in running snow. The main roads from Suwalki to the Niemen were now blocked. The enemy, still fighting in the area around Suwalki, had to either give way at Augustow by turning southeast from the north. Then he got into the large forests southwest of Augustow and Grodno. The drive forward, which had enabled the divisions to achieve such seemingly impossible feats, fully corresponded to the spirit that prevailed in the general staff of the XXI Army Corps. When he arrived in Sejny late in the evening, at a time when there was no infantry in the town except for the company of the Fabland detachment.

## The XXI Army Corps Blocks the Main Road Suwalki–Niemen.

The 1st Cavalry Division could not participate in the race to encircle the enemy. It reported in the morning from Marjampol that the enemy was generally moving southeast, and the ordered pursuit to Prety no longer corresponded to the situation. However, the Army High Command had meanwhile received an intercepted radio message from the Russian army leader to his cavalry leader, demanding "utmost efforts" to "destroy the enemy wagon columns." Therefore, operations by the enemy cavalry against the army's rear connections had to be expected. Lieutenant General v. Eichhorn therefore held back the 1st Cavalry Division to protect the rear connections; it remained at Marjampol. The 16th Landwehr Division in Wylkowsky and the 5th Guard Infantry Brigade in Wladyslawow were also available for the same task.

The Army High Command received a visit from the Chief of Staff in Gumbinnen that day. There was no doubt that the operation against the Russian 10th Army had succeeded and East Prussia was liberated, but the extent of the success at Suwalki was not yet clear. The incoming reports reinforced the leadership's view that significant parts of the enemy, mainly from the northern flank, had escaped encirclement, especially as the other divisions from the army center continued their retreat with all speed. According to prisoner statements, the Russian 56th and 73rd Reserve Divisions had retreated to Olita. These were essentially the parts that had faced the 10th Army from the Memel to the height of Gumbinnen. Over 10,000 men had already been captured. The pilots reported in the afternoon the departure of disordered units on the roads to Olita and Kowno. Further radio messages revealed that the staff of the Russian XX Corps was still in Suwalki and the 27th Infantry Division had been detached to Wizajny to "vigorously attack" the enemy in the area of the Wyskitzer Lake and to "secure the left flank from encirclement." "The army staff is moving to Grodno," concluded the radio message. About three hours later, a second message reported the relocation of the army staff to Grodno. That was quite a leap. In general, the Army High Command held the view that the Russian XX Corps was retreating from the north to Suwalki, the XXVI to Raczki, and the III Siberian to Augustowo, and that the main parts of the fighting troops of these corps had not yet crossed the Suwalki–Augustowo road. However, there were rumors that very strong columns were marching from Suwalki to Sejny.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

It was now crucial for the Army High Command to confront the masses gathering in the Suwalki-Augustow area, who apparently wanted to escape via the Augustow-Grodno road, in a final battle. Generaloberst v. Eichhorn therefore ordered: "XXXVIII. Reserve Corps advances relentlessly; XXXIX. Reserve Corps blocks the Senge of Tartar on February 14. XXI. Army Corps sends a division from Sejny via Frontki, towards Augustow; a division to remain for flank protection northeast of Sejny; 1st Cavalry Division blocks with a brigade Senge at Sereje, marches with the mass towards Sejny." The Commander-in-Chief thus brought the eastern extending encircling wing to energetically encircle the enemy masses still suspected in the area around Augustow-Suwalki. A threat from Kowno was not considered present by the Army High Command. It therefore intended to pull the 16th Landwehr Division and the 5th Guard Infantry Brigade behind its left wing. This intention might have included the thought of having forces available later for an attack on Grodno. However, the Commander-in-Chief East did not agree with this measure of the Army High Command. Due to the threatening situation on other fronts, he had to reserve the right to dispose of parts of these units elsewhere.

On February 14, thawing weather continued; terrain and roads posed even greater difficulties for troop movements than before. The switch from sled to wagon operation led to time loss and disruptions. Intercepted radio messages indicated that the disintegration of the Russian 10th Army was steadily increasing. "If you know now or later," said a radio message, "where the staffs of the Siberian, XX., XXVI., and III. Corps are located, then inform me immediately, for reporting to the commander of the Grodno fortress." The response to this call for help stated that the staffs of the XXVI. and III. Siberian Corps were still in Augustow; the latter was even in a village near the border east of Borzymmen early in the morning.

Generaloberst v. Eichhorn summarized his instructions from the previous evening at 10° in the morning in an order to be delivered by airplane to the XXI. Army Corps. "The mass of the Russian army," it said, "is trying to escape via the Augustow-Suwalki road. Yesterday, six Russian army corps marched from the north on Suwalki, XXVI. on Raczki, III. Siberian on Augustow. The Augustow-Suwalki road can only be used by insignificant parts so far."

of the fighting troops have crossed. The 8th Army reaches today the 3rd Cavalry Brigade and 79th Reserve Division from Rajgrod to Augustów, to which their other parts, which were still fighting at Lyck and north yesterday, are assigned. XXXIX. Reserve Corps has orders to block the Suwalki–Sejny road. Its arrival can probably only be expected late in the evening. To block the roads leading southeast between Augustów–Sejny, the 42nd Infantry Division must immediately march from Sejny across the front to Augustów. The 31st Infantry Division follows to the Sejny area, advance troops Berzniki, remains there facing east and blocks the Suwalki–Sejny road for passage from the west. Until their arrival, a detachment of the 42nd Infantry Division is to remain at Sejny. The 1st Cavalry Division (without the 1st Cavalry Brigade) advances from Marjampol towards Sejny, the advance of stronger forces from the Kockynowo–Olita line is not expected according to the reports available here.“

If the Russians, as was likely according to all available reports, were to hold out at Suwalki, there was every prospect that the corps heads of the 10th Army would engage with them in combat north of Suwalki on February 14th.

The Army High Command 10, in agreement with the Commander-in-Chief East, assigned the Przerośl–Suwalki road to the 75th Reserve Division, which had only seven companies available in Przerośl, even though the 10th Landwehr Division had arrived in Przerośl with its main forces. This had to now detour via Filipów and ended up behind the 3rd Reserve Division. The 75th Reserve Division was forced to wait until the road was clear; thus time was lost, and it could only set off at 10:30 a.m. Held up by Russian rearguard, three divisions of the two reserve corps only reached a line on February 14th that encircled Suwalki in the northwest and north at a distance of about ten kilometers. The 78th Reserve Division took control of the main Suwalki–Sejny road at Krasnopol. The enemy, who had been thrown back on the way, belonged to the 29th Infantry Division, which had previously been stationed in the Dartenyhem area. Contact with the enemy cavalry was avoided.

General Fritz v. Below had not yet received any orders from the Army High Command on the morning of February 14th. He considered a breakthrough attempt by the Russians to the east over Sejny likely. Only weak German troops had so far stood on the main road in Sejny itself. He therefore decided to prepare his corps for defense. The 42nd Infantry Division grouped around Sejny,

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

Half of the 31st Infantry Division was moved to the narrow passage east of Sejny. Only weak cavalry remained in Sereje; the division's detachment that had advanced there was moved to Lodzięże. The radio station of the XXI Army Corps had been marching all day. When General v. Below finally received the order from the Army High Command to continue marching south, evening was already approaching; he therefore hesitated to lead his troops into the impenetrable forests at night and postponed the execution of the ordered movements to the early morning of February 15. The 1st Cavalry Division, at the request of the XXI Army Corps, sent a brigade each to Sereje, Simno, and Lodzięże. By morning, demolition patrols had already been dispatched against the Wilna—Grodno railway in the area south of Merecz. The enemy had been repeatedly observed marching off to Olita.

In the 8th Army, the lake fortification Lyck—Rajgród finally fell on February 14. Would it be possible to encircle the enemy at Augustowo? Already, the Eastern Commander-in-Chief could foresee that the operation would grow into a great victory. Greater obstacles than the enemy's resistance were posed by the weather and road conditions. Especially the 10th Army, whose outermost flank had freedom of movement to the side and the possibility of bypassing, was dependent on very poor field roads, which required superhuman efforts from the marching troops. The divisions had laboriously made their way through the snow, the artillery lagged far behind the infantry, and batteries took a day to move their guns forward one kilometer. The troops could no longer maintain an orderly marching formation. Although three divisions had reached the Suwałki—Sejny road on February 14, progress was too slow. Human strength was no match for the forces of nature. Moreover, the threat on the southern front of East Prussia was taking on a menacing shape. All reports from February 14 indicated a reinforcement of the Russians in the area of Chorzelę—Kolno. Their Russian advance troops had already crossed the German border. All the more, Field Marshal v. Hindenburg had to ensure that the situation at Augustowo was brought to a conclusion as soon as possible.

The Army High Command<sup>1)</sup> came to the conclusion during the day that the Russians would try, under the protection of their

---

1) G. 206.

## Army High Command 10 intends to engage the enemy at Augustow.

Rear guards at Augustow—Raczki—Suwalki with the main forces to escape via Lipsk—Sopockinie to Grodno. Generaloberst v. Eichhorn decided to take Suwalki with the XXXVIII Reserve Corps and push towards Augustow, to block the northern edge of the Augustow Forest with the XXXIX Reserve Corps at Krasnopol, to advance rapidly on Augustow with the 42nd Infantry Division via Froncki, and the 31st Infantry Division was to block the enemy's retreat to Grodno by advancing via Kopciowo—Sopockinie. The 1st Cavalry Division was tasked with securing the rear and flank of the army.

f) The first encirclement attempt at Augustow from February 15 to 17, 1915.

Map 12 and Sketch i.

Even after the capture of the Lyck—Rajgrod lake passage, significant difficulties still faced the advance of the 8th Army on Augustow. By the evening of February 14, reports, mainly from aerial reconnaissance, had reached the Army High Command that the enemy had already marched from Rajgrod and Raczki towards Augustow shortly after noon. It was known that the 10th Army was engaged in combat at Suwalki and was marching from Sejny towards Augustow. General Otto v. Below then ordered the XXXX Reserve Corps, with the attached 4th Cavalry Division from Rajgrod, the 2nd Infantry Division, which rejoined Group Kosch from Lyck, and the 1/3 Reserve Division from Raczki to advance on Augustow. The 10th Landwehr Division was to engage in the battles of the 10th Army at Suwalki with a brigade. All other troops were withdrawn from the front. Special attention was given to protecting the long and vulnerable southern flank; what was happening behind the Bobr and Narew was unknown to the German command. Therefore, the enemy at Grajewo had to be quickly defeated. General Litzmann ordered the 80th Reserve Division to conduct the attack on Grajewo vigorously and as early as possible so that the division could soon follow the 79th Reserve Division to Augustow. The 4th Cavalry Division was to march on Augustow via Rydzewo after being relieved by the infantry on the morning of February 15.

At Grajewo, the situation quickly took a favorable turn. The Russians had timely withdrawn from the wide encirclement towards Ossowiec. General Litzmann traveled to Grajewo in the evening to quickly mobilize the freed-up units towards Rajgrod. The 6th Reserve remained at Grajewo.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

Infantry Brigade. The 80th Reserve and 4th Cavalry Division reached Rajgrod by evening.

There, the situation had also significantly improved over the course of the day. The 79th Reserve Division had pushed back a strong enemy column, which wanted to withdraw from Borzymmen to the southeast, in a northerly direction towards the advancing 2nd Infantry Division and reached Barglow without a fight. The 3rd Cavalry Brigade found the crossing at the Ssipnowo lock occupied. On the orders of the Commander-in-Chief East, the 4th Cavalry Division was now also assigned to block the roads leading from Augustow to the southeast by advancing over Krasnybor the next day. General Litzmann also sent a strong regiment of the 80th Reserve Division marching in the same direction. On the orders of the Commander-in-Chief East, a reinforced infantry regiment from the 79th Reserve Division was also sent ahead to Augustow during the night, to join hands with the parts of the 10th Army advancing there from the northeast. The main forces of both divisions were to follow from Barglow to Augustow early the next day. North of the XXXX Reserve Corps, the 2nd Infantry Division from the area east of Lyk had laboriously advanced on the roads covered with deep wet snow in rainy weather, especially since they were supported by several side columns of the 11th Landwehr Division marching south. The enemy offered serious resistance only in the evening just beyond the national border. The  $\frac{1}{3}$  3rd Reserve Division had thrown the enemy at Raczki after fierce fighting early in the morning, but soon encountered new resistance on the march to Augustow, which could only be broken after the intervention of Lieutenant General Clausius with the replacement brigade of his 10th Landwehr Division. The attack carried further against the road to Augustow brought the brigade 1000 prisoners. Rich food supplies in Raczki benefited the troops, whose heavy artillery and baggage train could not reach them that day due to the broken poor road conditions. The 9th Landwehr Brigade of the division meanwhile engaged in the battle of the 10th Army southwest of Suwalki.

Behind the army border south of Lyk, the reinforced 5th Infantry Brigade initially advanced as an army reserve into the area north of Gr. Rosinsko, from here to be used as flank protection both at Kolno and at Grajewo. The 11th Landwehr Division reached Grajewo Prostken and the area north of it on the march. East of Lyk, the  $\frac{1}{2}$  1st Landwehr Division advanced to Wyschow

## Advance of Group Litzmann and the 42nd Infantry Division on Augustow.

The High Command of the 10th Army moved its headquarters to Goldap on February 15. It had anticipated strong resistance from Russian rearguards at Suwalki for that day and therefore only deployed the XXI Army Corps towards Augustow and Sopotskin against the presumed retreat route of the enemy, while keeping the other corps tightly concentrated on the inner right flank.

However, the XXXVIII Reserve Corps found Suwalki evacuated at dawn; it captured 900 prisoners from the 27th, 28th, and 29th Infantry Divisions. A few kilometers south of the city, the enemy held its ground again but then used the night to evade the encirclement advancing from the northeast.

As two divisions were already advancing from the north over a narrow area via Suwalki, General v. Lauenstein wanted to direct his entire corps east of the Tartak narrows, but had to pull his corps westward due to the intervention of the army high command, which could not yet clearly assess the situation at Suwalki, so that only the 78th Reserve Division initially reached the Suwalki-Sejny road east of the narrows. The attempt to take control of the Czarna Hancza section at Wysoki Most failed, as the work detachment sent for this purpose, two companies and two guns, had to retreat before a superior enemy.

The XXI Army Corps attempted to make up for the lost February 14 by setting out early on the 15th. General Fritz v. Below could not decide to send the entire 42nd Infantry Division through the wilderness to Augustow. Only the 65th Infantry Brigade, under its commander, General v. Etzdorff, advanced towards Augustow. Three times it repelled the enemy that blocked its path; prisoners belonged to the Russian 27th, 28th, and 29th Divisions. After a march of 36 kilometers, the brigade reached Studzieniczna and Sajenec at the narrows east of Augustow in the dark. On the main road Augustow-Grodno, retreating Russian columns were observed. It was a situation of utmost tension, with the reinforced brigade in the midst of the vast forests. Meanwhile, the division had sent additional battalions and four batteries under Major Breyding of the 65th Infantry Brigade. General v. Below did not want to send more. With a battalion left by the Etzdorff Brigade at this location, he thus had three battalions and three batteries there. The weaker remainder of the division stayed at Sejny. The 31st Infantry Division had already received orders from the army command by 2:45 in the morning regarding the 1st Cavalry Division.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

and immediately advanced south over Kopciowo. The beginning reached Sopoczkinie and found the place filled with Russian columns, all of which were captured after the cover had fled. Another important step towards encircling the Russians was thus achieved.

The divisions of the XXI Army Corps had again made a tremendous leap forward (35 km). But with understandable concern, General v. Below looked forward to further developments, as a breakthrough attempt by the enemy to the east still seemed possible, and the bulk of the 42nd Infantry Division was widely dispersed in the woods in a threatening situation. The Army High Command also attached great importance to the road over Sejny. On the night of February 16, it ordered the XXI Army Corps Command to hold Sejny with a strong detachment. In any case, the roads from Augustów to Grodno remained usable by the enemy 24 hours longer than would have been necessary. That the enemy had derived considerable benefit from this was evidenced by statements from prisoners taken by the Eßtorff Brigade; according to them, almost all forces had hastily withdrawn from Augustów towards Grodno on the 14th and 15th.

The 1st Cavalry Division continued to secure the flank of the army in the area of Sereje-Simno-Lodzjeje. According to statements from local residents, large troop assemblies were to take place in Olita, which were soon reinforced from the east. The Army High Command therefore moved the 5th Guards Infantry Brigade from Marjampol to Simno; the 16th Landwehr Division was to occupy Marjampol, Wylkowskij, and Pilwiskij. The Commander-in-Chief East now refrained from the temporarily intended transport of parts of this division to the Narew Front<sup>2)</sup>.

Despite the day's combat successes and marching achievements, the army's grouping did not present a favorable picture. At Stuwalki, three divisions, hindered in their movement by the lake group southeast of the city, pushed the left wing of the 8th Army southwest, thus in front of the Augustów front. One division stood east of these lakes on the main road, where hardly any enemy was to be expected and to the south a completely impassable forest wilderness. The 42nd Infantry Division, scattered in the area from Sejny to Sajene, and the far-flung 31st Infantry Division faced the difficult task of penetrating the vast forest area and simultaneously advancing against the fortress of Grodno and the Njemen.

## Concerns of the High Command about the Flanks.

secure. What was happening behind this river section was unknown. The otherwise so informative radio messages contained nothing about the enemy at Grodno. Nevertheless, the possibility of relief attacks from the east had to be seriously considered. If the enemy, which could now be assumed with certainty, flowed eastward through the only escape left to him, namely through the narrow gap between Augustów and Wigry Lake, then initially it was only the 42nd Infantry Division that could stand against this flood.

The view that a major Russian attack was imminent between Przasnysz and Lomza was increasingly reinforced at the Eastern High Command. He already recognized that the main focus of the 8th Army would soon have to be relocated to the area of Lomza–Ostrowic, and in view of the expected flank threat there, he considered a reorganization of command relationships by subordinating the group Scholtz stationed at Kolno to the 8th Army. Flank protection was to be conducted offensively along the entire line, particularly at Przasnysz, Lomza, and Ostrowic. Initially, only forces that could gradually be distinguished at the 8th Army were available for this. It was a situation that put the nerves of the leadership to a severe test. Additionally, the Carpathian Front was to be reinforced by a division from the area of the Eastern High Command. Despite all this, Field Marshal von Hindenburg did not abandon hope for a major strike. The Russian radio messages left no doubt that the confusion among the enemy was growing because the leaders no longer knew where their troops were.

For the German high command, it was crucial to bring the situation at Augustów to a conclusion quickly, despite the exhaustion of men and horses, in full appreciation of the heavy sacrifices. The Eastern High Command had dispatched a General Staff officer from his staff on February 15, who was to report on the reasons for the sometimes slow progress of the movements based on his personal impressions. His report on the condition of the roads, the efforts, and sufferings of the troops did not fail to impress the Field Marshal and his advisors. They came to the conclusion that under such circumstances, fighting could continue for a short time, but no longer could a major operation be conducted.

## The Winter Nature Battle.

It was already considered risky to lead the German divisions, deprived of their artillery and machine guns, against a strong enemy determined to fight to the end in a tight encirclement. The Supreme Commander East adhered to his plan to carry out operations against the Russian 10th Army, which was expected to be encircled in the forest of Augustów, under all circumstances until the complete destruction of this army; however, it remained to be seen whether the next operational goal, the breakthrough to Białystok, could still be achieved. By February 15, a certain change in the perception of the situation had already begun, but it was not yet reflected in the orders. Initially, Field Marshal von Hindenburg limited himself to emphasizing the importance of the roads leading southeast from Augustów; the XXXX Reserve Corps and the 2nd Infantry Division were to immediately advance through Augustów, and the 4th Cavalry Division was to proceed for an overtaking pursuit via the Sopienow lock.

Even on February 16, the 8th Army had not yet reached the canal crossings near Augustów. That night, a severe snowstorm had again destroyed most of the wire lines; the roads became even worse. The Russians stubbornly held their rear guards in fortified positions, which were a few kilometers west and southwest of the town, leaning right on Lake Necko and left on the marshy canal lowlands near Netta. Against this bridgehead position, the 79th Reserve, both parts of the 80th Reserve Division, reinforced 2nd Infantry, and  $\frac{1}{3}$  3rd Reserve Division under the unified command of General Litzmann attacked. However, there was no room for encirclements, and the frontal attack took time. As night fell, only local successes were achieved. The hope of inflicting more serious damage on the retreating enemy here was diminished, as all attempts to reach further south across the canal and intercept the Russians at the Bobr crossings near Stabin and Krasnobór failed due to the unfavorable terrain and weather despite all the troops' dedication. Two detachments from the 80th Reserve Division, pushed against the enemy's retreat routes at Barszcze and Barglow, were just as unsuccessful as the 4th Cavalry Division in crossing the canal that day. The bridges were destroyed, and the several kilometers wide swamp strip on both sides of the canal was under enemy fire, who occupied the forest edges on the opposite bank.

## Concentration at Augustow and Suwalki.

The situation in the north of Augustow developed more favorably. Here, the vigorous advance of the 10th Landwehr Division under Lieutenant General Clausius led to a fine success. In relentless forward thrusts, the march through the lake narrows north of Augustow was achieved during the night. In the large Russian barracks located just south of there, 3000 prisoners, six guns, and a flag were captured by the division. Unstoppably, they continued in the darkness towards Augustow, which was occupied at 5 a.m. without significant resistance; the number of prisoners and captured guns doubled.

In the 10th Army, the disturbances caused by the weather on February 16th had an even more adverse effect, as the actually critical hours were only approaching for the widely spread encircling wing, while it became increasingly clear that the compressed inner wing of the army would no longer be able to strike.

The XXXVIII Reserve Corps had received orders to leave the 76th Reserve Division as army reserve at Suwalki and to advance only with the 75th Reserve Division on Augustow. This division met the 10th Landwehr Division at 5 p.m. at Oczko, which was already advancing on Augustow after successfully concluding battles at Raczki and Suwalki. The 75th Reserve Division had no choice but to let General Clausius's Landwehr take precedence and then to rest between Augustow and Suwalki. The 76th Reserve Division remained at Suwalki; strong security forces were pushed forward to the southeast.

The XXXIX Reserve Corps was also forced into inactivity in its previous position, as no enemy came from Suwalki anymore. When General von Lautenfün learned of battles at Matzare around noon, he ordered a shift of his divisions to the southeast.

The day was all the more eventful and significant on the rest of the army front, where the long-awaited breakthrough of the Russians finally occurred. It did not hit the XXXIX Reserve Corps, but the 42nd Infantry Division in the middle of the large forests, where they were weakest. In heavy fighting southwest of Matzare, the reserve lost eight guns and two machine guns. The rest of the units, barely more than 250 men, retreated to Tronki. The enemy had broken through the thin line of defense.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

This turn of events threatened to deprive the 10th Army at the last moment of the reward for their previous efforts and successful battles. A gap had been opened in the encircling ring, allowing the Russians to escape to the southeast. The 42nd Infantry Division was scattered, with a strong enemy standing between its two brigades on the only road. The fate of the 65th Infantry Brigade at Augustowo had to fill the leadership with grave concern. General v. Etorff, with his 65th Brigade, which counted only 4½ battalions here, was attacked east of Augustowo by a far superior enemy, but managed to hold on, albeit with heavy losses. Two guns were lost, a battalion at Sajenec was dispersed. Prisoners belonged to the Russian 64th Reserve Division. The enemy streamed east from Augustowo. It was apparently the XXVI Reserve Corps, which had previously stood before Löben. Thus, the retreat routes leading over Szabina, Krajnbowr, Lipsk to Grodno remained open to the enemy, unless the 31st Infantry Division succeeded in also blocking the southeastern side of the forest from Augustowo.

Meanwhile, the divisions at Suwalki-Sejny had not remained idle. Their measures to restore the situation at Makarce, however, could no longer take effect on February 16. The 42nd Infantry Division could help the least. The parts that were not on the road to Augustowo were ordered back by the Army High Command 10 from the General Command to secure Sejny. On the other hand, the 78th Reserve Division of the XXXIX Reserve Corps, anticipating the orders of their General Command, had already moved south early. In the evening, their foremost parts made contact with the enemy in Makarce.

During the critical battles in the woods, the 31st Infantry Division had remained in uninterrupted march from Kopciowo southward. The General Command had set Lipsk as their target. When Lieutenant General v. Berret arrived in Sopócinie at 7 a.m., reports from cavalry patrols were already available there, stating that between the forest area and the fortress of Grodno, apart from numerous fleeing baggage and columns, no enemy troops were present. Under security against Grodno and the bridges over the Augustow Canal, the advance over Holynka to Lipsk was accelerated. Rich spoils of columns and cattle, as well as war booty with 3000 prisoners, fell into the hands of the division. When the division wanted to take quarters at Holynka, it was already 4 p.m. — a downright

## Breakthrough of the Russians at the 42nd Infantry Division.

brilliant performance of the signal troops — the telegraphic communication of the General Command about the breakthrough of the Russians at Malacze. At the same time, the General Command expressed the suspicion that the breakthrough enemy would take the route over Plaska and south of the canal towards Grodno. General v. Berner then decided to position his division at Wolynta. The further march the next day over Lipsk to Dombrowo south of the Bobr, as originally planned, was now out of the question.

To secure against Olita, the 16th Landwehr Division occupied Mariampol and Wylkowyszki, the 5th Guards Infantry Brigade Simno. The 1st Cavalry Division remained in its previous formation. The demolition unit, which had been assigned against the Grodno—Wilna railway, had not been able to cross the Niemen, which was covered with a weak ice sheet.

The enemy had abandoned Suwalki early on February 15. The expected major battle there had therefore not occurred. Rather, the impression at the Supreme Commander H increasingly solidified that strong opponents were trying to break through in the forests of Augustow south of Lake Wigry and then south of the canal towards Grodno. According to everything known about the enemy, about four divisions were still in the pincer, which, however, was not yet completely closed. On the north and west front of Augustow, divisions of the 8th and 10th Army were accumulating. Everything between Rajgrod and Lake Wigry was now only pushing frontally towards the enemy and pressing him out of the sack against the double, but weak clamp, first the 42nd, then the 31st Infantry Division, the latter of which was also strongly threatened from Niemen and Grodno. Although from early February 15 a breakthrough on the major west-east connection from Suwalki was no longer in question, the Army High Command 10 was unable to decide to clear the road and focus the attack on the outer flank. Three divisions were trapped at and east of Suwalki on the main road, and yet parts of the 42nd Infantry Division, which had gradually shrunk to a battalion, were still held back at Seiny. Prompted by the events at Malacze, the 78th Reserve Division was finally moved south. These were the reports of the enemy west of Olita and southwest of Kowno. To cover the front against Niemen, the XXXIX Reserve Corps was to position itself on the 17th at Krasnopol

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

to concentrate and from February 18 onwards, to take over the security of the flank with the 5th Guard Infantry Brigade, the 16th Landwehr, and the 1st Cavalry Division, which were to unite at Sereje.

According to the order of the High Command of the 8th Army for February 17, the XXX Reserve Corps was to occupy and keep open the Bobr crossings at Sztabin and Krasnbor, while the 2nd Infantry Division was to position itself at the crossroads about seven kilometers northeast of Krasnbor. The 4th Cavalry Division was to advance over the Bobr into the area of Suchowola. The  $\frac{1}{3}$  3rd Reserve,  $\frac{1}{2}$  1st Landwehr, and 10th Landwehr Divisions were ordered to prepare between Augustów and the border. At dawn on February 17, it was recognized at Augustów that the enemy had vacated his position west of the town during the night. General Litzmann then directed the 79th Reserve Division east of Augustów over Bialobrzegi towards Krasnybor and, given the poor roads leading further southwest over the canal, deemed it necessary to pull the 80th Reserve Division behind the 79th Reserve Division over Bialobrzegi. Due to the excessive use of the road to Augustów, which was clogged with vehicles of all kinds, the advance of the two divisions was further delayed, as the  $\frac{1}{3}$  3rd Reserve Division, marching southwest from Augustów to its accommodation area, crossed the path of the XXX Reserve Corps. Therefore, the 79th Reserve Division only reached about five kilometers northwest of Krasnbor by evening in its foremost parts. The troops were at the limit of their capacity. The following 80th Reserve Division could only advance to Bialobrzegi by evening. They found the particularly poor road beyond the canal completely clogged by side-by-side vehicles and enemy guns. Despite these difficulties and the exhaustion of the troops, the division commander ordered the march to continue through the night after an unnecessary rest for clearing and repairing the road was known. The infantry only reached the crossroads at Sijon on the morning of February 18. The side detachments of the 80th Reserve Division encountered similar difficulties when crossing the swampy lowlands south of Augustów. The bridges over the canal and the nets were destroyed. The southern detachment fought its way across at the Sijonow lock and only reached Hutta by evening. Due to the complete impracticability of the roads on the other bank, the guns, vehicles, and horses had to be left behind, the freed machine guns

## Capture of Augustow.

carried and later moved forward on hastily assembled wagons. The northern detachment, supported by hunters and riflemen of the 4th Cavalry Division, after forcing the crossing at the Borki lock, advanced with great difficulty to south of Ciszow, but was unable to capture Stabin, which was held by the enemy. In view of the impassability of the roads, General v. Hofsmann had his cavalry mass detour via Netta-Bialobrzegi. North of the XXXX Reserve Corps, the 2nd Infantry Division had followed the enemy, who had withdrawn during the night, through Augustow early in the morning. Here it met the 65th Infantry Brigade of the XXI Army Corps and remained with its mass in Augustow overnight. The  $\frac{1}{2}$  3rd Reserve Division and the  $\frac{1}{2}$  1st Landwehr Division were no longer able to engage and prepared accommodations west of Augustow. The 10th Landwehr Division moved to rest northwest of Augustow.

The vigorous action of Lieutenant General Clausius with his 10th Landwehr Division had captured Augustow early on February 17th, creating a new situation for the 10th Army. When General v. Etorff, with the two battalions of his 65th Infantry Brigade, attempted to attack the enemy in their positions southwest of Studzienica early on February 17th, the Russians had withdrawn. The brigade immediately reached Augustow and encountered the 2nd Infantry Division, which was preparing to leave Augustow in an easterly direction. Cut off from any reinforcements, the weak brigade was unable to prevent the enemy from streaming eastward behind them at Marciac and in front of them on the main road. Undoubtedly, their appearance behind the Russians had a significant moral impact and contributed decisively to the high number of prisoners recorded by the 8th Army in Augustow. General v. Etorff remained with his greatly reduced brigade in Augustow on February 17th.

The XXXVIII Reserve Corps, which had been pushed out of the front the day before, was also held south of Suwalki on February 17th. It was able to use the pause in fighting to regroup and bring up the artillery that had been left behind. From the XXXIX Reserve Corps, General v. Lauenstein deployed the 77th Reserve Division to protect the army-

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

flank against the Njemen towards Lodzzieje in march. For the 78th Reserve Division and the rest of the 42nd Infantry Division, the task was to throw the enemy at Malcare and close the gap that still existed between Augustow and Froncki. However, the whole day passed before the stubborn resistance of the Russian rearguards could be broken here. Only after nightfall did the 78th Reserve Division occupy Malcare, after the enemy had vacated their position. Soon after the 78th Reserve Division, the 59th Infantry Brigade of the 42nd Infantry Division also arrived at Malcare, having captured several hundred prisoners from the enemy at Froncki. They were to pursue over Plaska and along the southern bank of the canal.

Thanks to the stubborn endurance of covering troops, the mass of the Russian XX Corps had been able to flow off to the southeast. Now it had to push against the second line of the Germans at the Wolkowysk section. Here stood the 31st Infantry Division, to intercept the enemy driven towards them. The situation at Grodno was still unclear. It was not to be assumed that the Russians would remain completely inactive there. Similar to the 65th Infantry Brigade at Augustowo, the 31st Infantry Division had the enemy in front and in their rear. Since strong columns had also been observed at Nowy Dwor marching east, an attack from the south had to be reckoned with eventually.

When in the early morning of February 17th Augustowo was surrounded from all sides, the mass of the enemy had already timely escaped the encirclement. At Augustowo, as could be determined by prisoners and wounded, the two divisions of the Russian XXVI Corps had broken through to the east and had overrun the weak parts of the German 10th Army, which wanted to block their way here<sup>1</sup>. The III Siberian Corps had apparently taken the retreat route south of Augustowo. In the forests north of Augustowo, the remaining four divisions of the Russian center had flooded the weakly occupied road Augustowo—Seiny in the area of Malcare. To still catch the two southern corps of the enemy seemed with so few prospects, as the cavalry found stubborn resistance everywhere when crossing the easily defensible canal and only slowly gained ground. From Russian radio messages, it became known during the day that the station of the III Siberian Corps had been in Dombrowo since February 16th,

---

1) p. 222.

which consisted of the XXVI Corps in Grodno. The general commands of the respective corps were probably also to be found there. Furthermore, the previous reports about the threat to the army flank from Olita and Kowno proved to be partly false, partly exaggerated. More important than ensuring flank protection seemed to be to bring reinforcements to the 31st Infantry Division. After the 5th Guards Infantry Brigade had reached Sejny,  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the 1st Cavalry Division was moved south via Kopciowo. Additionally, the 77th Reserve Division was set in motion by the Army High Command via Kopciowo, but it only reached as far as Berzniki—Sejny.

### g) The Encirclement from February 18 to 21, 1915.

Maps 13, 14 and Sketch i.

After the clash of the 8th and 10th Armies at Augustow, a new situation had arisen, which the Commander-in-Chief East had already recognized a few days earlier<sup>1)</sup>. With a firm hand, he intervened to disentangle the troop concentration at Augustow and assign new tasks to the armies according to the changed circumstances. The prerequisite for carrying out this new operation was the conclusion of the battles with the Russian 10th Army in the large forest area, whose successful outcome the Commander-in-Chief East could now hardly doubt, as the reorganization of the forest terrain was making ever further progress.

The focus of the 8th Army had now shifted; from the ever-lengthening flank at Narew and Bobr, a new front had emerged. East of the Vistula, two new hotspots had emerged north of Lomza and near Przasnysz. The German artillery deployment was taking place in front of Ojcowice. The swampy terrain, as in the autumn of 1914, posed the greatest difficulties for the infantry's advance.

The situation at Lomza caused serious concern. Caucasian and Guard troops had been newly identified there. It had become known from Russian radio messages that two Russian armies had been formed on the Bobr—Narew front: on the right flank the 12th Army, with its headquarters in Ostrow, with three corps, and on the lower Narew the 1st Army, also with three corps and a cavalry corps; its headquarters was in Jablonna. It was also established that considerable enemy forces (V Corps) were in front of the 9th Army's front-

---

1) p. 219.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

As they were drawn, there was no doubt that the enemy also shifted the main weight to the right bank of the Vistula. It was hardly to be assumed that the two armies on the Narew would limit themselves to defense. Rather, given the battles in the forests of Augustów, a strong relief attack by the Russians from the Narew was to be expected. On the German side, only weaker forces were available for defense. However, due to the slowness of all Russian operations, the Commander-in-Chief East hoped to preempt them in attack and to push into the movement of the 1st and 12th Army.

The new instructions issued on the evening of February 17 by the Commander-in-Chief East, which contained the foundations for the continuation of the operation, placed the further conduct of the battle, including in the hands of the advance detachment v. Eichhorn. For this, the XXXX Reserve Corps, the 2nd Infantry, and the 4th Cavalry Division were subordinated to him from the previous 8th Army. The 10th Army was to conclude the battles at Wolfzun, then to capture the Bobr section still defended by the enemy, and subsequently to attack Osowiec from the east. Additionally, it retained the task of rear protection against the Njemen with the fortress. Thus, there were three tasks initially set for the army.

Although the foresighted instructions of the Commander-in-Chief East had already been heeded before the new operational task, the main focus of the combat action was still temporarily with the encircled, heroically resisting Russian divisions west of Grodno. Here, unexpectedly heavy fighting developed. Initially, only the 31st Infantry Division with its now heavily depleted battalions and two brigades of the 1st Cavalry Division were available for this. The anxious question was whether they would be able to withstand the impact of the Russians still in the forest; they were estimated at about four, albeit heavily battered divisions. Were they morally broken after all the heavy fighting and hardships, that they would resign themselves to their fate when they also saw the terrible enemy in front of them on the retreat front, or would they, with the courage of despair, put their last strength into fighting their way to the protective walls of the fortress?

In tense anticipation, Generaloberst v. Eichhorn watched as the divisions advanced from all sides to confront the enemy, who was laboriously seeking his way back through the woods. However, the movements were very slow; the troops had

## Reorganization of the 10th Army. Measures for New Encirclement.

to fight endless marching difficulties. Wherever they encountered the enemy, they always faced stubborn resistance, which, despite all the troops' eagerness to attack, was not always quickly broken, as the artillery could not always keep pace with the infantry. In the order given by the army high command responsible for further directing the battle on February 18, it stated: "The remnants of the enemy armies have fled to Grodno and Olita, 60,000 prisoners, 65 guns, 98 machine guns, countless vehicles and war equipment of all kinds remained in the hands of the 8th and 10th Army." After the pursuit, the XXXX Reserve Corps and ½ I Army Corps were to reach the area south of the Bobr and further east, followed by the XXXVIII Reserve Corps to the area southeast of Augustowo to Bornarsch on Lipsk. The XXI Army Corps was tasked with continuing to block the previous positions with the 31st Infantry Division and bringing the 42nd Infantry Division into the area south of Sopodzinie. At its disposal, the 77th Reserve Division was set in motion from the area of Sejny to Sopodzinie. The general command of the XXXIX Reserve Corps was to assemble the 78th Reserve Division at Berzniki as soon as possible. The three groups of flank protection at Sereje, Simno, and Marjampol—Wylkowsky retained their task. The 4th Cavalry Division was set on Janow, the 1st Cavalry Division on Sidra. According to a report received early on February 18 from the 2nd Squadron of the 9th Uhlan Regiment, which had left Rajgrod on the morning of February 14 as a reconnaissance squadron of the 4th Cavalry Division, enemy forces of about a corps strength had been detected in the Plaska area the day before. This operationally important report confirmed the presence of still strong enemy forces in the woods; they must have been very

exhausted; the squadron, which pursued the retreating enemy, captured 220 Russians during the day. The target of the 1st Cavalry Division was south of the Bobr. However, it found the Bobr section between Lipsk and Grodno occupied and could not overcome it. In the area of Dombrowo, Russian columns were still observed moving eastward.

At the decisive point of the battlefield, west of Grodno, the 31st Infantry Division succeeded on February 18 in repelling all enemy attempts to emerge from the forest south of the canal towards Grodno. In doing so, all regiments of the Russian 28th and 29th Infantry Division as well as about 24 guns were certainly identified.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

Even though the division commander, General v. Berer, was quite confident about the further development of the battle, an enemy could break out from Grodno at any moment. Then his division was hardly able to cope with the situation. However, significant relief was brought by the arrival of considerable parts of the 2nd Infantry Division in Lipsk. The barrier between the canal and Bobr thus gained considerable strength. Also marching towards the 31st Infantry Division was the 77th Reserve Division from Sejny. Exhausted, it reached Kalety and Kopciowo on two roads with company strengths of about 50 men. It therefore required another full day's march before its intervention could be felt. The 78th Reserve Division was withdrawn from pursuit during the day and assembled around Sejny. From the northeast, the 42nd Infantry Division now also moved against the retreating enemy of the 31st Infantry Division. However, it only reached the canal lock at Plaska with its eight weak battalions.

The western flank of the army made little progress. Here, south of Augustowo, wedged in the angle between the two broad swamp sections, stood the defended Bobr lowland, the XXXX Reserve Corps with the 4th Cavalry Division, the 79th Reserve Division behind the 80th Reserve Division, the latter without artillery. The Russians still held bridgeheads at Sztabin and on both sides of the railway. It was the previous opponent: the III Siberian Corps, which, despite vigorous pursuit by the German attacker, had escaped over the canal and the Bobr and had now made a front again behind the bending section in a, as assumed, previously established, strongly fortified position. The attack of the 4th Cavalry Division and 80th Reserve Division against the Russians at Bobr could not achieve full success without artillery support. Only at nightfall did the Siberians evacuate the bridgehead at Sztabin and set the bridge on fire. General Litzmann wanted to force the crossing on February 19 after the arrival of the artillery.

The XXXVIII Reserve Corps, now entirely in the second line, was positioned at Augustowo to advance on Lipsk or also to support the XXXX Reserve Corps.

The focal point of the fighting on February 19 remained in the area north of Lipsk.

At Army Headquarters 10, now located in Suwalki, there was certainty about the presence and strength of the enemy in the large forests. Furthermore, the situation at

### Advance of the Right Wing of the Army against the Bobr Section.

Grodno somewhat cleared. Pilots reported two new war bridges west of Hoza and further north near Swientojansf. Additionally, according to prisoner statements, the Russian XV Corps was to be unloaded in Grodno for three days. These reports still suggested serious battles and prompted the army command in the morning to take new measures: it dispatched the 76th Reserve Division held ready at Augustów to Lipsk and the 79th Reserve Division of the XXXX Reserve Corps to Holynka. The 1st Cavalry Division, which had previously unsuccessfully attempted to cross the Bobr between Lipsk and Grodno, was to secure the rear of the line against Grodno.

While the 2nd Infantry Division was still arriving at Lipsk, the Russians launched a further northward breakthrough from the woods and advanced against Holynka. The commander of the 31st Infantry Division, General v. Berner, had to deploy his last reserves to regain lost ground in a counterattack. The presence of a very strong enemy still in the woods west of Wolfshuz was evidenced by the identification of four different enemy divisions, including the 27th Division, which had been driven into the large pocket after the battles at Wizajny by pressure from the north over Suwalki.

By evening, in addition to the 2nd Infantry Division, the beginning of the 76th Reserve Division had arrived in the Lipsk area. From the north, the 77th Reserve Division of the XXXIX Reserve Corps, which was assigned to the XXI Army Corps for the expected battles at Grodno, reached Kaledny and Kopciowo. The Niemen bridge near Swientojansf, reported by pilots, had already been destroyed again by the Russians, so that no immediate danger seemed to threaten from there. While a steadily strengthening

defensive front was forming here behind the enemy, the 42nd Infantry Division continued to press against the stubbornly holding rearguard of the enemy at the southern edge of the canal. Several times the enemy was driven off by encirclement. Finally, during the night, the beginning of the division moved into Rudawka.

Now, about five, albeit weakened in their operational strength, German infantry divisions were forcing the increasingly encircled enemy to surrender and were able to repel a relief attempt from Grodno. With the concentration of these divisions between Bobr and the canal, a weakening of the Bobr front south of Augustów was associated. Here now stood only the 4th Cavalry Division at Krasnybór and the 30th Reserve Division at Stabin, after General Litzmann had withdrawn his 79th Reserve Division.

### The Winter Battle of Masuria.

In view of the threatening situation at Lipisf, they had been set in motion there. Furthermore, the reconnaissance revealed that the crossing planned for the night of February 20th could not be carried out due to the strength of the enemy position. Overcoming the Bobr lowlands, which were often completely underwater, outside the crossings was out of the question. However, these had been destroyed by the Russians at Stabbin and Krasnybor and were under the fire of cleverly positioned machine guns and artillery. General Litzmann did not make use of the assistance of the 75th Reserve Division. The division was then stationed by the army command at Augustow and to the south.

On the left flank and in the rear of the army between the Niemen and the border,  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the 1st Cavalry Division held at Sereje, the 5th Guards Infantry Brigade at Simno, and the 16th Landwehr Division at Wylkowyski remained unchanged in their previous positions. No new reports about the enemy were available here. General v. Lautenstein held his 78th Reserve Division south and southeast of Sejny, as it was still expected that enemy forces might escape to the north.

The slow progress of movements on February 19th and the resistance of the Russians in the forest of Augustow continued to test the patience of the higher command. They had to come to terms with the idea that the two escaped corps at Bobr were apparently determined to offer serious resistance in a prepared position. A heavy battle was imminent over the kilometer-wide Bobr section, which, if the frontal attack was to succeed at all, required time for preparation. Given the extremely poor road conditions in the area of the XXXX Reserve Corps between Stabbin and Krasnybor, bringing up artillery and supplying ammunition encountered the greatest difficulties. Conditions were not much better in the Bobr section between Krasnybor and Grodno. An attack was out of the question until a decision had been made in the forests, especially since the grim news had arrived that the Russian XV Army Corps had been unloading from Grodno for days. Tension was rising. As serious as the situation of the German troops between Lipisf and Sopodnie appeared, the Commander-in-Chief East did not let hope fade to expand the victory by continuing the operation in accordance with the order of February 17th. Among the Russians, the regrouping of forces from Volhynia to East Prussia along the Vistula seemed to be progressing. Army Command 9 suspected that there were still 24½ infantry divisions at the front, while the Commander-in-Chief East

### The Enemy Holds the Bobr Section.

only assumed 19½ infantry divisions there. He therefore ordered the 9th Army, which had already transferred the 4th Infantry Division to the Southern Army on February 18, to now also withdraw the 6th Cavalry Division and ⅔ of the 3rd Infantry Division.

On February 19, General v. Falkenhayn requested information about the operational goals and intentions of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief. The significance was the Chief of Staff's note in this telegram that the Supreme Army Command would likely be forced around the second half of March to transfer very significant parts of the forces currently deployed in the northeast to other theaters of war and to reduce the reinforcements and ammunition quantities sent to the east early on. The aim was to bring the Russian armies into such a situation by the second half of March at the latest that they could not become dangerous in the foreseeable future. Field Marshal v. Hindenburg believed he could still hold on to his far-reaching goals for the time being. He replied on the same day: "Our set operational goal of the Eastern Army is to exert such pressure on the rear connections of the enemy by forcing the Narew-Bobr line and Bortsch southward that he retreats with his main forces behind the Vistula. Whether there is a prospect of achieving this goal will only become clear in a few days, and I will then provide Your Excellency with more precise information about the intentions of the Eastern Army."

In a hopeless situation, the entrenched Russians also fought desperately on February 20. There must have been men among them for whom no sacrifice seemed too great to save the honor of arms. From Sopodjine, General Fritz v. Below directed the battle. To the right of the 31st Infantry Division, the 77th Reserve Division was advancing on Sopodjine and Tartak; it was to secure southeast of Sopodjine against Grodno. To the left of the 2nd Infantry Division, the beginning of the 79th Reserve Division had arrived in Lipse early in the morning; it was to block the Bobr section. The 76th Reserve Division was to close a gap that still existed between the 2nd and 42nd Infantry Divisions on the orders of the Army High Command.

The 42nd Infantry Division, in close contact with the enemy for days, found on the morning of February 20 that the Russians had taken up a fortified camp on the forest edge near Lubinow. At 10 a.m., it launched an attack southward from Rudawka. By 3:30 p.m., the division had disappeared into the woods. The day was drawing to a close as the first shooters

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

Continuation of the attack emerged from the forest darkness and encountered heavily fortified trenches, from which heavy rifle and artillery fire met them. The temporary inferiority of the Germans was exploited by the enemy, who launched fierce counterattacks; it came to bitter close combat. General v. Etzdorf — one of the most vigorous leaders of the battle-tested XXI Army Corps — was struck by a deadly bullet in the front line, close to the goal he had been striving towards for days with superhuman tension and weakening will. The encroaching darkness hindered the enemy from further exploiting his artillery superiority. Meanwhile, the 76th Reserve Division, coming from the southwest, encountered strong resistance northwest of Mlynet, which they intended to break at dawn on February 21.

On the eastern defensive front of the upper cauldron, the two divisions contented themselves with holding the heights east and southeast of the Wolfsuk depression to allow the enemy to run into these positions. However, a breakthrough attempt by the Russians did not occur.

General v. Below intended to storm the next day, after the encircled enemy had been worn down by artillery fire; he believed he could justify the short delay of the assault until the next day; for as threatening as the reports of the assembly of a Russian corps in Grodno sounded, the enemy had so far only probed from this direction with weak detachments. After the arrival of the other divisions, the situation was no longer as endangered as in the previous days.

With utmost tension, the higher commanders directed their gaze towards that forest area, where they knew the remnants of the Russian 10th Army were surrounded like in a besieged fortress. What had the Grand Duke arranged to help them? Was the XV Corps the only troop that could attempt from Grodno to break the ring of besiegers? When would the relief attack from Niemen begin? For days, gloomy weather prevailed. On the night of February 20 to 21, it rained. During the day, there was intermittent rain, then wet snow. A worse weather situation was hardly conceivable for the troops, who had to spend the night partly outdoors. All movements on and off the roads were extremely difficult in the already swampy forest terrain. Therefore, all troop movements proceeded only slowly and with great effort.

North of Holynta, so much high-angle artillery was positioned

## Serious Situation West of Grodno.

brought, as could be procured, about five heavy and six light field howitzer batteries. After careful artillery preparation — the timing was dependent on the weather — the 42nd Infantry Division and the northern wing of the 31st Infantry Division were to attack, while their left wing south of Bohatery and the 2nd Infantry Division were to prevent Russian breakthroughs and secure against Grodno. The 77th Reserve Division was positioned south of Sopockinie to cover against the Niemen and Grodno. The 1st Cavalry Division with its two brigades was also located there.

The concentrated fire of the heavy and light artillery on the narrow forest clearing was devastating. Unfortunately, the exploding shells, as later became known, also endangered the German prisoners, who had shared the last meager supplies, danger, and worries with their enemies since the day of Malarec. It was not hidden from the forward German lines before the forest clearing that the enemy fled into the woods from the artillery fire. The commander of the 42nd Infantry Division, General v. Bredow, therefore requested a ceasefire at 11 a.m. and launched an assault. The division encountered only slight resistance in Lubinowo but also made few prisoners. The enemy was scattered. Advancing south, the 42nd Infantry Division connected with the 31st Infantry Division, which advanced on both sides of the Wolfkisz Brook towards Bw. Mlynet. Here, in this brook valley, which was bordered by forest strips on both banks, was the last refuge of the harried enemy, who was now driven into the arms of the 2nd Infantry and 76th Reserve Divisions. The former managed to repel the last breakthrough attempts of the Russians pushed southwest in the brook valley in conjunction with parts of the 79th Reserve Division by noon. However, the 76th Reserve Division was destined to reap the main harvest of the entire operation through its attack from the west. Their advance led to the complete dissolution of the encircled enemy, worn down by days of fighting, wandering, and hunger.

In further advances on Wolfkisz, the division encountered the attacking wing of the 31st Infantry Division, which was advancing upstream. Everywhere in the forests around the brook meander, the Russians now laid down their arms in droves. In some places, entire battalions had to be withdrawn from the front for transport. The 76th Reserve Pioneer Company alone captured five generals, a battery, and 2000 prisoners. The captured guns were partly stuck so deep in the swamp that they could not be recovered.

### The Winter Battle of Masuria.

Given the inaccessibility of the confusing forest terrain and all the associated further consequences, the encirclement of the Russians could not be completely seamless. It could not be prevented that smaller groups of the enemy escaped unnoticed and now appeared behind the German encirclement line. Two Russian companies managed to slip north between the 42nd and 76th Divisions. They suddenly attacked the divisional headquarters of the 42nd Infantry Division in Rudawka, where only 30 pioneers and some troops of the large baggage were available, but over 1000 prisoners of the transport awaited. The unequal battle ended with the surrender of 300 Russians.

While the last act of the great drama was playing out here in the swamps and forests of the Augustów Forest, strong Russian forces infiltrated from the south and east at the German encirclement line. As early as February 20, parts of the 1st Cavalry Division had encountered weak enemy west of the bridge at Hoza. On February 21, the enemy strengthened on the west bank of the Niemen to such an extent that it was only with the help of the 77th Reserve Division that they were able to repel them. The 78th Reserve Division of the XXXIX Reserve Corps had been held back in the Sejny area on February 20 to ward off any breakthrough attempts by the Russians and was transported to Kopciowo the next day to secure against the Niemen. After the battles at Grodno, it was to move to the fortified Olita.

General Fritz v. Below had considered the situation so threatening in the morning that he decided to bring all dispensable forces from the 2nd Infantry Division over Holynka. Meanwhile, this division itself had also come into battle with the front to the east. After a weak attempt in the morning, the enemy launched a serious attack from Grodno at noon. It was a fortunate circumstance that by this time the forest battles had almost come to an end. The 31st Infantry Division was ordered to hold Holynka at all costs. The 2nd Infantry Division, supported by ten companies and seven batteries of the 79th Reserve Division, turned back and faced the new enemy. These were young troops of the XV Army Corps, just transported from the interior of Russia, who stormed forward fearlessly, in dense masses and firing while standing, without artillery support. Their attack came to a halt despite the overwhelming numerical superiority, about 8000 dead lay in front of the front. When the 62nd Infantry Brigade of the 31st Infantry Division launched a counterattack in the afternoon, the enemy turned to flight. Thus, daily

### Unsuccessful Relief Attacks. Capture of Four Russian Divisions.

Concern awaited a relief attack from Grodno, which, if undertaken a few days earlier, could have relatively easily cleared the way for the remnants of the Russian 10th Army to Grodno. Similarly, the unsuccessful attacks of the Russians on the Bobr front at Sztabin, east of Lipsk and at Kraynburg — here the 4th Cavalry Division had to yield to enemy pressure — could not change the fate of the Russian 10th Army.

The winter battle in Masuria had come to an end. It had led to the destruction of significant parts of the Russian 10th Army. Crowded into an ever-narrowing space, completely surrounded and finally exposed defenseless to the murderous fire of a powerful artillery, utterly exhausted by hunger and cold, the brave enemy finally laid down their arms after an honorable fight! By February 22, the spoils counted: 92,000 prisoners, including 9 generals, 295 guns, more than 170 machine guns. Of these, the German 10th Army accounted for 67,500 prisoners and 249 guns. Immense booty of weapons and military equipment lay still unclaimed in abandoned Russian positions, on retreat roads, and in the extensive forests. This great success of the German arms was achieved with relatively few bloody sacrifices, mainly thanks to what captured Russian officers called an "elegant" operation. The XXI Army Corps had suffered the most, having to endure the heaviest fighting alongside the greatest marching achievements. Without the marching losses, it had lost 120 officers, 5600 men in recent days; a general had fallen, two regimental commanders were wounded. Of these losses, the 65th Infantry Brigade alone accounted for 60 officers and 2000 men. Weeks of bivouacs under the open sky in icy frost, snowstorms, or even thaw had also sapped the strength of this excellent troop. Diseases and frost damage of the XXVIII and XXXIX Reserve Corps, with minor combat losses (only three percent of combat strength), cost a third of their strength. The combat troops were exhausted and overstrained, their strength depleted.

The operation was carried out according to plan. Unfavorable weather conditions, especially sudden weather changes, threatened

---

1) According to Russian reports, the four Russian divisions (27th, 28th, 29th, 53rd R.) lost 1545 complete guns, 1859 vehicles, and 5446 horses (Kamenitzki, p. 202). Apparently, before the closure of the ring, weak parts of the 28th and 53rd Divisions escaped south over the Bobr.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

At times questioning the success, leadership and troops overcame this difficulty and performed admirably in enduring efforts and hardships. In view of the stubborn resistance of the Russians at Lyck, in the forest of Augustow and at the Bobr, it had so far not been possible to reach the Wilna—Grodno—Bialystok railway and thus exert pressure on the enemy's connections.

### Defense against Russian counterattacks by the 10th Army from February 22 to 27, 1915.

Maps 11, 12, and 14, Sketch i.

After the last major final battle at Wolfusz, the German 10th Army now faced the new task of forcing the crossing over the Bobr lowlands between Ossowiec and Grodno under cover to strike the enemy's Bobr—Narew front from the rear. This required regrouping and thus time. The heavy fighting and efforts of the winter battle had taken the mental and physical strength of the troops to the extreme limit. Nevertheless, rest and recovery were not yet possible; for the enemy, who was strengthening daily, proceeded to counterattacks along the entire front.

Generaloberst v. Eichhorn faced a very difficult task. The ice cover of the Bobr still held, but the thawing of the last few days had softened the swamps again. The smaller Bobr arms could not be kept open, but in any case, it was necessary to overcome an exposed, many kilometers wide lowland in view of the enemy. Moreover, the task was hardly solvable with the Grodno fortress in flank and rear. The command of the 10th Army had not yet abandoned the intention to attack Grodno. The Commander-in-Chief East, however, seemed to assess the situation differently in view of the events at the Narew. He did not give permission for the attack on Grodno, for which the 77th Reserve Division was intended. The further development of the situation then forced the plans regarding the Niemen fortresses to recede.

On February 22, the army command was initially still under the impression of the Russian advance over the Bobr at Krasnybor, before which the 4th Cavalry Division had to evade to Jastrzembna. However, serious fighting did not occur, as the enemy

---

1) p. 237.

## Resistance of the Russians at the Bobr Section.

had cleared the northern Bobr banks before the attack on Jastrzembna by the 80th Reserve Division became effective.

In general, the deployment of the 10th Army on February 22 presented the following picture:

In the threatened Bobr section on both sides of the railway, General Litzmann moved the 80th Reserve Division. For this, the 4th Cavalry Division took over security in the western Bobr section. Behind this army unit, the majority of the 75th Reserve Division was relocated as an army reserve to the area south of Augustow; an infantry regiment had to be transferred to the 8th Army at Grajewo.

Between Lipsk and the Augustow Forest, the divisions were heavily mixed up. The 76th and 79th Reserve Divisions regrouped at Lipsk and to the west. The 2nd Infantry Division remained at Rygolowka, front against the Bobr and Grodno. To the north, with the front against Grodno, and south at Sopotskinie, where General v. Below had taken quarters with his staff, the 31st Infantry Division joined, whose business line was only two kilometers from the advanced works of the Grodno fortress. Behind it, the 42nd Infantry Division, as the reserve of General v. Below, took quarters in the villages between Holynka and the forest.

In front of the 77th Reserve Division and 1st Cavalry Division, the enemy had cleared the west bank of the Niemen and destroyed the bridge at Hoza. Both divisions took quarters at Sopotskinie and north of the canal. Further north, General v. Lauenstein in Sejny received reports of troop unloadings at Olita, column movements on the road from Grodno to the north, and bridge work at Swientojansz. However, when the 78th Reserve Division, which had been set in motion there, arrived with the vanguard at the Niemen, they found only a half-finished crossing. After its completion, some companies were thrown across the river. The bulk of the 78th Reserve Division remained in Kopciowo.

In Leipuny, parts of the 1st Cavalry Division secured, in Sereje a battalion of the 5th Guards Infantry Brigade. The bulk of the brigade occupied the lake position under construction on both sides of Simno.

From the 16th Landwehr Division, which had distributed its composite Landwehr Brigade to the locations of Marjampol, Pitwikzi, and Wylkowsky, a Landwehr Regiment 33 from Wirballen was transferred to the 8th Army, the other remained ready for loading at Wirballen. From the replacement brigade Siebeb, a regiment had arrived in Wylkowsky, a regiment was

## The Winter Masurian Battle.

February 25th departed to Lyck for the 8th Army. At Tauroggen, only the weak Hoffmann detachment secured<sup>1</sup>).

In this grouping, the 10th Army had to repel the fierce Russian attacks of the following days. Constant reinforcements on the enemy side gradually led to a balance of the situation. There were days of bitter local battles, in which the previous victor and attacker were completely pushed into defense.

The intention of the Army High Command 10, on February 24th, to attack from the Augustowfski Canal to Rygolawka with the XXXVIII and XXXX Reserve Corps as well as the 2nd Infantry Division, did not come to fruition, as in the early morning hours of February 23rd, the Russians managed to cross the lowlands at three points before the 4th Cavalry Division and advance further towards Lipsko and Wrotny. General Litzmann therefore had to request the support of the 75th Reserve Division and draw parts of his two divisions to the endangered section. The command over the 75th Reserve Division 4th Cavalry Division was taken over by General v. der Marwitz. Likewise, the 76th Reserve Division was pushed west to the railway. The orders for the counterattack were based on the idea of cutting off the enemy who had crossed from the crossing points or at least gaining the southern bank simultaneously with the retreating enemy. However, before the movements on the few and poor roads were carried out, the Russians expanded their successes on February 24th. The situation became critical. However, after fierce fighting during the course of this day, with the reinforcements of the 75th, 76th, and 79th Reserve Divisions, it was possible to push the Russians back over the section. Only Stabin remained in their hands. At Czarniewo, the 75th Reserve Division pursued the enemy over two Bobr arms; but before the last one, their strength failed. Simultaneously, a Russian attack at Jatszembna was repelled by the 80th Reserve Division.

The Army High Command now believed that the crossing to the southern Bobr bank could most likely be forced at the 75th Reserve Division. It therefore ordered on the morning of February 25th General Litzmann to make all available parts of the 76th Reserve Division General v. der Marwitz available again.

The 75th Reserve Division had meanwhile restored the crossings over the two Bobr arms; the bridge at Dungly over the third river arm had been blown up by the Russians in time; here

---

<sup>1</sup>) G. 243.

## Successful Battles around the Bobr Section.

The 75th Reserve Division was stuck. The enemy fire was so intense that any movement on the 2 to 3 km long dam, which led through the swamp depression, had to cease. An attack was only to be launched after thorough artillery preparation.

In the central section, the 4th Cavalry and 79th Reserve Division succeeded in taking Stabbin on February 25 after fierce local fighting and pushing the Russians back to the south bank. The enemy had cleared the north bank in front of the 80th Reserve Division. General Litzmann intended to advance over Ostrow at dawn on February 27 after consolidating stronger forces.

However, the prospects for success continued to deteriorate. On February 25, the weak forward parts of the 75th Reserve Division fell into captivity at Dwugly after bravely enduring the entire day in the snow water of the Bobr swamp and without assistance under enemy fire. On the orders of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief, the 4th Cavalry Division and the two divisions of the XXVIII Reserve Corps had to be drawn to the threatened Narew front in the following days. General Litzmann now had to hold the long Bobr section from the canal to Lipit with his two divisions alone. Additionally, the further dwindling of combat strength was a concern; the battalions, which had to rush from one endangered point to another day and night in snow and swamp, partially sank to 220, 180, even down to 78 rifles. Therefore, carrying out the attack was no longer feasible.

During this defense against strong Russian counterattacks at Bobr, the 2nd and 31st Infantry Divisions were also heavily attacked west of Grodno. General v. Below was eventually forced to re-integrate the 42nd Infantry Division into the front line. The focal point of the battles, where the Russians were supported by effective fire from the fortress guns of Grodno, was at the height 214 south of Kaplanowce, defended by the 31st Infantry Division. Holding this position cost heavy sacrifices. General v. Below could not initially decide on their voluntary evacuation, as the height was the tactically most important point in the foreground of the fortress due to its good observation against Grodno.

On the orders of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief, a reinforced brigade of the XXI Army Corps was to be withdrawn for transport to Augustowo on the night of February 27. However, this dispatch encountered unexpected difficulties. At 6 a.m., a strong Russian attack hit the relief, which was now interrupted

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

had to. Terrain was lost, several batteries fell into the hands of the enemy. It took until the evening hours before the situation was restored. The Russians lost 2600 prisoners in the process. The Army High Command now tasked the 2nd Infantry Division with the assignment of a brigade.

During the same days, the XXXIX Reserve Corps repelled Russian attacks from the east bank of the Njemen with heavy losses for the enemy, but the companies that had crossed to the east bank at Swientojansz had to be withdrawn.

Further north, no serious battles took place. Here, on February 24, the commanding general of the I Army Corps, General Kosch, who moved his headquarters to Kalwarja, took command of all units entrusted with flank protection. The 1st Cavalry Division was moved from the canal to Sejny and Leipuny, where parts of the 5th Guard Infantry Brigade were also stationed; at Simno, the rest of the 5th Guard Brigade and parts of the 16th Landwehr Division secured; Landwehr Regiment 4 was transferred to the Army Detachment Gallwitz on February 27; the rest of the Landwehr Division, which overall represented only a weak brigade, was stationed at Kalwarja and Marjampol, with border troops at Daußze; Reserve Brigade (Scheede without a regiment, which was moved from the 25th to the 8th Army to Lyck), secured with the bulk at Wladislawowo and had border troops at Szaki.

Thus, the entire 10th Army had been on the defensive since February 26. On the evening of that day, the Army High Command received a message from the Supreme Commander East that a continuation of the offensive was not intended. Recognizing that the position in which the 10th Army was located west of Grodno under the fire of the fortress artillery could not be held for long, the Army High Command ordered the XXI Army Corps to withdraw the front at this point. In the army order for February 28, it was stated that further attacks over the Bobr were excluded for the time being. Until the expected regrouping of the army, the following were to block:

XXXX Reserve Corps the Bobr from Czarniewo to Lipsk (both inclusive); Group Szelow (XXI Army Corps,  $\frac{1}{2}$  2nd Infantry Division) against Grodno via Rygolowka-Holynka up to the heights south of Sopockinie; XXXVIII Reserve Corps from there to the Njemen and further to Swientojansz; Group Kosch from there to the Baltic Sea.

---

1) G. 239/240.

## Evacuation of the Northern Tip of East Prussia by the Russians.

In the northern tip of East Prussia, the last Russian troops also had to evacuate German soil. On both sides of Tilsit, the Ersatz Brigade Esebeck took over the Memel protection on February 8, while the previous troop command Tilsit was moved to the lower Szies group on February 9. When the planned offensive of the Russian 68th Reserve Division was announced via radio on February 9, the Army High Command 10 ordered counterattacks by both divisions under the command of the Governor of the Fortress Königsberg, Lieutenant General v. Pappritz. On February 14, the position just north of Tilsit was evacuated by the Russians. On February 17, the Esebeck Brigade pursued the retreating enemy to the deeply incised Jesziorupa and was able to take enemy columns at Tauroggen under artillery fire. The Hoffmann division also participated in the battles of the Esebeck Brigade on February 17. It had crossed the solid ice cover of the Memel on the night of February 13 and arrived late in the evening of February 16 on the right wing of the Ersatz Brigade. After the occupation of Tauroggen on February 18, the attack movement concluded. The task of the Esebeck Brigade was to secure the 16th Landwehr Division from Schirwindt via Sudargi-Tauroggen to the Baltic Sea; its staff quarters were located in Pillkallen. A Russian radio message from February 21 revealed that the Russians intended to hold Stawhile.

### 4. Protection of the Right Flank of the 10th Army.

a) Attack of the 8th Army against the Narew–Bobr Line in February 1915.

From February 11 to 21.

Maps 12, 13, and 14.

While the right wing of the 8th Army advanced to encircle the enemy at Augustów, the protection of the ever-lengthening southern flank allowed a new front facing the Narew–Bobr to emerge. The opaque veil that the large swamp depression placed before the movements of the Russians required caution from the German leadership.

On February 11, the Commander-in-Chief East of the 8th Army ordered the preparation of a reserve group, ideally the size of an army corps, in the area of Szczuczyn–Grajevo. The Army High Command considered the 5th Infantry Brigade of the 1st Landwehr Division and the 6th Reserve Infantry Brigade of the 3rd Reserve Division, which had been drawn behind the right wing of the army, and ordered the 1st Landwehr Division, composed of two brigades, to form another brigade.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

to withdraw from the front and prepare for transport to Rudczanny at Angerburg.

In the staff of the Commander-in-Chief East, concern for the protection of the long flank on the southern border of East Prussia increasingly came to the forefront. Since February 12, there was the impression that the Russian 12th Army, marching on the Narew, would shift its focus to an advance towards Ortelsburg. The IV Siberian Corps was located at Rozan, the XXVII Corps at Przasnysz. However, the foremost brigade of the I Reserve Corps<sup>2)</sup> rolling in from West Poland was deployed at Willenberg. By February 13, the Russian advance over Grajewo towards Prostken was a warning of the dangers posed by the Bobr—Narew fortresses. Incoming reports on February 14 indicated an enemy reinforcement in the area of Chorzele—Kolno; north of the latter place, its advance troops had already crossed the border. The Russian relief attack against the long connections of the 8th and 10th Armies seemed to be underway.

The Commander-in-Chief East had already sent the first instructions for the capture of the fortresses Lomza and Osowiec to the Army Command 8 on February 13. The execution of the attack on Lomza was assigned to the XX Army Corps of General v. Scholtz<sup>3)</sup>. It was immediately subordinated directly to the Commander-in-Chief East but received its orders through the command of the 8th Army, to which the corps was "attached" for the new operations. For the attack against the fortress Osowiec from the northwest, the 1st Landwehr Division was designated<sup>3)</sup>, while the XXXX Reserve Corps and the ½ I Army Corps, after completing the battles against the Russian 10th Army south of Augustowo, were to encircle over Szablin—Suchowola and bring down the fortress through an infantry attack against its rear front. When several Russian columns were reported advancing from Kolno towards the border on February 14, General v. Scholtz received the order to attack this new enemy threatening the southern flank of the army. Since his 37th Infantry Division at Myszyniec faced stronger enemy forces

---

<sup>1)</sup> p. 250. — <sup>2)</sup> p. 171.

<sup>3)</sup> From the 1st Landwehr Division at the time:

- a) the 5th Infantry Brigade was already deployed with the XXXX Reserve Corps,
- b) the 34th Landwehr Brigade was in transport from Angerburg to Rudczanny,
- c) the 6th Landwehr Brigade, including the divisional staff and the entire heavy artillery of the 1st Landwehr Division, was marching from the area southwest of Goldap via Marggrabowa—Wielitzken.

## Battles at Lomza and Olsowiec.

was held opposite, the reinforced 34th Landwehr Brigade of the 1st Landwehr Division, which had arrived at Johannisburg, was assigned to him. Up to Grajewo, the 6th Reserve Infantry Brigade and the 11th Landwehr Division were to secure. On February 16, General v. Scholz drove the enemy from his heavily fortified position at Kolno; 700 prisoners from the 1st Caucasian Rifle Brigade were captured as booty. These were therefore freshly transported enemy forces. On the road to Lomza, the Russians still held the heights north of the Strodka. East of the Scholz Corps, the 6th Reserve Infantry Brigade took over security up to the area north of Wonsch; following it, between Wissna and Lent, the 11th Landwehr Division, now designated to attack Olsowiec instead of the 1st Landwehr Division, moved closer to the fortress. The reinforced 5th Infantry Brigade reached the area southwest of Bialla.

According to an instruction from the Commander-in-Chief East, preparations for the attack against the fortifications of the Narew-Bober line were to be accelerated so that the bombardment of the works of Lomza and Olsowiec could begin on February 19. On the morning of February 17, the XX Army Corps drove the enemy south of Kolno, but could only cross the Strodka with weak forces. The 5th Infantry Brigade, which was to turn against Wissna together with the 6th Reserve Infantry Brigade, reached Gsoszczyn due to route difficulties. The 6th Reserve Infantry Brigade, subordinated to the 11th Landwehr Division, advanced with it to about 10 kilometers from Olsowiec. The enemy had withdrawn his outposts into the fortress. In the evening, the Army High Command made the 5th Infantry and the 6th Reserve Infantry Brigade available to General v. Scholz for the rapid opening of the Strodka section for the following day. The two brigades were ordered to attack the Russian flank at Stawiski.

These instructions were already related to the reorganization of the 8th and 10th Army carried out by the Commander-in-Chief East on February 17. From the 8th Army, the XXXX Reserve Corps, the ½ I Army Corps, and the 4th Cavalry Division joined the 10th Army, and the Commander-in-Chief of the 8th Army, General Otto v. Below, was tasked with attacking the Narew-Bober fortresses Lomza, Wizna<sup>2)</sup>, and Olsowiec with the XX Army Corps (without the 37th Infantry Division), the 3rd Reserve Division, and the 1st and 11th Landwehr Division.

---

1) G. 228. — 2) Wizna was fortified in the field.

## The Winter Masurian Battle.

attack; the opening of fire was postponed to February 20. The 10th Landwehr Division was to take quarters halfway between Lyk and Augustow on February 19.

In accordance with this army order, Army High Command 8 had already issued instructions during the day for the attack against the Narew-Bober fortifications and initiated the deployment of the necessary artillery and engineer reinforcements. The army's grouping on the evening of February 17 was as follows:

The 37th Infantry Division of the XX Corps, remaining with the Gallwitz Army Detachment, was joined east of the Ssawa by the Landsturm border guard of the Deputy General Command of the XX Army Corps in the Demby-Leman line. General v. Scholtz was positioned with the 41st Infantry Division of his XX Corps and the 34th Landwehr Brigade of the 1st Landwehr Division in front of the Stroda section south of Kolno. In front of Dvinsk stood the 6th Reserve Infantry Brigade of the 3rd Reserve Division and the 11th Landwehr Division under General of Infantry v. Freudenberg, fighting for the outskirts of the fortress. The deployment area for the siege artillery had not yet been secured. The 5th Infantry Brigade had arrived in Szczuczyn. The rest of the 8th Army, the 10th Landwehr Division, the  $\frac{2}{3}$  3rd Reserve Division, and the  $\frac{1}{3}$  1st Landwehr Division were still positioned west of the town after the retreat at Augustow. General v. Below now made the 5th Infantry Brigade and 6th Reserve Infantry Brigade available to General v. Scholtz. The Army High Command moved its headquarters to Lyk on February 18.

The attack by the XX Corps made significant progress on this day. Northwest of Stanisfki, the enemy gave way. On February 19, they also evacuated the Stroda section. The 41st Infantry Division advanced in a broad front to just north of Maly Plock. The 5th Infantry Brigade and the 6th Reserve Infantry Brigade encountered strong resistance from the Russian Guard and advanced to north of Dobryjalowo and to Jedwabno. On February 19, the border guard advanced with its officer to Ptaki on the Pisa. Opposite the Scholtz group, however, the enemy — apparently the 1st Caucasian Rifle Brigade, the Guard Corps, and the IV Siberian Corps — offered stubborn resistance in the following days, so that no significant progress could be made. The 34th Landwehr and the 5th Infantry Brigade were reunited under the command of the commander of the 1st Landwehr Division, General v. Jacobi. The 6th Reserve Infantry Brigade had to evacuate Demby from more extensive attacks by a superior enemy on February 20. The enemy threatened to break through to the north here. Meanwhile, General Kolene was with the rest of his 3rd Reserve Division

## Successes of the Scholz Corps.

arrived and was able to somewhat restore the situation. Against new encirclement attempts by the enemy threatening at the Bobr, the 6th Landwehr Brigade (of the 1st Landwehr Division) was made available to him for February 22, which had reached the area northeast of Stawiski as an army reserve.

On the western flank of the XX Army Corps, from the evening of February 21, the ½ 10th Landwehr Division (Replacement Brigade Königsberg) arrived at Kolno<sup>1)</sup>. This reinforcement was all the more welcome as the Russians were visibly strengthening between Plia and Stroda. Thus, there were now eight brigades deployed against the Narew section Lomza—Wizna.

For the reinforcement of the 11th Landwehr Division in front of Osowiec, the army high command initially had no forces available. The Russians offered stubborn resistance here in a strong position and were extraordinarily favored by the open swamp terrain.

From February 22 to 27.

In front of Osowiec, the enemy retreated to the fortress on February 22. However, the artillery position now reached was still not sufficient according to the reconnaissance on February 23; it had to be advanced further. Therefore, the fire against the fortress could not yet be opened. According to verbal instructions from the Commander-in-Chief East, which arrived at the army high command 8 on the evening of February 22<sup>2)</sup>, the enemy in front of Lomza was initially to be pushed back only to the positions, while the attack against Osowiec was to be carried out. Consequently, all heavy batteries available to the 8th Army were directed to the 11th Landwehr Division. The assault infantry was also reinforced. On February 23, the 3rd Reserve Division succeeded in pushing the enemy back at the Bobr and advancing the front to the river through the deployment of the 6th Landwehr Brigade.

On the right flank of the Scholz Corps, infantry of the Russian V Corps was detected at the Plia on February 26. In the stubborn defense of the enemy, it was only on February 26 and 27 that the combined attack of the right flank of the 41st Infantry Division and the 10th Landwehr Division deployed between Plia and Stroda succeeded in driving the enemy out of its strong hill-forest position south of Lomza; 1100 prisoners from the Russian V Corps remained in German hands. According to an intercepted radio message, it was necessary to

---

1) The other half of the 10th Landwehr Division (9th Landwehr Brigade) was ordered to march to the Gallwitz Army Detachment by the Commander-in-Chief East. — 2) See p. 258.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

The entire Russian V Corps was expected in this area. On February 27, the enemy began strong attacks on the west bank of the Pisa; local successes of the border guard were lost again.

In front of Osowiec, the bombardment of the works was opened on the afternoon of February 25 with four 21 cm mortar battalions and an Austrian 30.5 cm motor mortar battery. On February 27, a total of ten 10 cm and two 15 cm naval guns, 32 heavy field howitzers, 32 mortars, four Austrian motor mortars, and three heaviest calibers (28, 30.5, and 42 cm) were in action against the fortress. The Russian artillery initially responded noticeably weakly. By the evening of February 25, Fort II in the road bend north of the place seemed to have been subdued, the central work (Fort I) in the immediate vicinity of the city was burning in several places. According to prisoner statements, the entire III Caucasian Army Corps was in the area of Osowiec; the heights of the opposite Bobr bank were, as confirmed by aerial observation, prepared for defense.

b) The Offensive of the Army Detachment Gallwitz from February 9 to 28, 1915.

Maps 13 and 14.

On February 7, the Commander-in-Chief East had assigned General v. Gallwitz the cover of the offensive of the 8th and 10th Army against the Russian 12th Army north of Warsaw as well as the unconditional protection of Bzura and Strykowens and ordered him to initially leave the command over the Zastrow Corps to General v. Scholtz ... "In their current composition" — as stated in the order — "the army group is in a position to withstand the attack of the Russian 12th Army, especially since the army units have a good position with the infantry and have ample heavy artillery. As soon as the deployment of the army group is completed — around February 11 — consideration will be given to advancing the right wing of the army group initially up to the Etwa, in order to stand in the flank of a possible advance of the Russian army and to gain connection to the left wing of the 9th Army at the Bzura estuary. I reserve further instructions."

Attacks from February 9 to 16.

The grouping forward of the East Prussian southern border was as follows on February 9: From the Thorn government stood on the right

### Situation of the Army Detachment Gallwitz on February 9.

Vistula banks between Włocławek and northwest Stemple the Corps

Dichthut; on its left wing was the reinforced 75th Infantry

Brigade from the XX Army Corps deployed). South of it, the

1st Guard Reserve Division, unloaded at Strasburg, moved on both sides of Szaw-

towo, where the combined Guard Cavalry Brigade of the 2nd Cavalry

Division had suffered heavy losses in recent days). On the left wing of the 1st Guard

Reserve Division extended eastward slightly beyond the main road Rypin

Sierpc. The Guard Cavalry Brigade was subordinated here; to the left

of it, the rest of the 2nd Cavalry Division extended to east of Radzanow.

The Zastrow Corps stood in a wide arc forward Mława up to

Janowo. From there to the Pißfel, Landsturm secured; the

¾ XX Army Corps was in the process of arriving.

General v. Gallwitz took command of the army detachment in Deutsch-Cylan on the afternoon of February 10.

On the same day, the comprehensive attack on Sierpc had already begun on the orders of the Commander-in-Chief East.

General v. Gallwitz was of the opinion that only a

further eastward attack by the left wing of his army detachment

could prevent the enemy from shifting forces to support his 10th Army in

Masuria. He therefore decided to carry out the already initiated

movement of his right wing, but then

to lead a second thrust on the eastern wing of his

army detachment with the I Reserve Corps, which was to be assigned to the 9th Army, as envisaged by the Commander-in-Chief East.

The attack on the right wing of the army was successful; on the night

of February 12, Sierpc was taken by storm, and in the next two days Goleszyn and the area northwest of Dobrin and Racionz were reached. Meanwhile, on the left wing of the army, Lieutenant General v. Staabs with the ½ 37th Infantry Division advanced beyond Kadzidlo on February 12, but the next day had to retreat halfway to Myszinze before a superior counterattack.

After the Scholz group was withdrawn from the area of the army detachment on February 13 on the orders of the Commander-in-Chief East, General v. Gallwitz was left with only the Dichthut and Zastrow Corps, the 1st Guard Reserve, the 37th Infantry, and the 2nd Cavalry Division, as well as Landsturm troops. General v. Gallwitz, whose headquarters had been moved from Deutsch-Cylan to Soldau on February 14, now wanted to proceed according to his previous considerations with the

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

The I. Reserve Corps arriving at Willenberg was to attack southwards as a shock group, but the right wing and the center were to be held so that a connection to the 9th Army on the Vistula was established, and the front then ran from here in the shortest line approximately to the south of Mlawa. This line was reached by February 15. The planned attack of the I. Reserve Corps was to be accompanied by the 1st Guard Reserve Division through Borstko to the east, approximately towards Ciechanow. The Corps Dickhuth, whose line had to be extended as a result, was reinforced by the Commander-in-Chief East on February 16 from the 9th Army by the 21st Landwehr Brigade and the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Cavalry Division.

The Battle for Przasnysz from February 17 to 24.

On February 17, the new offensive on the left wing of the army detachment was initiated. The I. Reserve Corps (without the 69th Reserve Infantry Brigade) was to advance vanguard troops southwards to the Ulatowka section and assemble under their protection at Chorzele. West of this deployment, the Corps Zastrow was to advance its left wing. General v. Stabski, who had at his disposal, besides his  $\frac{1}{2}$  37th Infantry Division, the 69th Reserve Brigade of the 36th Reserve Division, was tasked with advancing under cover against Ostrolenka from the northeast over the Omulew to the Orzyc near Jednorozec.

The progress on February 17 and 18 was minimal. The vanguard troops of the I. Reserve Corps were still kilometers away from the Ulatowka section. The Stabski group reached the Orzyc but could not secure the crossing east of Jednorozec, which was defended by the Russians. Meanwhile, the 41st Infantry Division of the XX Army Corps had taken Kolno, and the Landsturm border guard reached east of the Skrwa on February 20, the area east of Demby).

Meanwhile, on February 17, the Russians attacked the 1st Guard Reserve Division and, after initial successes, lost 2800 prisoners and six machine guns, as well as 450 prisoners to the Leib-Hussar Brigade.

In view of the great successes of the 8th and 10th Army, General v. Gallwitz was of the opinion that his main task, the protection of the flank of the two attacking armies, was fulfilled, but that it was more important to draw as strong forces of the enemy as possible to himself for their further development. This demand also seemed to be partially fulfilled. By February 18, it was evident from prisoner statements, radio messages, and air-

## Preparations for the Attack on Prasznysz.

Reconnaissance provided the following picture of the enemy's force distribution: In front of the Dichtuh Corps mainly stronger cavalry, in front of the 1st Guard Reserve Division the repeatedly defeated 76th and 77th Reserve Divisions, behind them the new XIX Corps. In front of the Zastrow Corps still the 1st Turkestan Corps around Ciechanow. As according to aerial reports the road Mława—Prasznysz—Chorzele was free of the enemy, but the fortified Prasznysz was occupied, the XXVII Corps had moved southwest and was now at Plonsk. The IV Siberian Corps was assumed to be at Ostrolenka. Quick action now seemed promising, so General v. Gallwitz decided on February 18 to advance with the 1st Reserve Corps west past Prasznysz and to roll up the 1st Turkestan Corps from the east at Ciechanow. However, the Supreme Commander East considered an advance east of Prasznysz to capture this place more effective. General v. Gallwitz's concern that such a maneuver would be time-consuming and that their own forces would not suffice if the enemy, as expected, brought superior forces from the east and south and thus brought the advance between two fires, was not heeded; the Supreme Commander East issued the order to conduct the attack east around Prasznysz.

Consequently, General v. Gallwitz ordered on February 18 that the 1st Reserve Corps (including the 69th Reserve Infantry Brigade) should be advanced south past Prasznysz on February 19, so that on the 20th it could attack the 1st Turkestan Corps on the right flank and rear. The Wernitz Division of the Zastrow Corps was subordinated to him and was to engage the enemy's northern-directed flank, with the  $\frac{1}{2}$  37th Infantry Division covering against Ostrolenka.

Already on February 17 and 18, the 1st Reserve Corps, in preparing its attack thrust, had not proceeded sharply enough for the army commander, who was particularly concerned with gaining time. As the objectives reported for the 19th did not seem to guarantee that the attack order given for the 20th could be fulfilled, General v. Morgen was instructed to reach the line Dłowiniec—Zala—Chodkowo with his main forces on February 19, advancing with the 69th Brigade on Lazy southwest of Krasnosiele. Due to the impassable roads caused by the thaw, the 1st Reserve Division reached Zala with advance troops, while the 36th Reserve Division only reached Dłowiniec. The  $\frac{1}{2}$  37th Infantry Division, which was attacked in its positions by about seven enemy divisions with only light artillery.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

was able to hold. General v. Staabs expressed the firm expectation that he would be able to cover the attack of the I Reserve Corps even against a three- to fourfold superiority. Therefore, General v. Gallwitz confidently ordered the continuation of the attack for February 20.

On this day, the I Reserve Corps reached the Murawka east and southeast of Prasznysz without significant resistance and thus gained the front to the west. In the 37th Infantry Division, the Russians were thrown out of Kierzel in bitter close combat, with 300 prisoners from the II Siberian and IV Siberian Army Corps falling into German hands.

For February 21, the I Reserve Corps was ordered to capture Prasznysz, and then to push the I Turkestan Corps in the general direction of Ciechanow. General Morgen attacked the strongly fortified place with his 1st Reserve Division on the east and south front. It succeeded in repelling the Russians from positions. The 36th Reserve Division, which encircled further south of Prasznysz, found fierce resistance west of Murawka. Although the division was now behind the Russians at Prasznysz, the prospects for quick success dwindled due to the enemy's stubborn defense. The Wernitz Division, advancing from February 19, reached the main road Mlava—Prasznysz at Grudusk and eastward on the 21st without particular difficulties in several columns. Here the enemy seemed determined to offer sustained resistance. The day passed quietly in front of General v. Staabs' front.

On February 21, close contact with the enemy was established everywhere. The high command was confident. Additional troops were provided by the Commander-in-Chief East and were on the move: the  $\frac{1}{2}$  3rd Infantry Division from the 9th Army and the 9th Landwehr Brigade from the 8th Army<sup>1)</sup>. An intercepted Russian radio message: "XIX Corps is marching" was interpreted to mean that the enemy intended to retreat with his left wing and center into his fortifications on the Narew.

February 22 brought good progress. However, Prasznysz was not yet taken; for even on its southern front, where the weakest fortifications were located, the enemy offered the strongest resistance, so that the 1st Reserve Division could only slowly advance in the heavy clay soil. The thaw had made roads and fields with tough

---

<sup>1)</sup> See footnote on page 247.

## Heavy Fighting before Przasnysz.

Mud covered. The achievements of the 36th Reserve Division were all the more commendable, as they reached the road Ciechanow—Przasnysz from the south at Wola with the beginning of the 70th Reserve Brigade during continuous battles throughout the day and the following night, thereby blocking the defenders of Przasnysz from retreating to Ciechanow. The division, already weakened by two battalions, now stood south of Przasnysz, stretched between the two major roads over about 20 km, while about two battalions had to hold the Orzyc crossings of a front of more than 15 kilometers. In this difficult situation, a success achieved on this day west of Przasnysz against Ciechanow seemed significant, capturing 10 officers, 700 men, and numerous materials as booty. East of the I Reserve Corps, the Staabs group had to fend off heavy enemy attacks on their left flank but had advanced to the Rypin—Ożel line by evening.

General v. Gallwitz still had the impression on the evening of February 22 that the enemy was retreating under strong offensive thrusts of his rearguard. The Thorn Corps was therefore instructed to continue "gaining ground without exposing themselves to significant losses." In the Castro Corps, the Breugel Division gradually joined the Wernitz Division's plan with its left flank. This was to continue its attack southward, while the I Reserve Corps with its main forces was to advance further southwest towards Ciechanow—Nasierowo under appropriate protection of the left flank. The 9th Landwehr Brigade was instructed to free the parts of the corps remaining in front of Przasnysz as soon as possible.

During the next day, February 23, signs increased that Russian columns were advancing from the east, south, and southwest to relieve Przasnysz. By the evening of the day, the situation was such that a retreat of the enemy, who was strengthening his position everywhere, was no longer to be assumed. The Wernitz Division did gain further ground with its left flank and thereby made contact with the I Reserve Corps north of Wola, closing the ring around Przasnysz. However, the right flank of the division only slowly worked its way towards very strong Russian positions. Further action here was eventually halted.

In contrast, the I Reserve Corps made good progress in the attack on Przasnysz with the 1st Reserve Division. The barracks on the eastern edge of the city were stormed, capturing over 2000 prisoners, three guns, and three machine guns from the Russian 63rd Reserve Division.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

From the south, the left wing of the division advanced into the suburban houses at dawn. In the evening, the 69th Reserve Brigade was deployed against the western front. The Russian garrison resisted stubbornly. The commander refused negotiations; at the same time, the reports from the 36th Reserve Division became increasingly serious. The 70th Reserve Brigade barely repelled heavy attacks on both sides of the road from Ciechanow, and from the southeast, from Mława, increasingly stronger enemy forces advanced. East of Przasnysz, the Russians attempted to force a crossing at the Orzyc. A long column approached Krasnosielc from the east. East of the river, the  $\frac{1}{2}$  37th Infantry Division faced a difficult situation. Given this situation, it was fortunate that the 9th Landwehr Brigade arrived by noon, albeit heavily fatigued, with the foremost parts northeast of Przasnysz up to Zająca. The 1/3 Infantry Division reached from Mława with the beginning at Kuliszewo.

The situation had completely changed; the enemy did not think of retreating. On the morning of February 24, radio messages and reports from the front clarified the picture that the 1st Siberian Corps was marching from Pułtusk, the 2nd Siberian Corps was pushing over the Orzyc from Ostrolenka, and strong attacks were also occurring from Ciechanow, meaning the enemy was advancing from three sides towards Przasnysz. The rapid capture of the place seemed of utmost importance. From the entire army front, from the Vistula to the Baltic Sea, including Wernitz, all available forces were to be withdrawn to unite them on the eastern flank.

At the 1st Reserve Corps, the attack on Przasnysz continued. To cover the east, the 9th Landwehr Brigade was sent to Krasnosielc to repel the enemy who had advanced over the Orzyc, while in the south, parts of the 36th Reserve Division repelled the increasingly fierce attacks of vastly superior Russian forces.

By evening, Przasnysz fell; about 10,000 prisoners from the 63rd Russian Reserve Division with 36 guns, 14 machine guns were the spoils. Przasnysz, so often the target of German attacks, was once again captured; however, it was questionable whether the victor could hold it, as the situation at the Orzyc became increasingly threatening. The 9th Landwehr Brigade was unable to fulfill its task and retreated at night before the threat to its southern flank to Rogowo—Bobin, while  $\frac{1}{2}$  3rd Infantry Division (6th Infantry Brigade) only reached the beginning of Bartniki by evening. The 70th Reserve Brigade, like the Wernitz Division, was able to hold its positions. Through...

## The Capture of Przasnysz.

The parts of the 69th Reserve Brigade freed by the capture of Przasnysz were redeployed to the right wing of the 70th Reserve Brigade in the evening. From February 26 onwards, the 6th Cavalry Division, rolling in from the 9th Army on the orders of the Supreme Commander East, was to be unloaded at Willenberg.

## The Defensive Battles at Przasnysz and the Retreat. February 25 to 28.

General v. Gallwitz had to focus on defense. The I Reserve Corps was to set up between the two main roads south of Przasnysz for defense, with the 1/3 Infantry Division, the 9th Landwehr Brigade, and the Landsturm at Orzyc assigned to secure the east.

General v. Morgen had deployed the 36th Reserve Division south of Przasnysz, following the Division Wernitz for defense, and held the 1st Reserve Division as a reserve at Przasnysz. Attacked by the vastly superior forces of the I Siberian Corps, the 36th Reserve Division had to retreat about two kilometers. From the east, the Russians advanced with the II Siberian Corps over the Orzyc. General Freiherr v. Gagern, with his Landwehr, who had fought so brilliantly in the winter battle a few days earlier, was unable to withstand this attack with stronger forces. Without much effort, the Russians threw back the 9th Landwehr Brigade north of the Przasnysz—Krasnosielc road. At Dembning, the 6th Infantry Brigade managed to intercept the Russian thrust, but south of there, the Russians advanced to the Wengierka. The situation had become serious. Danger threatened especially from the northeast. In the evening, all German troops from the Division Wernitz, including up to the Orzyc, were placed under General v. Morgen's command. He ordered the 36th Reserve and 3rd Infantry Divisions to defend against the south and east on February 26, while the 1st Reserve Division was moved far north to strike the northern Russian flank with a thrust to the southeast. However, on February 26, heavy fighting occurred only on the southern front, but it did not bring any decisive change in the situation. General v. Gallwitz now believed he had to expect a major Russian attack against the army detachments. According to reliable observations, troops were unloaded at Ostrow and on the railway line to the south. Reports from the front indicated that the enemy was advancing stronger forces in the direction of Przasnysz. On the German side

---

1) p. 216 and 221.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

were expected as reinforcements, besides the 6th Cavalry Division, a Landwehr regiment at Puppen and the 4th Cavalry Division in the coming days, advancing on foot from the left wing of the Scholtz Corps.

The big question was whether the general situation required the I Reserve Corps to hold out at Przasnysz, and whether such a thing was possible under the given circumstances. To decide this question, a clear picture of the situation of the corps was needed, with which, however, no connection could be made until noon on February 27. The news from other places became increasingly threatening. On the western bank of the Orzyc, an enemy column of all arms had reached Jednorozec from the south. The Russians were thus advancing further north. According to information from the Commander-in-Chief East, strong attacks against the front of General v. Staabs were also to be expected.

At noon on February 27, a report finally came from the I Reserve Corps: the southern front was still holding, but the eastern front was being enveloped from the north. The moment for the counterattack of the 1st Reserve Division had come, then the front was to be withdrawn into the hilly terrain northwest of Przasnysz. General v. Gallwitz now came to the clear realization that further holding out at Przasnysz was inadvisable, and ordered the retreat to the former positions of the national border in the Janowo-Gorzelen line. Since the enemy only pursued hesitantly, the disengagement succeeded, and after midnight from February 27 to 28, the divisions came to rest about 20 kilometers north of Przasnysz behind the Ulatowka section. The High Command, which had feared at noon that even a violent breakthrough of the I Reserve Corps to the north might be necessary, was relieved of a great worry. The enemy did not initially follow, so the further retreat could be halted.

During these battles of the left wing of the army detachment, the picture of the situation on the rest of the front changed little. The Dickhuth Corps was able to advance its position with the Guard Cavalry Brigade and the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Cavalry Division on the right wing by a few kilometers up to the height of Slupno. Far to the east, strong Russian attacks were repelled, until after February 21, calm prevailed everywhere. The focus of the fighting had shifted entirely to Przasnysz.

General v. Morgen later called the operation at Przasnysz "one of the boldest that military history shows," and for himself, "the

## Defense and Retreat from Przasnysz.

most interesting and exciting of the entire war"<sup>1)</sup>). Its execution was due to the strict leadership and the almost superhuman achievements of the troops, who, with sparse supplies, attacked or stubbornly defended themselves for days in cold, mud, and dirt against overwhelming odds and the strongest obstacles. Overall, a booty of around 12,000 prisoners, 36 guns, and 19 machine guns faced a loss of about 13,000 men, a flag, a 10 cm cannon that got stuck in the swamp, two field guns, and some machine guns.

Although the operation at Przasnysz ended with a retreat and significant losses, it had a favorable effect on the overall situation, as it attracted far superior enemy forces that could have otherwise changed the course of the battles at Grodno.

## 5. New Decision of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief (February 22 to 27, 1915).

Map 14.

With the disarmament of four Russian divisions in the forest of Augustow on February 21, the winter battle in Masuria had concluded. A great victory was achieved. But the operation was not yet over. The destruction of the Russian 10th Army was primarily intended to clear the way into the rear of the enemy's main forces. The continuation of the attack initially from the east against the Bobr—Narew position was the second task, which the Eastern Commander-in-Chief continued to pursue. He relocated his headquarters to Lötzen on February 22.

However, the events of the following days were not suitable to strengthen the hope for a successful continuation of the operation. All incoming reports, including valuable aerial reports, indicated a strong influx of Russian reinforcements to the Niemen—Narew front. The enemy seemed to focus on the Lomza—Przasnysz section. German reinforcements had to be directed there. For the operational wing at Grodno, the available forces were no longer available. The intense attacks threatening from Bobr and Narew gradually deprived the Eastern Commander-in-Chief of the initiative despite his great victory. An attack against the Niemen fortresses was no longer conceivable.

---

1) C. v. Morgen: "My Troops' Heroic Battles". Publisher E. S. Mittler & Sohn, Berlin 1920.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

Even the 9th Army to the left of the Vistula still faced a superior enemy. In response to an inquiry from General v. Falkenhayn on February 22 about the intended use of the 9th Army, Field Marshal v. Hindenburg replied that, given the ammunition restrictions, it would have to remain defensive for the time being against 22 Russian divisions.

After the minor setbacks on February 20 near Lomza, the question initially arose as to whether the attack on this fortress could be continued with a prospect of success. The Commander-in-Chief East decided to abandon the siege, as the available offensive means for Lomza and Osowiec were insufficient. Until the heavy artillery could be positioned in front of Lomza, costly frontal battles and probably a lot of time would have been necessary given the strong enemy forces stationed there. Initially, however, only Osowiec was to be taken.

On February 23, the storming of Przasnysz by the I Reserve Corps temporarily provided relief. However, at Grodno, the enemy attacked again, and the Russian II Corps was also identified here; its successes at Szabin and Krasnybor on the Bobr even led to a temporary crisis. The enemy had apparently already overcome the heavy blows of recent weeks to such an extent that it found the strength to go on the offensive again despite difficult terrain. This fact was more serious for the overall situation than the gain at Przasnysz. However, the will of the German leadership to break through west of Grodno was not yet shaken on February 24 — at a time when fighting at the Bobr crossings was still ongoing with varying success. However, there could no longer be any doubt at the Commander-in-Chief East about the continued reinforcement of the enemy on the Niemen-Narew front. Simultaneously with offensive operations at Grodno and Lomza, the Russian leader deployed the mass of these freed forces and his best corps (Siberian) against the left flank of the Gallwitz Army Detachment (I Reserve Corps) west of the Orzyc River, apparently to break through here. In contrast, the Commander-in-Chief East intended only to take defensive measures here and to adhere to the original plan of breaking through between Osowiec and Grodno in the direction of Bialystok with pressure on the Russians' rear connections. This operation was endangered by a potential Russian attack over the Grodno-Kowno line; even if the enemy seemed to make no preparations for this, the idea was so obvious that strong protection of the extreme left flank had to be maintained, even if at

---

1) p. 247.

## Suspension of Operations.

At another point, an urgent need was to be highlighted. The capture of Przasnysz seemed to relieve the currently most sensitive point of the German front somewhat; however, further measures were necessary.

Thus, it was necessary to prevent a change in the situation at Przasnysz and to bring further reinforcements there. However, before these could arrive, the turnaround had already occurred. On February 25, the situation significantly worsened due to the failure of the 9th Landwehr Brigade. A severe crisis seemed inevitable.

Even at Bobr and Grodno, the development of the battles gave no cause for great hopes. South of Augustów, heavy fighting was needed to push the attacking Russians back over the lowlands. However, gaining the crossings did not succeed. Also, west of Grodno, the Russians attacked repeatedly, albeit unsuccessfully. On February 26, the Eastern Commander-in-Chief could no longer ignore the realization that the 10th Army had been thrown into the defensive. He therefore withdrew divisions to deploy them with the Gallwitz Army Detachment. In total, it was estimated to be 15 corps that the enemy had now initiated north of the Vistula; the distribution was generally sufficiently informed by Russian radio messages.

On February 27, the situation further deteriorated. Apparently, at Przasnysz, it was not just a local relief attempt by the enemy, but its serious intention to break through the rear connections of the Germans in East Prussia. From Nowogrodb, unmistakably stronger new attacks threatened. Northwest of Lomza, the German Landsturm had to yield to Russian pressure, and northwest of Grodno, the XXI Army Corps suffered a more serious setback.

The Eastern Commander-in-Chief now considered a breakthrough through the heavily fortified Bobr Line (Grodno—Bobr-Knee) to be out of the question, as the necessary heavy artillery and especially the associated ammunition could not be brought up. Similar conditions existed at Osowiec. After the prospect of taking the fortress by attacking from the rear had vanished, the Eastern Commander-in-Chief considered the possibility of capturing this place to be even less likely, as the garrison had received a significant increase in strength with the arrival of the III Caucasian Corps. No further units were available for strengthening the Narew Front, as 19½ Russian divisions were still encountered in front of the 9th Army. For these reasons, the Eastern Commander-in-Chief decided to continue the operation in the direction of Białystok

### The Winter Battle of Masuria.

to surrender. Even a longer stay of the 10th Army in its current position did not seem entirely safe in view of the possibility of a Russian advance over the Kowno—Olita line, which, according to the Commander-in-Chief East, despite the offensive at the Narew, their numerical superiority still gave them the possibility. The 10th Army should therefore, as soon as the impassable roads were cleared and the loot secured, be withdrawn behind the Augustów Forest; only in this way did Field Marshal v. Hindenburg

believe he could regain operational freedom here. Near Osjowiec, the heavy artillery was to be withdrawn from

March 1st. No decision had yet been made regarding the future use of the 10th Army — apart from the forces assigned to the 8th Army and the Gallwitz Army Detachment. The 9th Army was to try to prevent the withdrawal of further enemy forces through "offensive thrusts."

In this sense, on February 27th, in addition to the report of February 19th, it was considered at Mézières: "Offensive over Bobr is completely abandoned as hopeless. Russian offensive is repelled.

Forces are being concentrated to launch a counter-offensive at one point. Where this point is, is not yet clear."

With a heavy heart, the Commander-in-Chief East had resolved to relinquish conquered ground at great sacrifice and withdraw from the enemy to regain freedom of movement for his operational wing. Whether it would be necessary to retreat to the border position under construction since mid-February along the line Szczuczyn—Rajgrod—Augustow—Suwalki—Wizajny—Wladislawowo—Jurburg could not yet be foreseen. This position was to form the northern

end of the extensive position system, the construction of which had been worked on for months along the eastern border of the Reich from Silesia to the Johannisburg Heath. In addition, the Drewenz position, the field position Lötzen, and the Angerapp position were restored and expanded.

## 6. The Operations of the Russian Northwestern Front.

Maps 19 Volume VI as well as Maps 9 and 14 Volume VII.

At the beginning of 1915, the Russian military leadership assessed the situation on the Western Front as quite optimistic; they considered the risk of a setback to be completely excluded.

---

1) p. 233.

## Formation of the Russian 12th Army.

The operational plan for the spring envisaged an offensive from the south against East Prussia. This was not a new line of thought; similar ideas had played a role before the war in the development of the Franco-Russian alliance and in the preparation of the deployment. Besides the common interests of the alliance, the season was now a decisive factor, as the Russians still considered a major German attack during their offensive against Austria-Hungary possible despite the events on the French theater of war and feared the threat to their flanks and rear from East Prussia. The Russian leadership also hoped for a tactical success in East Prussia, as the other German front sections seemed too strongly developed and occupied. The newly to be formed 12th Army under General Plehwe was to advance from the line Ostrolenka—Pultusk to Ortelsburg—Soldau by the end of February, supported on the right by vigorous pressure from the 10th Army and on the left by demonstrations of the troops at Mlawa.

Despite these intentions, the Supreme Army Command had no reservations about taking the XXII Corps from the 10th Army in East Prussia in January to respond to a call for help from the Southwestern Front.

By the end of January, the 1st, 2nd, and 5th Armies were positioned closely against the enemy west of the Vistula since the November and December battles; combat activity remained constantly active. The situation on the East Prussian front was calmer. General Ruski, the commander-in-chief of the Northwestern Front, had designated ten infantry and seven cavalry divisions for the 12th Army to be formed north of Warsaw. In the assembly area of this army, only the I Turkestan Corps and 4½ cavalry divisions (4th, 6th, 15th Cavalry, 4th Don Cossack Division, 4th Independent Cavalry Brigade) had been present so far. Newly added were to be: the IV Siberian and XV Corps from the army reserve, the XX Corps from the 10th Army, the 76th and 77th Reserve, 8th and 14th Cavalry Divisions, as well as the Ussuri Cavalry Brigade—all units from the left wing of the army group near Warsaw to West Poland. Since the XV Corps was only ready to march on February 14 in Gomel (north of Kiev), the army's offensive operations were to begin on February 23. In the meantime, they wanted to try to push the enemy back to the border, while the 10th Army had to clear the forest areas in its northern flank of the enemy and extend its right wing to the Instre.

---

1) p. 141.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

These operations had just been initiated when on January 31, the German attack at Bolimow hit the right wing of the 2nd Army. The Supreme Army Command advised the Northwestern Front on February 3 to wait with the transport of the IV Siberian Corps to the Narew. The losses were extraordinarily heavy even by Russian standards. The repeated proposal of the sector command to withdraw the front slightly at this point was rejected. The bitter struggle continued with heavy losses but without decision until the German attack against the 10th Army shifted the focus to East Prussia.

By extending the right wing of the army to the north and the transport of the XXII Corps to Galicia, the front of the 10th Army had been stretched, although it was still much more densely occupied than the opposing German side. The army under the command of General Sievers counted at the beginning of February, after various deductions, still 11½ infantry and 2½ cavalry divisions, namely: at the border against Memel and Tilsit parts of the 68th Reserve Division; in the area of Pillkallen the 1st and 3rd Cavalry Division, followed south by the III Corps with the 73rd and 56th Reserve Division; the XX Corps with the 27th Infantry and 53rd Reserve, 29th and 28th Infantry Division east of Darkehmen; the XXVI Corps with the 84th and 64th Reserve Division east of Angerburg and Lötzen; the III Siberian Corps with the 3rd Siberian and 7th Siberian Rifle Division in front of Nikolajken, the 57th Reserve Division at Pißhof and on the extreme left wing the 1st independent Cavalry Brigade at Johannisburg.

On October 5, General Ruzki reported to the Supreme Army Command, based on a letter he found on a fallen German, that enemy troops were now being concentrated in East Prussia; this was the first news of the arrival of German reinforcements. Otherwise, the strength and composition of the German 8th Army were well known. The attention of the Supreme Army Command was still occupied by the battles at Bolimow, and the German attack undertaken on February 7 at Johannisburg initially seemed to be of no greater significance to the Russian 10th Army itself; the 57th Reserve Division was ordered to "deliver a strong blow to the enemy." On the other hand, it was decided to withdraw the 78 siege guns to Lötzen. By February 10, they were safe at Ostwiece. During the course of February 9, General Sievers became aware of the seriousness of the situation. He reported that the complete dissolution of the 57th Reserve Division, which no longer...

## Preparations for the Offensive at Narew.

was more capable of holding back the enemy, had put the army in a very difficult position. At least two German divisions were advancing on Szczytno; since he had nothing to oppose them, he considered it necessary to withdraw the III Siberian Corps, the XXVI Corps, and the left wing of the XX.

At the same time, the attention of the army group was also claimed by the actions of the Germans south of Ortelsburg against the assembly area of the 12th Army. General Ruszki had the impression on February 8 that the Germans were advancing along the entire front from Johannisburg to the Vistula, and therefore ordered reinforcements to be deployed at this point in the coming days. More than seven infantry divisions were designated for the Narew front, including: the Guard Corps and the 1st Caucasian Rifle Brigade to Lomza, the XXVII Corps to Przasnysz, the II Corps and the 5th Rifle Brigade to Ostrolenka, and the 2nd Cavalry Division to Pultusk. Only  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the 68th Reserve Division was to come to the 10th Army. To the left of the Vistula, another corps, the XIX, was prepared for transport.

Meanwhile, the northern wing of the Russian 10th Army had also been completely surprised by the German attacks and had to retreat. The enemy here was initially estimated at three divisions. On the night of February 11, the army commander realized that the III Corps was "severely shaken, a part scattered, everything else in retreat to Kowno and Marjampol."

General Ruszki was not initially deterred by these events in his preparations for the attack against the southern front of East Prussia. He assumed that the wings of the 10th Army would be attacked by only one German corps each and that about one German division would attack south of Ortelsburg. At Mlawa and to the west, as well as with the armies to the left of the Vistula, it seemed calm. The 10th Army was to evade the German pressure to Marjampol-Lyd, to later join the 12th Army in an attack. Under this impression of the German advance against Grajewo and the still unclear situation on the northern wing, he had to instruct the army commander on February 11 at noon to "act according to circumstances"; in any case, an attempt must be made to hold the line Kowno-Sejny-Augustowo-Olszowice; Augustowo was to be maintained as a starting position for the later offensive at all costs, if possible also

---

1) Njesnamow, I, p. 66.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

Suwalki. Two days later, General Ruzski agreed to the retreat of the army center, if necessary, even to Lipsk—Sopochinie—Ditta; the main thing now was to preserve the army's combat strength in order to be able to attack again at a favorable opportunity.

Overall, the Russian Northwestern Front presented the following picture in mid-February: The 12th Army was still in assembly. The enemy seemed to be moving forces from the left bank of the Vistula to East Prussia. However, the situation for the 10th Army had become extremely serious; there was a danger that the Germans would advance over the middle Njemen. The III Caucasian Corps was assigned by the Supreme Command to Orany (between Vilna and Grodno). Under the impression of the rapidly unfolding events, the representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported to the Great Headquarters on February 14 to Petersburg: "We are not going, but apparently running out of East Prussia. At Bösen we have been entrenched and fortified for three months, reportedly no worse than the Germans; suddenly we abandon everything and flee hastily!" On February 15, the commander-in-chief of the Northwestern Front decided on a new grouping of his armies. His proposal to move the defensive front to the developed and shorter line Nowogorgiewsk—Gora Kalwarya in the event of another German attack at the Bzura and Rawka was decisively rejected by the Supreme Command. General Ruzski then decided to leave only the 2nd and 5th Armies on the left of the Vistula, whose detachments he sought to replace with individual Landwehr brigades as best as possible. To the right of the river, the troops stationed north of Warsaw were consolidated into the 1st Army. The 12th Army, consisting of three corps, was now to be assembled further east, with the right wing at Lomza; their corps were mostly still on the railway.

On the evening of February 16, the Grand Duke reported to the Tsar about the situation on the East Prussian front: "The Siewers Army has not succeeded in returning behind the Njemen in a satisfactory condition." The hasty retreat of the right wing to Kowno had "enabled the Germans to advance deep into the rear of the army in the area between the river and Suwalki" and to reach the retreat routes of the army center (XX and XXVI Corps) in the Augustów Forest. "Of these

---

1) Krahny Archive, Volume 27, C. 3.

2) XIX, XXVII, and I Turkestan Corps, 77th Reserve Division, 1st Cavalry Corps and Cavalry Corps Erdeli.

3) Guard troops, II, XV Corps, IV Siberian Corps.

## Hopeless Situation of the Russian 10th Army.

Since February 15, no messages have been received from the corps. On the left flank of the army, the III Siberian Corps, along with two to three other divisions, is retreating from Augustów to Lipsk—Stabin, pressed from three sides. "From Grajewo to Osowiec, an enemy division is advancing, and in the section between the Vistula and Ostwa, the enemy is maneuvering... This situation has forced General Adjutant Ruskij to abandon the counterattack he had planned from the middle Narew." He is now taking measures to support the right wing of the army. Prince Kudaschew, the representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, also reported on February 16 from the Great Headquarters about the "detailed severe defeat at Augustów," about the "extremely difficult situation of the Northwest Front and expressed his fears about whether it would be possible to hold Grodno."

Now the army group of the Northwest Front also saw the situation of the 10th Army as almost hopeless. They believed that holding the line Sopodjnie—Lipsk—Stabin was hardly feasible, even if the divisions of the 10th Army managed to break through. Apparently later in the evening, the commander-in-chief, General Sievers, reported that Sopodjnie was occupied by German advance troops and the fortress Grodno was endangered. General Ruskij ordered the entire XV Corps from the 2nd Army to Grodno, the II to Svolfa northeast of Białystok; he requested the transport of the Guard Corps to Białystok instead of Osowiec. From the left bank of the Vistula, two more corps were to be brought in, namely the II Siberian to the 12th Army and the V Corps to Warsaw.

On February 17, Grand Duke Nicholas attended a meeting with the commanders-in-chief of the two army groups in Siedlce, the headquarters of the Northwest Front. General Ruskij explained that the Germans were now moving strong forces from the left bank of the Vistula into the area of Mława. Here he expected an attack, so that the 12th and 1st Armies now faced a double encirclement due to the 10th Army's sortie. To counter this threat, he intended to gather all available forces from the left bank of the Vistula and concentrate them in the Grodno—Białystok area in the entire seventh corps. This assembly could be completed by March 3. Only five corps would then remain on the left bank of the Vistula. The Grand Duke agreed with this. General Ruskij proposed again, in connection with this regrouping, to withdraw the front on the left of the Vistula to near Warsaw.

---

1) Krajny Archive, Volume 27, C. 3.

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

With regard to the right wing of the Southwest Front, the Grand Duke again rejected the proposal.

The focus of the Northwest Front in the coming days was mainly on the area of Mlawa. On February 18, the 10th Army was informed that the enemy's measures indicated an offensive along the Vistula and at Mlawa, as well as in the direction of Lomza. Therefore, the previously planned strong attack by the 12th Army was not feasible for the time being; rather, one must also expect a German attack in this section.

At the same time, the threatening development of the situation at the 10th Army led to the fact that the deployment of the 12th Army did not materialize even in the manner ordered on February 15. General Plehwe had to hand over the II and XV Corps to the 10th Army, in return for which the III Caucasian Corps, previously destined for Drany, was to be assigned to him. Meanwhile, however, a setback occurred on the night of February 18 at his own front; as it later turned out, insufficient reporting on the fortress's expectations.

General Ruzski still considered the overall situation of the army group unclear on February 19. He rejected a request from the 1st Army for deployment, as the enemy was not only offensive at the Plock—Siedlce—Przasnysz front but also in the sections of the 12th and 10th Armies. The uncertainty about which part of the Northwest Front the Germans intended to strike made it necessary to keep a strong reserve. The I Siberian Corps was designated as such, which was also advancing from West Poland.

On February 20, the Supreme Army Command received news of the advance of two German corps on Kalwarja and Marjampol. The concern about an attack over the Njemen came to the forefront again. However, General Ruzski had a different view. He assumed that the main German forces would be directed against the Grodno—Ostrolenka line and wanted to counter them with an advance, for which the previously held forces of the 12th Army (2½ Corps) were already advancing north from Lomza on that day, February 20. Under these circumstances, the Supreme Army Command left it to the Northwest Front to decide whether to form an attack group at Drany if necessary and no longer insisted on the demand to hold the Baura—Rawa position under all circumstances in the event of a German attack.

## Failures at Grodno and Przasnysz.

In the 12th Army, the attack ordered for February 20th was "a regrettable failure." The Russians' hope of gaining a few days' advantage here was not fulfilled. Similarly, on February 21st, the relief attack by parts of the XV, II, and XXVI Corps from the Grodno area to rescue the parts of the 10th Army surrounded by the enemy and fighting with utmost determination was a complete failure. The fate of the four divisions trapped in the vast forest area of Augustow at Wolküz was thus sealed. General Russki was deeply impressed by the persistent German attacks at Przasnysz and now expected the main German attack over the middle Narew towards Warsaw. In his view, "the decision of the entire war now lay in the Grodno—Warsaw area." A success had to be achieved here. Accordingly, the 1st Army received orders to concentrate its forces more sharply to the right in the area south of Mlava. At the same time, the I Siberian Corps was inserted on its right flank. It was to advance together with the II Siberian Corps on the left flank of the 12th Army for a counterattack. Another 3½ divisions were successively moved from the left Vistula bank or designated for relocation; additionally, General Russki requested a corps from the Supreme Army Command. He pointed out the low combat strength of his units on this occasion; for example, the 2nd Army was short of about 127,000 men, 70 guns, and 150 machine guns at full strength; there was also a severe shortage of ammunition.

On February 22nd, the 63rd Reserve Division, positioned far ahead of the front at Przasnysz, was encircled by the German attack, but General Plehwe now felt strong enough for a counterattack. In the area from Lomza to southwest of Przasnysz, more than 12 divisions of the 12th and 1st Armies were assembled for this purpose on February 23rd. Stubborn fighting around Przasnysz resulted in the recapture of the city on February 27th, bringing the Russians about 10,000 prisoners. However, the leadership did not feel strong enough for a vigorous pursuit; they were content with the defensive success.

---

1) Njesnamnow, I, p. 76.

2) ½ XXIII Corps, 3rd Turkestan Rifle Brigade, I Corps.

3) Guard Corps, ½ Corps, 1st Caucasian Rifle Brigade, IV Siberian Corps, 5th Rifle Brigade, II Siberian Corps of the 12th Army, I Siberian Corps, ½ Brigade of the I Turkestan Corps, ½ XIX Corps of the 1st Army.

## The Winter Masurian Battle.

### 7. Reflections.

The Winter Battle in Masuria was, in its design and execution, a battle of annihilation, although the outcome did not fulfill all the leadership's hopes. After the flanks were pushed back, four divisions of the army center were encircled and destroyed. The Russian northern flank was shattered, measured by the extent of the booty and the number of prisoners; its two infantry divisions, the 56th and 73rd, were completely eliminated during the course of the battle. The British military attaché at the Russian headquarters, who witnessed the battle, reports that the 73rd Division suffered heavily, probably losing all guns and vehicles; he summarized his overall judgment by saying that the battle was "the worst since Tannenberg," with two or more corps lost, as well as irreplaceable guns and rifles. The Russian southern flank was not hit quite as hard. There, the III Siberian Corps, a particularly proven troop, with which the German divisions had crossed weapons not for the first time, held the attacker at bay until the withdrawal of its right neighboring corps, the XXVI, to Augustowo was secured. The Siberians also managed to escape encirclement, aided by the terrain, albeit with heavy losses. The high moral value of these troops is evidenced by the counterattacks at the Bobr, which soon resumed and temporarily put the advancing victor in critical situations. Nevertheless, the Russian southern flank was so shaken that the fate of the four divisions encircled at the Wolf River could no longer be reversed; they could not break the iron ring on their own. After the attempt to sneak to Grodno with the help of local guides succeeded for only a few hundred men, the rest, worn down by a terribly effective artillery fire and exhausted to death, finally laid down their arms after brave resistance, as further resistance seemed useless.

The design of the operation was the exclusive merit of the Commander-in-Chief East. The Supreme Army Command was completely uninvolved in this, as well as in the execution. With bold responsibility, Field Marshal von Hindenburg stripped his long-stretched front south of the Vistula so much of forces that, despite numerical inferiority in total forces, he could appear with approximately equal strength where he sought the decision. Nevertheless, the realization of the idea of annihilation encountered great difficulties already in the battle plan. An outflanking-

## Result, Setup, and Execution of the Winter Battle.

The deployment of the enemy front could not be achieved in the march; from the trench front, the thrust direction had to be taken against the flanks and rear of the enemy. Only after the disintegration of the enemy's wings could the encirclement movement be initiated by swinging in from the north and south. It was crucial to make these preparatory battles of the encirclement operation as short and decisive as possible to give the enemy no time for adequate countermeasures. The deployment took into account the close concentration of forces against the enemy wings. Furthermore, secrecy, surprise, quick initial successes, and extraordinary endurance in marching were prerequisites for the desired annihilation success. The diversionary offensive of the 9th Army at Bolimow and the strict measures of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief for secrecy did their duty. On the other hand, the Russian secret intelligence service, working with enormous resources and personnel, left its upper leadership in the lurch. The surprise was complete; already on the second day of the attack, the arrow section in the south and also the enemy's position in the north were in the hands of the attacker; freedom of movement for mutual encirclement was achieved, the first thrust was successful.

Whether the operation would succeed in full depended primarily on the performance of the troops. They justified the trust that a leadership willing to take responsibility had placed in them to the highest degree, despite enormous difficulties piling up before them. Even though careful preparation had taken into account the expected weather influences as far as human foresight was capable, it became apparent during the battles that the success of the operation was often seriously endangered due to the unfavorable weather of the winter campaign. It was not due to the troops' willingness to sacrifice if they could not always follow the forward-directed thoughts of the leadership with the expected speed. The power of the natural forces was not always matched by the strongest will of the best troops. The high number of march and sick losses, like bloody battles, testified that the troops spared no sacrifice to remain at the enemy's blade. Cutting east wind, icy cold, snow-laden, mirror-smooth roads, then again after sudden weather changes rain, mud, water, and softened paths posed the highest demands on the performance of man and horse. Bitter efforts and deprivations were imposed on the troops in the

### The Winter Battle of Masuria.

Road-poor, willingly endured by numerous troop movements for months, the areas were desolate. Rarely could a protective roof in the few and poor villages accommodate the freezing, starving, and exhausted troops. On the country road or on barren snowfields, exposed to the cutting wind without protection, which turned back into tough mud after a sudden weather change, they mostly found insufficient rest for only a few hours. But despite all these obstacles, which sapped their strength more than the enemy's weapons, a sense of duty, will to win, and trust in leadership, which had so often shown the way to victory, drove the troops in battle with snow and cold, hunger and hardships, ever forward against the enemy. Soon the supply of the troops could no longer keep up. The artillery also lagged behind. Individual guns were dragged along by the infantry, which, as soon as they encountered the enemy, had to unlimber on the road. Movements of the infantry off the road were almost completely impossible.

Such conditions made the combat situation particularly difficult for the attacker throughout the entire winter battle, especially since the terrain with its numerous lake sections and narrows always offered the retreating enemy favorable positions that could not be bypassed and had to be attacked frontally. Thin infantry points of endlessly long marching columns with individual guns encountered the enemy, who awaited them in position at Augustin. The development in battle took a lot of time, artillery support was low, and the burden of the battle had to be borne more than ever by the infantry. This explains why faster and greater successes were not achieved in the individual battles and why the first encirclement attempt at Augustin failed against the successful resistance of the Russians against the flank pressure, especially in the south.

It is also not to be overlooked that some measures of the higher command, born from the tactical situation of the moment, influenced the not fully satisfactory result of the encirclement operation. Apparently, based on the experience of 1914, the Commander-in-Chief East had repeatedly warned against too far-reaching operational encirclement in favor of tactical success before the start of the battle and in its first phase. Perhaps these hints contributed to army and corps commanders repeatedly concentrating their forces to overcome enemy resistance frontally, and it succeeded. At Lyk, the encirclement of the III Siberian Corps failed because the encirclement wing of the 8th Army's commander-in-chief

## The Leadership.

XXXX Reserve Corps from February 9 was drawn inward from its eastward movement and then positioned frontally. Valuable time was lost until the divisions could resume their encircling movement. The situation was similar with the 10th Army before Suwalki. The XXXVIII Reserve Corps used an entire division on February 12 to establish the connection ordered to the 8th Army. Their advance to the south west, instead of, as originally intended, east of Lake Wisztytzer, not only resulted in an undesirable accumulation of forces at an operationally and tactically unimportant location northwest of Suwalki, but also contributed to the left neighboring division also getting involved in the battle for this place. This gathering of forces before Suwalki was further delayed by the fact that the commander of the 10th Army on February 15 also brought the divisions of General v. Lauenstein, which were already extending to the southeast, to Suwalki. Here they were militarily fixed for days, while in the forest of Augustow the forces were lacking to close the ring around the Russian divisions at Augustowo and Suwalki. Added to this was the hesitation in continuing the encircling movement, which became apparent on February 14 with the XXI Army Corps. However, even if the 42nd Infantry Division had been immediately thrown into the forest terrain in full strength, it was too weak to prevent the breakthrough of six Russian divisions east of Sejny and Augustow. The failure of the first encirclement attempt delayed the decision by days and gave the Russians time to support the Bobr front by bringing in new forces.

Now the risk of the entire operational setup found its visible expression in the growing threat to the flanks. With anticipatory attention, the eyes of the highest leaders were directed from the beginning of the battle to the Niemen and especially to the Narew, to ensure that the commander-in-chief East was continuously concerned with timely reinforcing the endangered front sections to strengthen flank protection. It was not always possible to avoid that, in the constantly worsening situation at the Narew, units were torn apart and troops had to be moved as they were available. And the 9th Army had to be increasingly relied upon. The opponent behaved similarly. Thus, on both sides, there was a continuous movement behind the Vistula front towards the Narew, in which the Russians initially gained an advantage on the inner line, especially since this movement had already begun for them for other reasons at the beginning of January.

### The Winter Battle of Masuria.

Despite these difficulties, the bold and more targeted leadership in the final act of the great drama in the forests of Augustów was rewarded by the complete success of encircling and rendering defenseless the central section of the enemy army front.

In view of this significant partial success, it must be regretted that the supreme army command did not provide stronger forces for the execution of the operation. The Commander-in-Chief East repeatedly requested the transfer of further reinforcements from the west. These were to attack as a reserve behind the right wing simultaneously with the strike against the Russian 10th Army in East Prussia against the Narew and Ostrolenka. It cannot be denied that early, vigorous action at the Bobr and also at Lomza would have led to the fall of the Bobr-Narew position and thus to a decisive advance into the rear of the enemy standing in the Vistula bend. Also behind the northern wing, such a reserve group of the supreme command could find tasks that had to favorably influence the course of the operation, whether it was initially only that they relieved the command from the concern for flank protection against the Niemen and initially provided stronger support to the weak and on three sides bound 31st Infantry Division. Moreover, such a wing reserve also offered operational possibilities for use through a coup on Grodno or by crossing the Niemen north of the fortress. As we know today, the Russians were very concerned about the fate of Grodno at that time; on February 16, there was fear of having to abandon the fortress. As a report from the Russian 10th Army on the evening of February 18 stated, the fortress, with a circumference of 68 kilometers, had only about eight battalions of Landwehr and reserves as a garrison. The possibility of taking Grodno by coup was therefore given, and, as the events at Swientojanss on the Niemen proved<sup>1</sup>, the crossing over the Niemen posed no insurmountable difficulties. Operationally, the capture of Grodno would have been of the greatest importance because it would have also deprived the Russians of the important Petersburg-Warsaw connection. After the breakthrough over the Bobr at Grodno, the thrust into the rear of the enemy towards Białystok might even have been continued. However, it must be considered that the incalculable obstacles and influences of the winter campaign had extraordinarily exhausted the strength of the troops — undoubtedly more than the enemy's weaponry effect. In snow,

---

<sup>1</sup> p. 239.

## Operational Possibilities with Increased Force Allocation.

Ice and bitter cold could render the best considerations and measures of leadership much more ineffective than even the strongest weather influences of an unfavorable summer.

Furthermore, it proved disadvantageous for the leadership of operations in the area of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief that his forces had been weakened shortly before by allocations to the Carpathian Front by 2½ combat-effective infantry divisions. Whether the Commander-in-Chief would have agreed to these allocations at the beginning of January if he had already been informed about the deployment of the new corps in the East and if this increase in forces had opened up other prospects of success, is doubtful. Based on our current knowledge of the impact of the diversionary attack at Bolimow-Borzynow, it can be assumed with certainty that the Russians would have retreated to or behind the Vistula in West Poland with a prompt repetition of such attacks. A decisive operation in the East, as originally sought by Field Marshal v. Hindenburg, did not occur this time either due to a lack of available forces.

East Prussia was liberated from the Russians for the second time, a new major victory of annihilation was achieved. However, the goal set by the higher command in planning the operation was not reached; the strategic impact sought at the time was denied to the great battle success. Reluctantly and slowly, the high command came to this realization. Until February 26, Field Marshal v. Hindenburg resisted the idea of abandoning the operation. The unsuccessful first unification attempt at Augustow, the failures at Bobr, and the escalation of the situation at Przasnysz were the milestones on the way to the difficult and bitter decision of February 27 to halt further offensives. The crisis on the Eastern front, which had only postponed further victories around Lodz in 1914, was not resolved by the new major battle success, despite all the troops' dedication. With the means available in the East, no decisive result could be achieved in the face of Russian superiority, even if forces had been spared for deployment at the Narew Front for the 10th Army.

Nevertheless, the operation did not remain without significant strategic results for the overall situation in the East. The new defeat caused even greater concern in Russia, as this sad prelude to the new campaign plan offered little hope for a change in the situation, which was so urgently needed for internal political reasons. The

## The Winter Battle of Masuria.

The Chief of Staff of the Grand Duke wrote at that time to the Minister of War about the "entire horror of the catastrophe," about the "disgraceful conditions" of the commanding general of the III Corps and the reserve divisions, which he called Panti divisions; the losses were enormous. It was a new "calamity." Of the XX Corps, only some of the defiance and artillery remained<sup>1)</sup>. The massive material losses<sup>2)</sup> threatened to lead to a serious crisis soon, given the low performance of the domestic arms industry. They searched for culprits, high and low, put the commanding general of the III Corps before a court-martial, and even spoke of treason. To calm public opinion, a scapegoat had to be found. A gendarmerie colonel, accused of having betrayed to the Germans the Russian positions long known to them, was hanged. As is now undoubtedly established, the Russian military court committed a judicial murder.

When Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmann declared in a telephone conversation with the Supreme Army Command on January 15: "Consider it crucial that the corps come soon, by the end of January, as the Russians can thwart our operations," the course of the operation proved that the commander-in-chief often anticipated the operational necessities of the Russian attack from the Narew. In the uncertainty that existed in January, there was no initiative for an independent solution, response came through attack, to destroy the "gigantic plan" of the Grand Duke, which the foreign press had spoken of. In fact, such a plan did not exist. After initial hesitation, the Grand Duke decided on the attack on East Prussia, but the chief quartermaster in the Russian headquarters, General Danilov, expressly emphasized that the state of the army did not allow for large-scale operations. If we follow the Russian regrouping in January/February today, it can be asserted with certainty that two or three weeks later the German operation would have had to become inevitable under much less favorable conditions. As the timing was chosen, the Russian relief attacks from the Narew at Lomza and Przasnysz came too late and could mostly be repelled with troops that had been freed by the victory at Augustowo. In complete dependence on the German initiative, the Russian leadership sought

---

<sup>1)</sup> Krasnyj Archiv, Volume 3, p. 31. — <sup>2)</sup> p. 237, Footnote.

## Strategic Impact of the Victory.

planless and clueless about countermeasures to fend off the completely unexpected German strike. There is no longer talk of a planned counteroffensive; the Russian military leadership does not know whether the reserves should go to Drany, Grodno, or Bialystok, and finally abandons the idea of a decisive attack on East Prussia.

On February 23, the Grand Duke admitted that, given the state of the troops and supplies, he was not in a position to launch a strong counterattack and wrest the initiative from the Germans. According to General Danilow, a strong thrust into West Poland would have been the most suitable means; however, for "such a bold and responsible maneuver," they had neither the necessary means "nor probably sufficient offensive spirit." He also admits the severity of the defeat: "Russian prestige" had "suffered a severe blow for the third time" in East Prussia, and the conquest of East Prussia had once again been thwarted by the German victory. Since the great defeats of the summer of 1914, the conquest of East Prussia had to be a question that "due to its unpopularity could never again be openly and fully addressed." With a "certain artificially generated mistrust, even prejudice," all thoughts concerning East Prussia were treated, and offensive operations against East Prussia bore "the character of haphazard half-measures, marked by the stamp of indecision and indecisiveness." East Prussia, "the hornet's nest" or "the trap" as it was called by Russian generals, had cost the Russians three armies. The conquest of East Prussia as a strategic goal was now definitively abandoned. The German victory in the Augustów forests had put an end to the "long and fruitless struggle in East Prussia," which the Russian General Staff had foreseen and feared in its peace considerations of 1908. With Hindenburg's devastating blow against the Russian 10th Army, the plans of the enemy military leadership were also shattered. The shift that the Grand Duke originally wanted to move north was now shifted back to the south. This was a strategic impact of the victory, which at that time could not have been anticipated on the German side.

---

1) Danilow, p. 438. — 2) Danilow, p. 281. — 3) Gaiomtschowski, p. 164 and 351.

## The Battles on the Eastern Front until the End of April 1915.

### 8. The Final Battles on the German Eastern Front from the End of February to the End of April 1915.

#### a) The Intentions of the Commander-in-Chief East.

When the Commander-in-Chief East decided on February 27 to withdraw the 10th Army from the forest of Augustów, he wanted to concentrate forces to launch a new attack at one point on his entire front with superior strength; at which point, there was still no clarity. According to the available reports, the Russians had a total of about 37 infantry and eleven cavalry divisions east of the Vistula, some of which had been severely affected by the recent battles; newly identified were the II, XIII, XV Corps and the III Caucasian Corps as well as the Guard Cavalry Division. In contrast, the Commander-in-Chief East, with some Landsturm units, had only 24½ infantry divisions and five cavalry divisions in total, a large part of which had been severely reduced by heavy fighting and the hardships of the weather. The upcoming time of snowmelt and "inability to move" had to have a paralyzing effect on all operations. The focus of the fighting had shifted from Augustów to the area of Przasnysz and Lomza. There, the enemy, constantly reinforcing, attacked with its battle-hardened corps. At the 10th Army, there was hope for a relaxation of the situation, as it could find support at the position under construction at Augustów-Suwalki-Wylkowyszki.

Thus, the main concern of the Commander-in-Chief East, who was still in Litzen, remained focused on the left wing of the Gallwitz Army Detachment and the 8th Army at the Narew. The severely weakened 9th Army had the task of preventing the enemy from bringing in additional forces through offensive thrusts. The Commander-in-Chief East agreed with an attack north of the Pilica.

On March 5, General v. Falkenhayn communicated that "a withdrawal of forces from the Eastern Front to the West" — as he had intended on February 19 — "was no longer envisaged for the time being, i.e., in the month of March." However, when on March 9 the request followed to "send a brief assessment of the situation on the eastern theater of war as a basis for further decisions as soon as possible," the Commander-in-Chief East believed he had to infer from this that General v. Falkenhayn was again considering a weakening of the Eastern Front in

### The Commander-in-Chief East intends to attack again.

Consideration is given. Field Marshal v. Hindenburg therefore pointed out emphatically on the same day the impracticability of such an intention: "The troops brought by the Russians into the line area east of Plock-Grodno are so strong that they engage all the forces of the three German armies located on the right bank of the Vistula, so that a withdrawal of any forces cannot be considered if the successes achieved by the last battle are not to be relinquished. The own intention is to damage the enemy forces as much as possible, and indeed in the way that is feasible for them, through offensive strikes." The intention to "advance to a counteroffensive at one point" was thus abandoned. The German Eastern Front was increasingly pushed into defense; the Commander-in-Chief East wanted to conduct this offensively. In its effects, this decision led to various operations with locally limited successes.

#### h) The Battles of the 10th Army in March and April 1915.

Map 14.

Defense against Russian attacks until March 5. On the evening of February 26, the High Command of the 10th Army received the message from the Commander-in-Chief East that a continuation of the offensive was not intended. Two days later, the XXI Army Corps with the attached  $\frac{1}{2}$  2nd Infantry Division was withdrawn unnoticed by the enemy from the fortress area of Grodno to the extended position Rygalowka-Wolynka-Sopoczinie. On the right, the XXXX Reserve Corps connected from Bobr from Lipitz to the Augustow Canal, on the left from the Augustow Canal to south of Druskeniki, the XXXIX Reserve Corps secured against the middle Njemen. Further north, in a very light deployment, stood the Kosch Group with the 1st Cavalry Division, the 5th Guard Infantry Brigade, and the 16th Landwehr Division up to Jurborg on the lower Njemen, with some smaller and less combat-effective border guard detachments under Major General Baron v. Esebeck north of this river up to the Baltic Sea. According to reliable reports, the enemy had three corps between Sopoczinie and Grodno, as well as at Grodno, two cavalry divisions at Olita, and one corps at Kowno. According to unconfirmed civilian reports, stronger forces were supposed to gather at Olita for an attack. On March 1, the army command informed the subordinate command authorities that the army would soon be withdrawn to the line Augustow-Krasnopol-Lodzajcie. The 5th Guard Infantry Brigade was withdrawn and transferred to the Gallwitz Army Detachment.

## The Battles on the Eastern Front until the End of April 1915.

Meanwhile, the Russians continued their attacks across the Bobr lowlands. On March 1, they managed to penetrate the weakly occupied German position at Lipsk on the seam between the 80th Reserve and 2nd Infantry Division; however, they were thrown back across the Bobr in a counterattack on March 4, suffering heavy losses and losing 900 prisoners. Similarly, on March 2, a Russian attempt to secure the railway bridge at Ostrow on the northern bank failed; 1500 prisoners remained in German hands. An attack launched on March 4 at the mouth of the Augustowki Canal soon collapsed in the counterattack of the XXXIX Reserve Corps.

The Russians also advanced against the flank of the army. During the relief of the 5th Guards Infantry Brigade, the enemy approached their positions from Olita and Kowno; at Sereje, Simno, Dautlze, and Marjampol, there were skirmishes, but they did not take on any serious forms. The imminent danger here, under which the intended backward swing was significantly reduced, which was planned for March 5, was postponed to March 6 due to consideration of a simultaneous backward movement on the extreme right wing of the Austro-Hungarian army<sup>1</sup>.

The guiding idea for the future deployment of the army was to regain operational freedom, which was restricted by the favorable Bobr section and the fortress of Grodno. Generaloberst v. Eichhorn hoped that the enemy would follow against Augustow-Suwalki. Then he wanted to seize them by attacking their northern flank. For this, the XXXX Reserve Corps with the ½ 2nd Infantry Division was to occupy the under-construction position Augustowki Canal-Augustow-Wigrn Lake southeast of Suwalki. The XXI Army Corps and XXXIX Reserve Corps were to move in a more northerly direction, left flank on Kalwarja, with the Kosch group covering and concealing this flanking movement against the Russians on the middle Niemen.

### The First German Counterattack. March 5 to 12.

Stage w.

The backward movement proceeded according to plan and without disturbance by the enemy. The XXXX Reserve Corps already took up its new positions on March 6; behind it, the ½ 2nd Infantry Division took quarters in Augustow. From the XXI Army Corps, a group formed on March 7

---

1) p. 120.

## Retreat of the 10th Army and First Counterattack.

the 42nd Infantry Division between Wigry Lake—Krasnopol—Nowiniki for defense; the 31st Infantry Division reached the area of Punsk. The XXXIX Reserve Corps had advanced slightly along the road Sejny—Kalwarya with the 77th Reserve Division at Pelele and the 78th Reserve Division at Madzowo. In these three divisions, Colonel General von Eichhorn thus had a mobile strike wing.

The enemy pressed hardest on the southern flank over the Bobr. Here, the enemy was already probing variously against the position of the XXXX Reserve Corps on March 7; two Russian corps were identified in front of its line. The following day, the enemy attacked south of Augustowo so fiercely that the 2 1/2 Infantry Division, already in retreat, had to be redeployed at Sopnowo Lock. On the rest of the army front, the enemy followed only slowly and cautiously, so the army high command's hope that the enemy would push sharply from Grodno and expose its right flank to an attack was not fulfilled.

Even on March 8, no promising target for attack presented itself for the northern flank. In the large forests, Russians were identified at Szczerzec, Sucharzecka, and Malcarec. According to an intercepted radio message, the Russian II Corps was advancing in two columns over Sopoczkinie—Kopciowo and over Kaledy—Giby towards Sejny. Flyers reported that the enemy was advancing from Sejny in a broad front south of Dusz Lake; it was estimated at three regiments. Furthermore, the 1st Cavalry Division encountered Russian cavalry north of Sejny. Now, Colonel General von Eichhorn decided to attack with his northern flank on March 9. General von Below was to engage the enemy north of Krasnopol and, if necessary, attack himself, for which the 77th Reserve Division was subordinated to him. The main attack was to be led by General von Lauenstein with the 31st Infantry, 78th Reserve, and 1st Cavalry Divisions on both sides of the Kirsna to the south. For this, the two divisions were moved further northeast behind the 77th Reserve Division towards Simno. The 1st Cavalry Division was to close the gap between the 77th Reserve Division and the strike wing north of Galince.

In severe frost, which dropped to 25 degrees Celsius, the night shift of the strike group took place. On March 9, the Russian 73rd Reserve Division of the III Corps was defeated at Lozdzieje. With continued sharp cold, the attack on March 10 was carried on the left flank east around Galadus Lake towards Berzniki, which

## The Battles on the Eastern Front until the End of April 1915.

to intercept all Russian forces standing further west. The 77th Reserve Division joined the advance west of the lake. Late in the evening, Berzniki was taken, but there were still enemies in Sejny. On March 11, the 42nd Infantry Division was also supposed to attack. An intercepted radio message revealed early on March 11 that the enemy had already ordered a retreat to the northern part of the woods the evening before. The assumption that they would retreat towards Grodno was soon confirmed by aircraft reports. There was no longer any prospect of successfully continuing the encirclement movement; the enemy's lead was too great. The army command therefore contented itself with only allowing the 1st Cavalry Division to follow into the forest, while halting the infantry divisions at the northern edge of the forest. In battles with the enemy's rear guards, the four divisions reached the line Froncki—Jelwa. Exhausted, the 1st Cavalry Division reached Kopciowo and pushed parts forward to the road Giby—Kalety.

The hasty withdrawal of the Russians had cleared the way into the flank of the enemy in front of the XXXX Reserve Corps. This corps had attacked heavily south of Augustów in recent days and had even temporarily broken into the German position at Kolinica on March 10. Generaloberst v. Eichhorn hoped to roll up this enemy from the north on March 12 and perhaps outflank them from the south. However, the success did not materialize, as the enemy disappeared behind the river section in time. The total capture from the three-day battles amounted to 5400 prisoners and some artillery pieces.

## The Battles from March 13 to the End of April.

Support w.

Remaining in the reached line was out of the question given the flank threat from the middle Niemen. The troops urgently needed rest. Thus, the army was mostly returned to the last position by March 15, ready for a new counterattack if the enemy advanced again. The XXXX Reserve Corps resumed its extensive defensive position south and southeast of Augustów, the XXXIX Reserve Corps moved into the area between Wigry and Galadus Lake, and the XXI Army Corps formed the left wing northeast of this lake; the 1st Cavalry Division remained in the area northwest of Kopciowo in front of the front. In the following days, however, the striking power of the army was reduced by further detachments (General Command I Army Corps, ½ 2nd Infantry Division, 2/78 Reserve Division)

## New Retreat of the 10th Army after Tactical Successes.

... and an infantry regiment of the 31st Infantry Division<sup>2)</sup> was gradually weakened, and thus the prospects of success for a future offensive thrust diminished. The fact that the previous Kosch Group, now commanded by Lieutenant General Sommer, was reinforced at Wirballen by 2/3 of the 4th Cavalry Division from the 8th Army these days was insignificant compared to the strong infantry tasks. In view of the reduction in forces, Generaloberst v. Eichhorn decided to withdraw the northern wing of his main forces a little further, the XXI Army Corps to Kalvarja, the 1st Cavalry Division to Berzniki, and the detachment of the 16th Landwehr Division previously stationed at Seerze to Lozombieje. The enemy followed slowly.

On March 21, the position of the 1st Cavalry Division east of Sejny became untenable, and the Russians attacked at Pusn as well. Generaloberst v. Eichhorn wanted to let the enemy run as deep as possible into the prepared encirclement this time and withdrew the 77th Reserve Division to a position running from the northern edge of Lake Wigry towards Rutka Tartak, so that from south of Augustow to here, three divisions stood in an extended front facing east. At an angle to this, behind the upper course of the Sejzupa, the 1st Cavalry Division was to join at Ludwinow, the XXI Army Corps at Kalvarja with the front facing south ready to strike. Its flank was covered by securing the 16th Landwehr Division at Ludwinow, Marjampol, and northwards.

By March 24, this deployment was completed. The enemy approached only slowly and cautiously. In front of the XXXV Reserve Corps, the III Siberian and XXVI Corps seemed to be advancing, the II Corps advanced over Sejny, the III from Lozombieje initially westward, but then turned in several columns to the northeast and north; strong cavalry approached the Sejzupa section at Ludwovo ahead of it. But also on the left flank of the XXI Corps, the enemy appeared; here, east of Ludwinow, the 1st Guard Cavalry Division appeared. The entire Russian 10th Army, four corps, and four cavalry divisions marched — as a war diary of the German 10th Army states — generally in the "direction desired by the German leadership."

On March 24, the enemy attacked with about seven battalions against the Sejzupa bend south of Ludwinow, while holding back further southwest. Thaw had set in; the snowmelt had turned terrain and roads into bottomless mud.

---

<sup>1)</sup> To the Gallwitz Army Detachment. — <sup>2)</sup> To the 8th Army.

## The Battles on the Eastern Front until the End of April 1915.

Generaloberst v. Eichhorn, who had meanwhile set the 2/3 4th Cavalry Division in motion to reinforce the eastern flank at Ludwinow, ordered the 31st Infantry Division to counterattack at noon. This was successful and continued in the following days together with the 42nd Infantry Division on the right, the 4th Cavalry Division on the left, in the direction of Lodzzieje against the enemy's northern flank and rear.

On March 27, the XXXX Reserve Corps was to advance with strong forces south of Lake Wigry against the enemy's retreat routes, and the ½ XXXIX Reserve Corps was also to attack now; the Commander-in-Chief East led the 76th Reserve Division from the 8th Army, partially supplemented by other troops, to Suwalki. Generaloberst v. Eichhorn pointed out to the XXI Army Corps that rapid progress of its encircling movement was of decisive importance for the success of the operation. However, the results of the general attack fell short of expectations. Along the entire line between Lake Wigry and Lake Dus, there were fierce frontal battles. Despite local successes, which at Krasnopol brought about 4000 prisoners, a gun, and seven machine guns as booty, the struggle did not lead to any decisive success in the following days. The Russians resisted stubbornly and repeatedly launched counterattacks. Thus, a front gradually formed, running east of Krasnopol and Punsk and then bending eastward to Lake Dus. When the advance of the 31st Infantry Division south of Wigry at Lake Dus seemed to stall again, reports from aerial reconnaissance about Russian troop concentrations near Olita prompted the army command to withdraw this flank northwestward. Even when a second aircraft sent by General v. Below could not detect any enemy at Olita, the army command adhered to this order; it had gained the impression that, given the constantly increasing mobility and the noticeable fatigue of the troops, a greater success was no longer achievable. With a booty of 5000 prisoners, the XXI Army Corps began the retreat after having fought on a 30-kilometer front against parts of the Russian II, III, XIII<sup>1</sup>) and the III Siberian Corps.

In the second half of March, the Commander-in-Chief East was surprised by the incursion of weaker Russian forces over Memel and Tauroggen into East Prussia. On March 17, they broke through in the north-

---

<sup>1</sup>) The XIII Corps, shattered at Tannenberg, had so far only reestablished one brigade.

## Invasion of the Russians into the Memel Area.

In the tip of East Prussia, 4000 Russians with ten machine guns and eight cannons overran the weak land defense at the border and advanced plundering and burning from the north and east towards Memel. In the evening, the weak German forces were forced to retreat to the spit; a large part of the population followed, and the Russians entered Memel. The next day, the border guard further south at Tauroggen was also forced to retreat before superior opponents to Laugszargen and surrender this place to the Russians on March 20. Thanks to the reinforcements quickly brought in by the Commander-in-Chief East and the High Command of the 10th Army — six battalions, two and a half batteries, strong parts of the 4th and 6th Cavalry Divisions — it was possible, on March 21, under the leadership of the Governor of Königsberg, Lieutenant General v. Pappritz, to retake Memel. The Russians retreated hastily to the north with considerable losses and the abandonment of several guns and machine guns. At Polangen, the pursuit was halted on March 23, without being able to intercept significant parts of the enemy despite the deployment of strong cavalry. A few days later, on March 29, the Russians were also driven out of Tauroggen by the reinforced Brigade Esebeck (six battalions, three batteries, and parts of the 6th Cavalry Division). Major General Freiherr v. Esebeck took over the border protection from Schmalleningken to Radsuthen, followed by the 6th Cavalry Division.

On April 1, the German 10th Army was essentially back in the same position as before March 24: the XXXX Reserve Corps in the fortified position on both sides of Augustow, in the middle the Corps Lauterstein formed from the 76th and 77th Reserve Divisions between Wigry Lake and Sidory, the 42nd Infantry Division of the XXI Army Corps at Wizajny behind the front, the 1st Cavalry Division at Lubowo, and the 31st Infantry Division at Kalvarja. The enemy advanced slowly, as on April 3, they approached the Szeszupa bend south of Ludwinowo, the Army High Command made the decision of General v. Below (former Chief of Staff of the XXI Army Corps). On April 4, the 42nd Infantry Division was moved from Wizajny to Kalvarja; the next day, the attack began under the command of the 42nd Infantry Division, Lieutenant General v. Bredow, after General Fritz v. Below had been called away to the west as army leader. Despite all efforts, it was not possible to drive the enemy, who had meanwhile taken possession of the eastern protruding Szeszupa bend, back from this bank. The movements remained...

## The Battles on the Eastern Front until the End of April 1915.

Stuck in mud, the attack strength of the XXI Army Corps, which had performed excellently in eight weeks of fighting but had also suffered the most, was now exhausted. On April 7, the attack was halted by order of the Army High Command. The current positions were to be held.

In the following days, combat activity decreased. The exhaustion of the troops and the difficulties of the season ruled out larger operations.

Generaloberst v. Eichhorn had the XXXX Reserve Corps, which had been in a relatively quiet sector behind swamps and lakes for almost six weeks, swap with the XXI Army Corps stationed at Kalwarya. The following sector division came into effect on April 26:

XXI Army Corps (without reinforced 65th Infantry Brigade) from the eastern edge of Lake Rajgrod to the southern edge of Lake Wigry;

76th and 77th Reserve Divisions under Lieutenant General Elstermann v. Elster to the Wigra River;

1st Cavalry Division on the Szeszupa to Jurgiszovry;

XXXX Reserve Corps with 65th Infantry Brigade and 4th Cavalry Division to north of Ludwinow;

Landwehr Division Königsberg, without its two detached regiments<sup>1</sup>), then to the Niemen.

After the Memel near Schmalleningen, with special orders from the Commander-in-Chief East, were on the march: the General Command of the XXXIX Reserve Corps with 2/3 of the 78th Reserve Division, the 3rd and Bavarian Cavalry Division, which had meanwhile arrived from the western theater of war. In the Memel corner, the 6th Cavalry Division and Major General Freiherr v. Esebeck secured with about eleven battalions (replacement and landsturm), some squadrons and batteries. The 6th Reserve Division coming from the 9th Army was also unloaded there<sup>2</sup>).

The March and April battles of the 10th Army formed the last offshoots of the great struggle for East Prussia, which had begun anew at the beginning of the year. The enemy had been sustainably weakened and finally driven from German soil, but it had not been possible to deliver a decisive blow. The German 10th Army with about seven infantry divisions and two cavalry-

## Operational Pause During the Thaw.

The Russian 10th Army faced 11½ divisions of infantry and four cavalry divisions during this time. The 10th Army repeatedly prepared to strike, but the enemy always retreated in time. The season, thaw, and complete exhaustion of the troops severely affected the speed and force of the attacks, and thus the chances of success to the highest degree. Thus, the battle here on the previously mobile operational wing gradually froze into trench warfare.

c) The Battles on the East Prussian Southern Front from Early March to Late April 1915.

Map 18.

The 8th Army.

By the end of February, the 8th Army had ceased its attack on Lomza and Ostrow on the orders of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief. The decision of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief to withdraw the 10th Army from the forest of Augustowo was significantly influenced by the difficult situation on the East Prussian southern front, especially the heavy fighting of the Gallwitz Army Detachment at Przasnysz. The withdrawal from Przasnysz initiated on February 27 did bring some relief to the situation, but renewed Russian attacks against the left wing of the Army Detachment and the right of the 8th Army were to be expected. The enemy seemed to be strengthening more and more. The German defense was to continue to be conducted offensively. What the Eastern Commander-in-Chief had taken from the 10th Army in terms of troops, the XXXVIII Reserve Corps of General of Cavalry v. der Marwitz and the 4th Cavalry Division, had been set in motion to the right wing of the 8th Army.

The Commander-in-Chief, General Otto v. Below, who expected an enemy attack from Lomza, intended to attack with a division of the XXXVIII Reserve Corps provided by the Eastern Commander-in-Chief and the 4th Cavalry Division between Sztwa and Stroda. He maintained this decision even when the Eastern Commander-in-Chief again shifted 2/3 of the 76th Reserve Division to the Gallwitz Army Detachment on March 1. While the 75th Reserve Division and 4th Cavalry Division were set in motion over Kolno, the Scholz Corps had to leave individual villages on both sides of the Sztwa to the advancing Russian V Corps. General v. Below then combined the 75th Reserve Division, 5th Infantry Brigade, Königsberg Replacement Brigade, 4th Cavalry Division, and the Landsturm Border Guard west of Stroda into the Marwitz Corps. It was initially tasked with the mission, with the support of-

## The Battles on the Eastern Front until the End of April 1915.

The effect of the right wing of Corps Scholz was to push the enemy back between Sztwa and Stroda over the Narew and block the crossing to Nowogrod.

In the following days, Corps Marwitz recaptured the lost villages on the Szkwa from the enemy; however, further successes were denied. On March 6, General v. Below decided, in view of the enemy's superiority, to halt the attack of his right army wing. On March 7, a fierce counterattack, in which the Russians advanced from Dawia—Serafin into the position of the 75th Reserve Division, was repelled after heavy fighting.

In the sector of Corps Scholz, battles with varying success took place on March 4 and 5 from both inner wings of the 41st Infantry and 1st Landwehr Division west of the Stawiski—Lomza road.

The reinforced 3rd Reserve Division began its attack on the morning of March 2, after heavy artillery fire, with at least one Russian corps against the 6th Landwehr Brigade at the Bobr and the 5th Reserve Infantry Brigade to the west. However, the attack collapsed, in some places only 50 meters from the German trenches, with heavy losses. The continued assaults by the significantly reinforced enemy throughout the first week of March also led to temporary successes due to the tenacious defense by the German Landwehr and reserve units; however, new attacks were to be expected.

The 11th Landwehr Division was to drive the enemy from its positions on the western bank of the Bobr near Osowiec, to make it easier to block the river crossing. Despite heavy fire from Russian artillery, the Landwehr gradually worked its way up to the dunes east of Klimaszewnica, up to Sopinia and Bialogronby, and took possession of the near bank of the Lenk Canal. The commander-in-chief East initially refrained from continuing the attack beyond this line on March 6.

The elevated construction of the border defense position on the Pisa west of Kolno to the Rajgrodner Lake was to be undertaken only when the front positions opposite Lomza, Wizna, and Osowiec were strongly expanded and connected to the adjacent sections.

Contrary to expectations, the enemy did not continue its attacks against the 3rd Reserve Division. On the entire front of the 8th Army, calm set in around March 9, interrupted on both sides only by locally limited offensive operations. In the defense, against

## Defense Against Russian Attacks at Lomza.

The Army Detachment Gallwitz repeatedly received successful assistance from the Marwitz Corps; on March 17, the Russian counterattacks extended to the section of the Marwitz Corps. When in the last third of March the 10th Army launched a new offensive, the 8th Army gradually returned the 4th Cavalry Division and five battalions to it, which it had previously received from the 10th Army. On March 28, the command of the XXXVIII Reserve Corps left the 8th Army to be used on the Carpathian theater of war. The 75th Reserve Division and the 10th Landwehr Division became independent. At the beginning of April, the parts of the 76th Reserve Division (XXXVIII Reserve Corps) still with the 8th Army were returned to the 10th Army. During the month, the combat activity at the front of the 8th Army gradually decreased.

The Army Detachment Gallwitz.

Map 13 and sketch m.

At the end of February, the Army Detachment Gallwitz was positioned with the Thorn Corps along with the 21st Landwehr Brigade and the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Cavalry Division, the newly formed Richthofen Corps (1st Guard Reserve Division and 2nd Cavalry Division), and the right wing of the Zastrow Corps (Pfeil Detachment and Brengel Division) in the long-held line from the Vistula forward Plock to east of Mlawa. The left wing of the Zastrow Corps (Wernitz Division) and the Morgen Group (I Reserve Corps, 6th Infantry Brigade, 9th Landwehr Brigade, and 6th Cavalry Division), which had borne the brunt of the fighting at Przasnysz, were moved back behind the Brzozowo-Ulatowo section forward of the border on the night of February 28. Further east, up to the junction with the 8th Army, the Staabs Group (1/2 37th Infantry Division, 39th Cavalry Brigade, and some Landwehr and Landsturm battalions) covered between the middle Orzyc and Szkwa.

By March 1, General v. Gallwitz in Soldau had the following picture of the enemy: in front of the Zastrow Corps stood the I Siberian and XIX Corps, in front of the I Reserve Corps the II Siberian Corps, with the I Corps behind at Rozan. Around Przasnysz, large masses, concentrated in five divisions, were gathered. Some of them had been observed marching west, while others pressed against the left wing of the Morgen Group and the right of the Staabs Group. General v. Morgen considered it after the preceding heavy

## The Battles on the Eastern Front until the End of April 1915.

Finding it necessary to give his troops rest, he proposed to retreat to the already developed border defense positions. However, General v. Gallwitz, in agreement with the Supreme Commander East, could not comply with this intention due to the neighboring sections. The current position of the Morgen Group already meant a concerning indentation of the overall front; at the upper Orzyc, a gap had even formed between the Zastrow Corps and the Morgen Group. Despite everything, they had to withstand the enemy pressure until reinforcements arrived, offering the possibility of improving the position through a new attack. The 11th Reserve Infantry Brigade<sup>1)</sup> just arriving from the 9th Army was assigned to General v. Morgen as the first support. Further forces were expected in a few days.

On the evening of March 1, the situation worsened as the enemy pushed back the 6th Cavalry Division from the lower Ulatowka. The expected unified Russian attack in the following days did not occur; although there were very intense, but overall unsuccessful partial attacks, mainly directed against the Zastrow and Staabs Corps, while the Morgen Corps, positioned between them, was less affected. Therefore, the 75th Infantry Brigade, which was marching with the Dichthuth Corps to its 37th Infantry Division to Chorzele, had to give up a regiment to the Zastrow Corps. The newly arriving 5th Guard Infantry Brigade was assigned, with another regiment going to the Morgen Corps. The advancing 3rd Infantry Brigade was assigned to Lieutenant General v. Staabs.

With prolonged waiting in the current deployment, there was a fear that the left wing of the Zastrow Corps would fall into a difficult situation due to the pressure of the superior enemy threatening encirclement. General v. Gallwitz wanted to relieve it with an attack by the Morgen Corps on March 7 and to balance the deep indentation of the front east of Mława. Due to delays in the artillery march, he had to postpone the operation to the morning of March 8. Meanwhile, the enemy launched strong but unsuccessful attacks on March 6 and 7, and even during the night of March 8, against the center and especially the left wing of the Zastrow Corps at Orzyc, attempting to break through the swamps to Mława. Mountains of corpses testified to the extraordinarily heavy losses of the Russians.

During the attack on March 8, the center of the Morgen Corps was supposed to

---

<sup>1)</sup> p. 169.

## Attack of the Corps Morgen.

The 1st Reserve Division, reinforced by a regiment of the 11th Reserve Infantry Brigade and six heavy and light batteries, was to lead the main thrust over the upper Ullatowka, followed by the newly arrived  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the 76th Reserve Division<sup>1)</sup> with an assigned infantry regiment. The units on the right and left were to support this advance with artillery fire and feigned attacks, with the Staabs group striking the enemy from the east in the flank. On the morning of March 8, the infantry began the attack after an hour of artillery preparation, but advanced only slowly due to heavy snowfall. The brigade of the 76th Reserve Division, which had been deployed early against the dominant heights of Krajevo, was only able to take them in the evening; the 1st Reserve Division reached the Ullatowka, capturing 2000 prisoners on its left flank.

On March 9, the left wing of the Zastrow Corps, Division Bernitz, and the assembled 75th Infantry Brigade also advanced to attack. The Corps Morgen worked its way forward in heavy fighting. By the evening of March 10, the enemy had been pushed back to about five kilometers east of Przasnysz, eliminating the large bulge in the front. Russian reinforcements hurried in by rail and foot march, and the enemy seemed determined to hold Przasnysz at all costs.

The purpose of today's attack was achieved. When it became apparent on March 11 that the enemy was positioned everywhere in a strong, cohesive formation and further Russian forces were advancing from the southeast from Plonsk and from the east on Krasnosielc, General v. Gallwitz ordered a transition to defense on the achieved line. This decision aligned with the view of the Commander-in-Chief East, who announced in the evening that the army detachment had a purely defensive task for the coming days; the positions were to be set up for sustained defense.

On the wide front from the Vistula to the Sziwa, it now seemed that the army detachment, which was numerically much weaker and consisted to a significant extent of Landsturm, was facing almost nine Russian corps in total; General v. Gallwitz counted on the XXVII, XIX, I Turkestan, I and II Siberian, II Caucasian, XXIII, IV Siberian Corps, and smaller units. New Russian attacks were to be expected. Defending them on the extended front was no easy task; it was particularly difficult in the sections that had been fought over for weeks and were inadequately fortified, opposite Przasnysz and in the area east of the Orzyc, where the Staabs group could only establish isolated strongpoints in the confusing swamp and forest terrain.

---

<sup>1)</sup> p. 285.

## The Battles on the Eastern Front until the End of April 1915.

could hold the position. The fact that severe frost hindered digging in and made the swamp areas passable increased the difficulties for the defenders.

As early as March 13, the Russians attacked on a 20-kilometer-wide front in the Przasnysz sector, but were only able to push back German advance troops. While the Supreme Commander East expected the continuation of Russian attacks, especially in this area, General v. Gallwitz's attention was now more focused on the Staabs group, where the enemy seemed to be preparing new forces near Ostrolenka.

On March 14, further Russian attack attempts in the Przasnysz area were unsuccessful. The enemy now also attacked further east, at Jednorozec. Initially repelled, they broke through in the evening east of the village in the swampy terrain of the Orzyc, unexpectedly coming into the rear of the defenders and capturing Jednorozec. The German loss amounted to about 1000 men, 16 guns, and ten machine guns. The attempt to regain the lost ground on March 15 through a counterattack brought 2000 prisoners but no full success.

In repeated, but mostly not locally conducted daily attacks, the Russians advanced against the fronts of Generals v. Morgen and v. Staabs in the following days. The approach possibilities in the vast, confusing swamp land in front of the left wing of the army detachment were only known to the local experts, very much like the German defenders, who sought to exploit this advantage, especially in night attacks. However, they were no longer granted success, but they left several hundred prisoners in German hands in almost every attack. Besides the area northwest and northeast of Przasnysz, the village of Jednorozec and beyond the Orzyc, the area around Ziomce, the river swamps of the Omulew, and finally Wach on the road from Myszyniec to Ostrolenka were focal points of the battles. General v. Gallwitz counted 45 more serious, partly nightly attacks by the Russians from March 13 to 23. The lack of uniformity in the enemy's advances gave the German leadership the opportunity to secure the situation at threatened points through troop movements. The Supreme Commander East had significantly helped with reinforcements. By March 22, the army detachment, in addition to smaller units, had been assigned the general command and the 26th Infantry Division of the XIII Army Corps of the 9th Army, the general command and the 2nd Infantry Division of the I Army Corps, as well as the 78th Reserve Division from the 10th Army. The army front was newly covered, now the corps seemed

## Defense Against Russian Attacks from the Area of Przasnysz.

Jastrow and the I Reserve Corps formed the Watter Group<sup>1)</sup> (General Command XIII Army Corps), replacing the Staabs Group with the Roß Group<sup>2)</sup> (General Command I Army Corps).

On March 24, General v. Gallwitz believed he could detect a decline in enemy attacks. The enemy's strength seemed exhausted. The German positions had meanwhile been expanded, and obstacles had also been laid. Thus, further attacks could be faced with confidence.

Since the beginning of operations on February 10, a total of 42,000 prisoners had been captured on this front, 12,000 of them since March 8, the beginning of the second attack on Przasnysz. The bloody losses of the Russians must have been considerable. Hundreds of dead lay in front of the fronts. In contrast, the own losses amounted to about 29,000 men by March 10.

As expected, the Russian attacks gradually ceased. Individual advances at Jednorozec, south of the Orzyc, and on both sides of the Omulew were unsuccessful. On March 27, the enemy made another major attempt. At Wach, the newly formed III Caucasian Corps broke into the positions of the 37th Infantry Division, which was forced to retreat to a further rearward line during the night of the 28th. Only after reinforcements were brought in did calm return on March 30.

Field Marshal v. Hindenburg also considered the situation of the army detachment to be stabilized. On March 25, he ordered the removal of the 2/3 76th Reserve Division<sup>3)</sup> stationed behind the front; on March 30, the Higher Cavalry Commander 1, Lieutenant General Freiherr v. Richthofen, on April 17, the 2/3 78th Reserve Division<sup>3)</sup>, the next day the 11th Reserve Infantry Brigade, and on April 29, half of the 36th Reserve Division to be withdrawn. In the first days of May, the rest of the I Reserve Corps followed.

It was a most remarkable achievement that the German troops on the southern front of East Prussia, especially the Gallwitz Army Detachment, accomplished in the winter defensive battles of March. Two

---

<sup>1)</sup> On March 13, General of Infantry Freiherr v. Watter became the commanding general of the XIII Army Corps, replacing General v. Fabeck.

<sup>2)</sup> The staff of the General Command was now expanded to the High Command; Colonel Marquard replaced Lieutenant Colonel v. Redern as the previous Chief of Staff.

<sup>3)</sup> See p. 284.

## The Battles on the Eastern Front until the End of April 1915.

Russian armies had stood opposite from the Vistula to Ospwiec, the 1st to the west, the 12th to the east of the Orzyc. They finally had a total of 31 infantry and 9½ cavalry divisions<sup>1</sup>, opposed by only 14 infantry and 2½ cavalry divisions on the German side, including a large part of the Landwehr and Landsturm.

d) The 9th Army in March and April 1915.

Map 14 and Sketch 0.

Before the 9th Army, the enemy had weakened during February. According to the task set by the Commander-in-Chief East<sup>2</sup>, to prevent the departure of further Russian forces, Generaloberst v. Mackensen, despite his own significant losses<sup>3</sup>, decided to undertake another breakthrough attempt. The Commander-in-Chief East agreed. The attack was to be launched from the eastward projecting section of Division Menges, where the Russians were considered relatively weak. According to reliable information, they no longer had troops in the second line here. The attack seemed more promising here than at the Rawka and Bzura, as no natural obstacle hindered the advance.

On February 27, the formation of an attack group under General of Cavalry Ritter v. Frommel was ordered; it consisted of a consolidated division of the XI Army Corps under Major General Dieffenbach, an infantry brigade formed under Major General v. Stein from troops of the XVII Army Corps, the Fabek Corps, and the XXV Reserve Corps, a reinforced brigade of Division Menges, a strong artillery group — including twelve batteries of heavy field howitzers, four batteries of 10 cm cannons, and one battery of mortars — and the 9th Cavalry Division. The remaining parts of Division Menges and the Posen Corps were available with the restriction that their positions remained secure.

The attack was to take place on March 5 in the early morning hours and, after breaking through the enemy standing north of the Pilica, continue "decisively northward" towards Biala, to roll up the enemy position and from

## Attack of the Frommel Group.

To cut off Warsaw. The Woysch Army promised its support: the group Kövess, adjoining south of the Pilica, was to feign an attack, further south on March 6, the German Landwehr Corps was to attack near Lopuszno.

The attack by General v. Frommel began in frosty weather and was initially successful. He broke through the Russian front over a width of eight kilometers. By the evening of the 6th, he reached the Rofitna section and approached the road Nowe Miasto—Gielondz. The troops of the Menges Division attacking on the right flank had advanced beyond Bieliny that day but could not hold their position there; 3400 prisoners and 20 machine guns were captured. The enemy seemed to be withdrawing reinforcements. On March 7, some progress was made on the left flank, but the enemy held firm on the rest of the front. The main resistance was formed by the strong Russian position at the village of Bzary.

In view of reports of continuous deployment of Russian units to the East Prussian front (XXIII Corps to Ostrolenka, II Caucasian Corps to Nowogeorgiewsk), Generaloberst v. Mackensen maintained his intention to continue the attack. He had the Frommel Group reinforced in the following days with the XI Army Corps, parts of the XVII, the Posen Corps, and finally the Batter Corps. General v. Frommel now shifted the focus of the attack to his northern flank. By bringing in forces from the north, he aimed to take the strong position at Bzary and then advance towards Biala. On March 15, he attacked with about four infantry divisions before the Batter Corps was available. But the enemy had also received considerable reinforcements.

The attack by the two divisions of the XI Army Corps and the Stein Brigade on March 15 did not bring decisive success. The Russians had already attempted during the night of March 15 to push the German attack from the south over the Pilica into the flank and rear. To defend, General v. Frommel had to withdraw troops from the attack front. The commanders of the 22nd and 38th Infantry Divisions, Major Generals Dieffenbach and v. der Esch, repeatedly pointed out the particular difficulties of the attack, which were further increased by the onset of thaw and snowfall. The front line was still partly 300 to 600 meters from the enemy position, and there was a shortage of artillery ammunition.

On March 16, during the attack of the 38th Infantry Division and the Stein Brigade, whose infantry partially penetrated into the main Russian position, there were varied and costly battles. Most

## The Battles on the Eastern Front until the End of April 1915.

Batteries had to cease fire as the ammunition was exhausted. Around noon, General v. Frommel received instructions from the Army High Command "not to insist on particularly vigorous execution of the attack, but to ensure a very strong expansion of the captured position"; in the afternoon, the order followed to halt the attack, as the Commander-in-Chief East had ordered the transfer of another division to East Prussia. This decision remained even when the Chief of Staff of Army High Command 9, Major General Grünert, reported to General Ludendorff by telephone, "the 9th Army is making promising progress on its southern flank; if a division were withdrawn now, continuation of the offensive would be impossible and the sacrifices made for its execution so far would have been in vain." The serious situation on the Narew Front required immediate assistance. The XIII Corps and the 26th Infantry Division had to be relinquished. The captured line was to be held and expanded. Since the beginning of the attack, a total of 7,150 prisoners had been taken, with own losses of over 10,000 men, including about 2,200 dead. Continuing the battle had become hopeless due to the weakened offensive power of the remaining troops.

On the rest of the army's front, the occupation had become quite weak in places. Thus, since March 8, the III Reserve Corps had only 10,000 rifles and eight field batteries on a front of 14 kilometers at the Bzura. The 8th Cavalry Division reported on March 15 that the two Landsturm brigades deployed in their section were at the end of their strength, but a replacement was not possible. A regrouping of forces was absolutely necessary.

The High Command's view on the tasks for the near future was laid down in the army order of March 21 as follows: "The war situation requires stubborn holding of the current positions with the most suitable forces possible. For this, the forward positions and obstacles are to be expanded as much as possible. Additionally, a second position is to be built throughout."

The construction of the Vistula position from southwest of Wyszogrod to the area south of Wloclawek, which had begun in early February, was largely completed by mid-April. By order of the

## Result of the Battles of the 9th Army.

The Commander-in-Chief East was also considered for a large rear main position, which was to run southeast of Plock, leaning on the Vistula position, at a distance of about 20 to 30 kilometers behind the front of the 9th Army to Grabica (northwest of Petrikau), where it was to connect to a position assigned to the Woysch Army for expansion Grabica-Czenstochau. Additionally, the Commander-in-Chief East desired the establishment of a bridgehead near Plock south of the Vistula; the bridge there was completed on March 30. Towards the end of March, the 25th Reserve Division left the 9th Army for use on the Galician theater of war; at the end of April, the ½ 6th Reserve Division<sup>1)</sup> was also released. On April 16, Field Marshal Prince Leopold of Bavaria was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the 9th Army in place of Colonel General v. Mackensen, who was assigned to other duties.

At the front, there was general calm from mid-March to the end of April.

## 9. The Commander-in-Chief East in April 1915.

In the course of April, new tasks were to be assigned to the German Eastern Army. On April 5, the Commander-in-Chief submitted an assessment of the situation on the Eastern Front to the Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army. According to the attached strength report, the enemy was identified in front of the front from the Baltic Sea to the Woysch Army, including 1034 battalions (64½ infantry and 16½ cavalry divisions), opposed by only 521 battalions (42½ infantry and 11½ cavalry divisions) of the Central Powers. The Commander-in-Chief East assured that the Eastern Army would hold its positions. Unfortunately, despite adequate replacement strengths, there was no possibility of giving the troops the urgently needed rest

and sufficiently promoting training due to the extended lines. The situation was undoubtedly tense. This could be alleviated if the Commander-in-Chief East had sufficient reserves. Therefore, it was requested to consider the idea of transferring two new divisions from the western theater of war until increased supplies were granted. The two divisions would, of course, be returned in time for an offensive in the West.

---

<sup>1)</sup> p. 169.

## The Battles on the Eastern Front until the End of April 1915.

General v. Falkenhayn, however, rejected this request on April 11, citing that under the current general military-political situation, the Eastern Commander could not be reinforced with two divisions from the West. Despite General v. Conrad's efforts to secure German reinforcements for his heavily embattled Carpathian Front<sup>1)</sup>, General v. Falkenhayn emphasized in a telegram to the Eastern Commander on April 12 the "importance and urgency" of the task assigned to the Eastern Commander by recent events, "to bind the enemy forces opposing him as much as possible."

Given the significant numerical superiority of the Russians, this remained a task that continued to place considerable demands on the heavily strained troops. Nevertheless, the gradually weakening Russian attacks and the weather conditions led to a certain state of calm, which the Eastern Commander intended to use for organizing the units and further forming an army reserve. On April 3, General v. Gallwitz received orders to withdraw the 2/3 78th Reserve Division stationed with him to be positioned at the railway near Willenberg. The 10th Army was reassigned the detached Reserve Infantry Regiment 252 of the 76th Reserve Division from the 9th Army. Additionally, on March 27, the transfer of the General Command to the XXVII Reserve Corps and the 25th Reserve Division to the Carpathian Front was ordered<sup>2)</sup>. As a replacement, the 29th Landwehr Brigade was sent to the East.

Field Marshal v. Hindenburg did not take the Supreme Army Command's order lightly. A frontal engagement seemed to him unlikely to succeed with the available forces and considering the road conditions. Instead, he considered an operation on the northern flank more promising. Initially, he intended — as indicated in a personal letter from General Ludendorff to the Gallwitz High Command dated April 19 — to launch an attack on both sides, primarily north of the Njemen. The first suggestion for this came from the Supreme Army Command. They had already suggested on the night of March 24 to 25 that Field Marshal v. Hindenburg could free up a corps for the wavering Carpathian Front<sup>3)</sup> if he received two cavalry divisions from the West. On the morning of March 25, they inquired whether an advance of two cavalry divisions, which were to be provided by the Army Command,

---

<sup>1)</sup> G. 128. — <sup>2)</sup> G. 287 and 295. — <sup>3)</sup> G. 128 f.

## Reinforcements for the Eastern Front.

would be equipped, north or south of Kowno, in the direction of Wilna and further against the railway line Warsaw—Polozk, was considered feasible. The Commander-in-Chief East described in his response an advance north past Kowno as quite promising. The concerns of the Supreme Army Command, whether the enemy, with the help of his very favorable railway connections, could thwart such a cavalry operation, were dispelled by the Commander-in-Chief East.

The 3rd and Bavarian Cavalry Division, which had meanwhile arrived from the west at Wirballen—Wylkowyszki and Wladyslawow, were subordinated to the Higher Cavalry Commander 1, Lieutenant General Freiherr v. Richthofen, who had arrived from the Gallwitz Army Detachment. However, due to the condition of the roads, the execution of the cavalry operation suggested by the Supreme Army Command was not initially feasible. The two divisions also had to be equipped for deployment in the East. They were already back at Wirballen, without their use being possible. When General v. Falkenhayn inquired on the evening of April 12 whether the war situation and the condition of the roads would allow the intended cavalry operation in the foreseeable future, he received the following report the next day: "The current condition of the roads excludes any cavalry operation. It can only be carried out after the onset of better weather. A date for this cannot be specified. The war situation would now allow the operation. How the war situation will develop until the onset of dry weather is still unclear."<header>10. The Russian Operations in March and April 1915.</header><body>Maps 14 and 18.

The Russian Supreme Army Command had completely abandoned the originally planned major offensive against East Prussia at the end of February and turned to the idea of seeking the decision against Austria-Hungary instead. General Russki, the Commander-in-Chief of the Northwest Army Group, could no longer count on reinforcements. The directive issued to the Northwest Front after the temporary success of Przasnysz on March 1 began with the words: "His Imperial Highness does not consider it, given the current state

## The Battles on the Eastern Front until the End of April 1915.

of the armies still considered it permissible, based on the availability of combat resources, to cross the border and invade East Prussia, where our troops would again be exposed to the harmful influence of the Prussian railways." The army group must be content with "sharp but short blows, with pursuit only up to the border," to gain suitable positions for active defense in the foreland of the Njemen, Bobr, and Narew. On the left of the Vistula, the positions were highly undesirable; the army group should rather — as ordered the next day — prepare to, if necessary, transport troops en masse from the right to the left bank.

On March 2, General Rußki ordered the general attack to the right of the Vistula with a limited objective. The 10th Army, with a total of about 13 infantry and five cavalry divisions, was to regain the Augustów Forest and, if possible, the line Kalvarja—Suwalki—Augustów. The 12th Army, with a total of twelve infantry and 2½ cavalry divisions, was to advance with the main forces from Lomza to Szczytno and encompass the left flank of the opposing enemy to separate it from the forces standing east of Ostjwiec and push it westward. The 1st Army, with a total of twelve infantry and 6½ cavalry divisions, was to clear the area up to the border. On the left of the Vistula, the 2nd and 5th Armies, with 16½ infantry divisions, several Landwehr brigades, and two cavalry divisions, were to tie down the enemy through partial advances, with the 2nd Army attempting to drive the Germans from the right bank of the Rawa. As a reserve, General Rußki held the XXIII Corps (3rd Guard Infantry Division and 62nd Reserve Division) ready at Warsaw and Białystok. General Rußki viewed the situation hopefully and was reluctant to halt the attack entirely at the border, as he would then have the flanking movements in the rear. He requested permission to continue the attack up to the vicinity of the southern part of the Masurian Lakes. The Supreme Army Command agreed but pointed out that a corps would soon have to be transferred to the southwestern front.

In the 10th Army, the XV Corps stationed at Grodno had to be withdrawn as an army group reserve as early as March 7. North of the Augustów Forest, the III and II Corps reached the area south of Simna by March 9, following the retreating Germans. A German counterattack on that day pushed parts of the III Corps from Lodzajice back to Sereje and thus into the rear

## Attacks of the Russian 10th and 12th Army.

of the II Corps, which fought at Sejny. "A repetition of the maneuver that led to the capture of the XX Corps did not succeed for the Germans" — according to the official Russian account<sup>1)</sup>, but the corps was nevertheless forced to quickly retreat to the "eastern exits" of the Augustów Forest.

For the 12th and 1st Army, the German counteraction resulted in "a series of stubborn and costly battles"<sup>2)</sup>, where the ever-increasing shortage of artillery ammunition was extremely inhibiting. General Ruszki had to make the XXIII Corps available to the 12th Army on March 5. On March 7, the enemy was estimated to be about four corps east of Drzyc, and about five German corps west to the Vistula; he seemed to have been reinforced by troops that had previously stood before the Russian 10th Army. The German attack north of Przasnysz, which began on March 9, prompted the deployment of the II Caucasian Corps from the left bank of the Vistula, so that since early February, a total of 10½ corps had been withdrawn from the entire East Prussian front, plus 3¾ corps<sup>3)</sup> from the reserve of the Supreme Army Command. The II Caucasian Corps was assigned to the 1st Army on March 12, and the XV Corps, prepared at Grodno, was assigned to the 12th Army. The 1st Army was to attack towards Chorzele the following day, with the 12th supporting it. "All in all" — according to the official Russian account<sup>4)</sup> — "there was no specific thought to be recognized on the Russian side in these battles, except for active operational zeal, which, with rare stubbornness, led to the continued effort to wrest from the Germans this or that piece of terrain they had taken, as in January at the Bzura and Rawka." The losses were again severe. By March 9, they were estimated at 35,000 men north of Lomza, 10,000 of them with the Guard Corps<sup>5)</sup>.

By mid-March, General Ruszki recognized the futility of further attack attempts. He now assumed about 30 divisions on the enemy side. On March 16, he regulated the course of operations with a new directive, after previously inquiring with the Supreme Army Command what "final goals" needed to be achieved on the East Prussian front. The attack was to be essentially halted. The

---

1) Riesjarnow, I, G. 82.

2) Riesjarnow, I, G. 83. — More details on this in Knor, p. 260 f.

3) Gardner, ¾ XIII., XV., IV. Siberian Corps.

4) Riesjarnow, I, G. 83.

5) Knor, p. 260.

## The Battles on the Eastern Front until the End of April 1915.

The 10th Army had to establish a stubborn defense in the foreland of the central Niemen, then at Kopziowo and along the line Sopockinie—Lipnis—Sztabin—Dowlgy, and if the opportunity was favorable, to attack again to gain the line Marjampol—Suwałki—Augustów—Rajgród. The 12th Army was to limit itself to active defense in the Narew foreland and to reach the line Kruszja—Lipniti—Wach—Zawady with its left wing as much as possible; it had to give up three corps, one each as a reserve for the Supreme Army Command and for the army group, the XXIII to the 1st Army. This army was ordered to advance again with its right wing and then also to switch to defense, preferably along the line Jednorozec—Przasnysz—Ciechanow—Plonsk—Wyszogrod on the Vistula. This army also had to give up a corps to the army group reserve, and to withdraw another as an army reserve as soon as possible. The 2nd and 5th Armies had to continue to hold their ground. Based on this directive, there were still a series of battles until the fighting activity gradually subsided from the end of March. The situation was "good, but not necessarily secure"<sup>1</sup>.

On March 26, General Ruski requested to be relieved from command for health reasons. His successor, General Alexejew, one of the youngest generals of the infantry and previously Chief of Staff of the Southwestern Front, took over command of the army group on March 30<sup>2</sup>. At that time, it was short of 320,000 men of its full strength. By mid-April, the III Caucasian Corps had to be transferred to the Southwestern Front. However, further transfers seemed impossible despite the urgent need in Galicia due to the weakness of the individual units, without questioning the defense of the front.

---

<sup>1)</sup> Krasny Archive, Volume 27, p. 8.

<sup>2)</sup> The senior and proven General Plehwe in the battles at Lodz was not considered due to his German name.

## IV. Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

### A. The Creation of a New Army Reserve.

Maps 1, 2, and 14.

When General v. Falkenhayn reluctantly gave his approval in January under the pressure of circumstances for the deployment of newly formed units stationed at home to the eastern theater of war, he apparently still held on to the idea of carrying out the offensive strike he had planned in the West as soon as possible. Already on February 19, before the conclusion of the Battle of Masuria, he sent an inquiry from Berlin, where he had gone after visiting the East Prussian theater of war on January 30, to the Commander-in-Chief East about his further intentions. It stated: "As important as it is, of course, to exploit the winter war in Masuria with all means, one must not ignore the fact that this endeavor is limited by our general military and political situation. By the second half of March, the Supreme Army Command will likely be forced to move significant parts of the forces currently used in the Northeast to other theaters of war. Even earlier, a reduction in the reinforcements and munitions to be sent to the East will have to occur. Therefore, it is crucial to bring the Russian armies into such a situation by then that they will not be able to become dangerous to us in the foreseeable future."

The plans underlying this inquiry from General v. Falkenhayn, as later explained by the Chief of the General Staff to the Commander-in-Chief East on March 9, involved the "continuation of the campaign in the West" and the "opening of the way to Turkey." Both assumed that by then the Russians would be so weakened that they would not be able to become dangerous again in the foreseeable future on any front section of the eastern theater of war — neither on the Carpathian Front nor in Poland or East Prussia. As long as the prospects and efforts of the operations currently underway were not yet foreseeable, this had to be at least

---

1) G. 3 f. — 2) G. 233. — 3) G. 276.

## Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

appear questionable. It was even more doubtful whether, given the circumstances, General v. Falkenhayn, who neither had an army reserve nor the prospect of obtaining one by mid-March, would be able to transfer such strong forces from the East to other theaters of war as were necessary for the subjugation of Serbia and the achievement of a decisive victory in the West. Both tasks seemed equally urgent. The political situation and the necessity of establishing a secure connection with Turkey demanded the swift subjugation of Serbia, at least the conquest of the Negotin salient. On the other hand, various reasons urged that, if at all possible, a decisive victory in the West be achieved this spring. There was no doubt that this goal would become increasingly difficult to achieve later, once the English reinforcements expected for the summer from the Kitchener Army became available on the mainland. The current balance of forces in the West favored a German offensive in the near future. In the second half of February, there were about 92 German divisions against 97½ of the Allies. However, achieving a decisive victory in the West required a significantly larger deployment of troops and materials than in the East. For on the stagnant Western Front, a breakthrough had to be achieved on a relatively broad front before operations could proceed. This preparation already required larger forces, and the operation was likely to require even stronger ones, as its execution required the continuous reinforcement until a decisive victory was achieved. A prerequisite for a successful breakthrough was again a particularly large number of heavy artillery and an unusually high amount of ammunition. General v. Falkenhayn could not be unclear on February 19, when sending his draft to the Commander-in-Chief East, that such strong forces of reserves and materials from the East could hardly be made available to him. He therefore seemed at that time to have thought less of a decisive operation in Serbia and the West than of short, less force-demanding offensive strikes, in Serbia for the conquest of the Negotin salient and thus for establishing a connection with Turkey, in the West for boosting the morale of the Western troops, who had been worn down by trench warfare for months). Such a goal had

---

1) According to the then estimate of the intelligence department of the German Supreme Army Command.

2) See the unsent letter from December 27, 1914, to the Commander-in-Chief East, Volume VI, p. 421/422.

## Creation of New Division Units.

General v. Falkenhayn apparently also envisioned his initially planned offensive in the second half of January in the West, when he still had control over the new formations. As desirable as both goals might have been, the question arose whether it was not initially more important to use all forces for an easier and quicker war decision in the East. Only through this could such strong forces be freed that the subjugation of Serbia and a war-ending decision in the West with a prospect of success could be dared. The prerequisite was, as the leaders in the East had repeatedly emphasized, the subjugation of Russia. It had to appear again without hesitation to shift the focus of warfare back to "other theaters of war" before the decision in the East was fought.

Then, completely unexpectedly, just a few days after the inquiry to the Commander-in-Chief East, a proposal came to General v. Falkenhayn, which provided a completely new basis for his further decision-making. The prospect opened up to gain new strong army reserves without weakening the Eastern front. On February 22, the already highly meritorious head of the Army Administration Department in the War Ministry, Colonel v. Briszk, proposed to General v. Falkenhayn, who was present in Berlin, to form new division units by giving up the fourth infantry regiments from existing divisions, initially from the Western front, in the manner of those established in January with three infantry regiments each. As a replacement for the surrendered regiment, the surrendered divisions were to receive 2400 trained replacements and two machine gun platoons for three guns each. The infantry replacement was to be distributed among the remaining regiments, resulting in an average increase of about 66 men per company. The number of infantry and machine guns at the front thus remained the same. The necessary field artillery, pioneer, cavalry, etc. front troops were to be gained partly by reducing the number of guns from six to four and reducing the cavalry in the existing divisions, partly by new formations. General v. Falkenhayn immediately agreed to the proposal and obtained the Emperor's approval on the same day. It was foreseeable that with the implementation of Briszk's proposal, a considerable number of divisions would be ready behind the Western front in about 1½ to 2 months.

---

1) See pages 3 and 5. — 2) Further details in the later appearing Volume II "War Armament and War Economy".

## Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

the Supreme Army Command could freely dispose. It was thereby largely, perhaps even completely, freed from the necessity of recalling troops from the East.

Preparations for the planned reorganization of the Western Army were immediately initiated. Already on February 25, the Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army issued an order to the Western Army, in which the intention of the Supreme Army Command was initially expressed, "to gradually form new units as army reserves behind the front of the Western Army." Initially, six infantry divisions (50th, 52nd, 54th, 56th, 58th [Saxony/Württemberg] and 10th Bavarian) were to be formed and ready for use in the second half of March. These divisions received, in addition to their three infantry regiments united under a brigade staff, a field artillery brigade and a foot artillery battalion, as well as two batteries of heavy field howitzers, two pioneer companies, and ammunition columns and trains, thus being fully independently usable. Simultaneously with this order, a request was made to the Ministry of War for the establishment of a new army high command (A.O.K. 11), which was to be ready for march in Kassel by March 11 at the latest.

On March 3, General v. Falkenhayn demanded the establishment of further divisions. "...The goal to be achieved this month" — he explained in this context — "must be to set all active and reserve divisions of the Western Army to three infantry regiments each and to form new divisions from the surplus regiments, also with three regiments each. If it is not possible to fully equip the last divisions, I would also be satisfied if they initially consist only of infantry and cannon batteries. They will also be very useful in this form as reserves and for special purposes and could gradually be expanded into full divisions..."

Since the Western Army counted 36 infantry and 37 reserve divisions, 24 new divisions had to result from the full implementation of the transformation, which could be provided as reserves of the Supreme Army Command behind the front. These were undeniably favorable prospects to bring about the decision of the war in the West before the effectiveness of the English reinforcements. The intention of General v. Falkenhayn to shift the focus of warfare to the West began to take on an increasingly firm shape. The balance of forces on the German side was now so favorable that, in contrast to his previous view, he temporarily considered a simultaneous war-

## Creation of a New Army Reserve of 14 Divisions.

Decisive operations were forced both in Serbia and in the West; for the solution of the latter task, he hoped to be able to forgo the return of stronger eastern forces. This increased the certainty that the eastern front would solve its task on its own and ensure the freedom of movement for the western army. Already on March 5, before it was certain whether the hoped-for number of new units would actually be achieved, he informed Field Marshal v. Hindenburg that "a return of forces from the eastern front to the west is not currently envisaged, i.e., in the month of March"<sup>1</sup>).

The expansion of the transformation to all active and reserve divisions of the western army, as demanded by General v. Falkenhayn, soon proved impracticable. On March 11, the Minister of War reported to the Kaiser that eight more divisions could be formed. Their formation was ordered on March 16. Of these, the 111th, 113th, 119th, and 121st divisions were to be ready for use at the beginning of April, the 115th, 117th, 123rd, and the 11th Bavarian 8 to 14 days later. These divisions could only receive six field artillery batteries and one heavy field howitzer each, as well as only one pioneer company; their equipment with ammunition columns and trains was correspondingly less.

With the formation of divisions 111 to 123 and the 11th Bavarian, the possibility of forming new units from the western army was temporarily exhausted. Besides armament difficulties, the replacement situation also did not allow for the creation of 24 new divisions through reorganization of the western army in March, as demanded by General v. Falkenhayn. In mid-March 1915, about 163,000 trained non-commissioned officers and men and about 515,000 men in training<sup>2</sup>) were available in the replacement formations and recruit depots for replacement purposes. The monthly replacement requirement of the field army was about 180,000 men on average, while an additional

175,000 trained men would have been needed to compensate for the infantry transferred from the existing divisions. In the long term, however, the replacement situation posed no difficulties, as besides the 1915 recruit class, a considerable number of men from the trained Landsturm were still available and had not yet been called up<sup>3</sup>).

---

<sup>1)</sup> p. 276. — <sup>2)</sup> How many of the men in training could be fully trained and sent to the field in March has not yet been determined; more details in the later published Volume II "War Armament and War Economy".

## Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

By mid-March, General v. Falkenhayn had clarity that by early April, only 14 new divisions would be available as army reserves behind the Western Front, not the expected 24. No further increase in strength was to be expected in the coming weeks due to the strained replacement situation exacerbated by armament difficulties. Bringing in divisions from the German Eastern Front was hardly considered at this time due to the situation there and was not urgent, as the Western offensive could not begin before mid-May at the earliest. On March 20, General v. Falkenhayn therefore warned Field Marshal v. Hindenburg that the withdrawal of forces from the Eastern Army to the West was not envisaged even after the end of March. "Should nevertheless," it continued, "the necessity for this or for the use of army units now assigned to Your Excellency in the South arise, a timely request will be made there..."

Also, on the eastern theater of war, General v. Falkenhayn suggested the formation of new German divisions by mid-April. However, it would take some time before this intention could be realized. Initially, three infantry divisions (101st, 103rd, and 105th) were to be formed with the Eastern Army, whose readiness for use was not expected until the second half of May.

In addition to the replacement situation, the ammunition issue was of particular importance. Not only did a decisive offensive in the West require an unusually high demand for ammunition, but it was also expected that the Eastern Front would then make higher ammunition demands, as a German offensive in the West would likely trigger an attack by the Russians on the Eastern Front.

---

1) p. 320 f.

## B. Considerations for a Decisive Breakthrough in the West.

On March 1, General v. Falkenhayn returned to the western theater of war. Here, he faced two significant tasks: first, the reorganization of the Western Army to gain new army reserves in the face of an enemy threatening with attack, and then the difficult question of a breakthrough operation on the western theater of war. It was initially necessary to determine on which part of the Western Front a breakthrough and operation would most certainly achieve decisive military effect and how much forces and material, especially heavy artillery and ammunition, they would require.

The idea of an attack breaking through the enemy front to bring about a decisive victory in the West had already been independently studied in detail by the high commands of the 6th and 1st Armies. On March 4, a memorandum drafted by General v. Krafft v. Dellmensingen was presented by the high command of the 6th Army. After examining the possible direction of attack, the memorandum, similar to what General Wild v. Hohenborn had done at the end of December 1914, designated the objective of the operation to sever and crush the northern flank of the enemy front, primarily the English army. The high command did not believe that numerical superiority on the German side could be expected; such superiority would only be possible if Russia were subdued. Superiority must rather be sought in the efficiency and practical skill of the German leaders and troops. By transferring fresh English forces to the mainland, the British army could swell to 15 army corps by the end of March, double the current strength. "We must therefore be particularly careful not to set ourselves a task that exceeds our capabilities." It is by no means only about breaking through the enemy's stronghold; the victorious troops must, after succeeding in a heavy, continuous day and night attack, push through in ever new frontal battles from position to position.

To view the operation from the perspective that it is close to

## Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

Passing by Amiens, General v. Krafft did not find it advisable, as desirable as the protection of the left flank by the lower Somme had to be. The necessary forces would have grown to an inadmissible height; for he placed the main emphasis on separating the English army from the French. For this, the thrust was to be directed against the English right wing adjacent to French forces. Thus, a breakthrough on both sides of Arras was to follow the ridge running northwest to the coast between Boulogne and Calais. Further north, in the area of Kemmel, a secondary attack was to pin down the enemy. To secure the main attack to the south, corresponding forces had to be diverted, which were likely to repel enemy interference attempts in the line Albert—Doullens—Authie-Run, as the best line of defense, the Somme, was hardly feasible.

The first step, the breakthrough through the enemy's front line, had to happen with utmost force — "shattering." In the individual artillery preparation, each steep-fire battery was not to be assigned more than 150 m of target width. On the proposed main attack front, the breakthrough distance, excluding the city of Arras to be encircled, was 26 km. At the actual breakthrough points, the combat zone of an army corps was narrowed to 3½ km. In total, 160 heavy and 374 field batteries were set up for the preparation of the main attack. The attack itself was to be led by six army corps; to widen the gap, for immediate support and as a reserve, seven more along with two cavalry divisions were to follow. Of these thirteen army corps, three were already at the front; ten were to be newly brought up. The secondary attack at Kemmel required 38 heavy and 143 field batteries. Here, three corps were to be newly deployed. Additionally, significant reinforcements in pioneer, mortar, aircraft, airship, etc., formations were demanded for both attacks.

The memorandum placed special emphasis on ammunition supply. The high command of the 6th Army had experienced in the battles around Ypres in the autumn of the previous year that a large part, indeed at times the majority, of the heavy batteries had not been able to fully unleash their firepower because of a lack of ammunition. Similar situations were not to be repeated in the face of the autumn battles of the past year with higher demands, which were to be anticipated for the upcoming breakthrough. "The execution of the entire operation is only possible," said the memorandum, "if: 1. the entire heavy artillery

## Proposal of the High Command of the 6th Army.

regarding harnessing (or mechanical traction), 2. a very large amount of ammunition is provided, so large that the firepower of the guns can always be maintained at its full height. The success of the attack primarily depends on this. There could be nothing more misguided than if the attack had to halt again due to insufficient ammunition supply before the operation was completed. The ammunition stock must therefore be sufficient for at least a full month of combat, during which the decisive group conducts daily battles — preferably even longer — or the supply must be secured."

For the first time, the question of under what conditions a major strategic breakthrough on the Western Front could succeed was thoroughly addressed. The memorandum had pointed out that a large part of the German troops and a relatively even larger portion of the available combat resources, especially heavy artillery, must be deployed for the proposed operation. Furthermore, it addressed the actual leadership problems; here, the necessity and difficulty of a surprise strike, the provision of a special operations army behind the units breaking through the enemy front, the distribution of various targeted operational tasks among special leaders after the successful breakthrough, and the binding of enemy reserves through major attacks on the rest of the army front were highlighted.

The remarks made by General v. Falkenhayn on these statements indicate that he took the warning against an undertaking that exceeded the German forces very seriously, but he saw the mutual balance of forces more favorably and believed that the intended operation could be carried out with less effort. The proposed operational direction resembled the one he had already considered in December<sup>1)</sup>. Even then, when reviewing the statements of Generals Wild v. Hohenborn and Schmidt v. Knobelsdorf, he had written at the end of the former's remarks: "In any case, I also consider the thrust on Amiens to be correct." Thus, he had spoken out against operations on the Aisne or in Champagne.

The high demands on troops and war material, which the High Command of the 6th Army had deemed necessary, nevertheless raised the question of whether a breakthrough operation with less effort might be possible elsewhere. On March 12, during a brief stay of General v. Falkenhayn in St. Quentin, the

---

<sup>1)</sup> p. 16.

### Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

likewise present Chief of Staff of the 1st Army, Major General v. Kuhl, reported to him that a memorandum was being prepared at the headquarters of the 1st Army, which concerned an operation to be conducted in the area east of Soissons, breaking through enemy positions over the Aisne. A few hours earlier, General v. Falkenhayn had expressed doubts at the headquarters of the 6th Army about whether it was feasible to concentrate the strength of the Western Army for a thrust towards the Channel coast, while at the same time the French would make the utmost efforts to break through in Champagne. The proposal of the 1st Army thus fell on favorable ground. Several days had to pass before the memorandum was completed. On March 7, General v. Falkenhayn decided to send the head of the operations department, Colonel Tappen, to the 7th Army as Chief of Staff until the end of the month, in order to gain an independent judgment on the prospects of an operation over the Aisne. A major offensive in the West could not yet be considered for March.

Meanwhile, it had become apparent that the formation of new divisions in the West would fall significantly short of the extent apparently expected at the beginning of the month. The total number of new divisions to be formed was not 24, but only 14; by utilizing those at the front, this number could be slightly increased, but it was clear that the forces calculated as necessary in the memorandum of the 6th Army would not be available. General v. Falkenhayn, however, did not abandon the idea of a major breakthrough operation on the Western Front, but rather informed Colonel v. Seeckt, appointed as Chief of Staff for the newly formed Army Command 11) on March 11, that he intended to bring the war back into motion on the Western Front through a large-scale breakthrough and to bring about a decision 3).

On March 13, the memorandum drafted by General v. Kuhl of the 1st Army Command reached the hands of General v. Falkenhayn. It described a breakthrough from the area of Roye as no longer expedient 4), as at most the success would be that the English would be pushed back into a more or less large semicircle around Dunkirk, Calais, Boulogne, the French

## Proposal of the High Command of the 1st Army.

to withdraw their left wing to the line Beauvais-Dieppe or Rouen, so that two new frontal attacks would be necessary. The memorandum emphasized that above all the breakthrough itself must succeed. "The place where the breakthrough is to take place must be chosen so that the attack is actually favorable, strong parts of the enemy are defeated or pushed back, and above all a renewed establishment in prepared rear positions is prevented. The breakthrough must be prepared and executed with such strong forces that it must succeed according to human judgment. It must not come to the French procedure of leading one corps after another against the enemy position. Surprise must be sought in the attack by all means. The breakthrough must succeed abruptly. The decision of the campaign depends on it."

The most favorable conditions for a breakthrough in the area of the 1st Army seemed to the High Command to be on their own left and the right wing of the 7th Army. The proposals of the memorandum were based on this idea. Four army corps, two of which were already on site, were to advance from a 20 km wide front at and east of Baily over the Aisne against the plateau Chassemy-Bauv. They were to be followed by four more corps and a cavalry corps, which were to be kept in further accommodation between Ham and Montcornet until the breakthrough, to keep the enemy unaware of the attack objectives. They were to expand the closed gap by advancing against the rear of the enemy standing further east, rolling it up and eliminating it. The further continuation of the operation was intended for Paris. Simultaneously with the start of the main attack, a secondary attack was to take place northwest of Soissons. For this, the deployment of a division by the Supreme Army Command was sufficient. The demands for heavy artillery were lower than in the draft of the 6th Army. For the main attack, a total of 110 heavy batteries were demanded, for the secondary attack northwest of Soissons 27. Accordingly, the ammunition demands were also lower than for the attack on both sides of Arras. It was clear that with a proposal that was very likely to succeed in the actual breakthrough, whose deployment of forces was within the realm of possibility, and which hit the enemy most sensitively. But how far did its strategic effect reach? And was the deployment of forces worthwhile if a campaign decision was not possible?

In a personal meeting, to which General v. Ruhl was called to the Great Headquarters on March 14, he presented the

## Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

he considered another operation, namely a major attack in Champagne<sup>1</sup>, to be more effective. However, a rough calculation showed that the forces required for this would not be available. Thus, the proposal for a breakthrough over the Aisne east of Soissons remained; but this operation took on more the character of a local strike without decisive military significance. In this sense, General Wild v. Hohenborn, who was consulted for his opinion, also expressed himself on March 15. The suggested continuation of the operation against Paris, in his opinion, was not feasible with the forces set.

Both operational drafts, of the 6th and the 1st Army, originally arose from the expectation that the battle in Masuria would free up significant officers for the West. Both were based on the intention to thoroughly account for the Supreme Army Command's great need for troops and war material and thus also for preparation time, which resulted from previous combat experiences. While the memorandum of the 6th Army, albeit only in broad outlines, pursued the operation to its hoped-for conclusion — the destruction of the English army — the 1st Army's essentially contented itself with considering the local breakthrough. If a further operation was to be undertaken, the deployment of new forces was necessary, whose total scope was presumably recommended to be at the same level as in the Arras enterprise.

Despite the large scale of resources, which according to both drafts required an operational breakthrough on the Western Front to succeed, General v. Falkenhayn adhered to his intention to attack with the means available in the West. On March 16, the newly formed High Command 11, which had meanwhile been transported to Maubeuge, received the following written order: "The Supreme Army Command intends to break through on the Western Front after providing sufficient troops. For this breakthrough, strong reserves will be provided at the railway stations behind the army front. The assembly of these reserves and their subsequent deployment by rail to the breakthrough point will be regulated by the Supreme Army Command. The time of preparation-

---

<sup>1</sup> On March 18, General v. Falkenhayn requested the opinion of the High Command of the 3rd Army on the prospects and force requirements of a breakthrough operation in Champagne. The memorandum submitted by the 3rd Army on March 28, which treated the breakthrough both as an independent main operation and as a secondary operation with demonstrative purpose, however, no longer had any discernible influence.

### Order to the Army High Command 11.

The deployment of reserves and the location of the breakthrough have not yet been determined. In the breakthrough, Army High Command 11 will have to lead the attack in a combat sector yet to be determined. The next task of Army High Command 11 is: Reconnaissance of the terrain between Canal—La Bassée<sup>1)</sup> and the Avre-Bach near Roye for a breakthrough with the aim of penetrating the enemy front north of the Somme to the sea in a width of 25 to 30 km. In the chosen combat sector, in addition to the troops already stationed there, as many infantry divisions (and two infantry regiments) would be deployed so that each infantry division can be assigned a front width of 2.5 to 3 km. The necessary heavy artillery will be available. With these forces, the tactical breakthrough up to the breaching of the enemy line is to be achieved. Behind the breakthrough point, the Supreme Army Command would provide so many additional forces that the tactical breakthrough can be exploited operationally. The reconnaissance is to begin promptly... the result is to be laid down in a report to the Supreme Army Command by the end of March."

Thus, in addition to defining the reconnaissance objective, fundamental instructions on force measurement were given, and a clear separation between the tactical task of the breakthrough and its operational exploitation was pronounced. The Supreme Army Command did not yet commit to carrying out the operation in the section to be reconnoitered, even though it could not be unknown to Army High Command 11 that General v. Falkenhayn was indeed planning an offensive north of the Somme. Regarding the forces to be deployed, he considered the task set by mid-March to be feasible. If ten divisions were used in the first line according to the instructions, of which about four had to be already in the breakthrough section, it was possible with the help of the fourteen new divisions being formed to hold a second echelon of eight divisions for the immediately following operation behind the forces designated for the tactical breakthrough. Further deployments from the positional front could reinforce this second echelon or be used for other tasks, such as diversionary attacks, or for securing against an enemy offensive elsewhere. However, such a calculation fell significantly short of the demands presented by the memorandum of the 6th Army.

---

<sup>1)</sup> As in the original. It refers to the canal leading from Béthune to La Bassée.

## Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

At this time, the provision of the following forces was planned for the disposal of the Supreme Army Command: From March 23 onwards, the following were to be gradually assembled: the Guard Corps around Schlettstadt—Colmar, the XXXXI Reserve Corps around Autun—Avallon—Joigny—Sens, the II Bavarian Army Corps with the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division around Valenciennes—Douai—Cambrai, the III Army Corps with the 113th Infantry Division around Mézières—Amagne—Sedan, the X Army Corps with the 111th Infantry Division around Ath—Mons—Halle—Grammont, and an XXXII Army Corps to be formed from the 119th, 121st, and possibly a division of the X Reserve Corps in the area of Falkenberg—Bensdorf and near Bitsch. The 2nd and 3rd Armies were each weakened by one infantry division; otherwise, it was a matter of exchanging older infantry divisions for newly formed ones. The decisive factor for the formation of these army corps," it continued, "is the point that the army corps can be quickly assembled by rail or foot march behind the right wing of the army, while at the same time sufficient cover remains for the center and left wing of the army."

According to this plan, by mid-April, sixteen infantry divisions, seven of them newly formed, were to be available behind the Western Front for the Supreme Army Command. As for cavalry divisions, four were still on the Western Front as of mid-March.

Simultaneously, preparations began for the creation of a strong army artillery. By the end of March, they led to a request to the War Ministry for the provision of 40 unhitched heavy batteries of older material with crews from replacement units. They were to be ready for use by mid-April to free up batteries of a new type from the front. A calculation, based on the deployment of a total of ten army corps, showed that, excluding field gun batteries, 624 combat guns would be available for a breakthrough.

A second memorandum presented to General v. Falkenhayn on March 19 by the High Command of the 1st Army dealt once again with the questions discussed on the 14th in Mézières. It initially pointed out the dominant point that one must adapt to the available forces and, if necessary, limit oneself to a locally restricted attack. Regarding the choice of the direction of operations, the High Command once again justified its negative judgment.

---

1) According to a letter from the Operations Department to the Chief of the Field Railway Service dated March 19, 1915.

## Deployment of Forces.

Regarding a breakthrough at Arras or Roye, which, if it led to the separation of the English and French, would again result in very long attack fronts against both enemy groups. It was considered important to continue the attack in such a way that parts of the German army would reach the vicinity of Paris as soon as possible; the enemy would not defend the city as a fortress like in 1870/71 or like Antwerp and Maubeuge in 1914, but rather place the main resistance in far-advanced fortified field positions. Therefore, it was important to advance in a direction towards Paris where such positions were less developed and their garrison was not ready in time. Then the pressure on Paris would undoubtedly serve to hasten the decision. Since an offensive in Champagne was not possible due to a lack of forces, a breakthrough over the Aisne east of Soissons was again recommended. With the addition of seven corps, the high command believed it could expect that the enemy position would be rolled up far to the east, including Reims, the enemy standing downstream of the Aisne would be encircled, and the march on Paris could be undertaken.

General v. Falkenhayn's marginal notes on this memorandum show that he had a different opinion than the high command of the 1st Army regarding the effect of an attack carried out to the sea north of the Somme. To its statement "Ultimately, the English would still be free to escape destruction by retreating to the sea," he wrote: "Then the French would be finished here with the ally." However, he fully agreed when the memorandum stated: "Every breakthrough must absolutely be supported by demonstrating elsewhere. This demonstration is best achieved by an attack that differs from the main attack only by the limited goal and limited means, but requires equally careful preparation and sufficient artillery."

The high command 1) had not received any orders to make proposals for diversionary attacks. General v. Falkenhayn seems to have reserved this for himself. On March 17, he instructed the army detachment Gaede, where an offensive could not exert significant influence on the enemy commander's measures, to suspend their previously approved attack 1) and switch to the "planned defense." Regarding the gas offensive of the 4th Army prepared since early February and not carried out by him 2), General

---

1) G. 61. — 2) C. 55, 63 f.

### Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

v. Falkenhayn had little hope. To timely lure enemy reserves away from the actual attack site, the weather-dependent, still completely untested gas attack was obviously to be interrupted, considering the uncertain weather conditions. On March 19, he inquired with the High Command of the 2nd Army whether a draft for a surprise advance from Fricourt-Mametz and from Dompierre had already been prepared to dislodge the French positions at Maricourt. He wished to know what reinforcements in infantry and artillery and what time expenditure the High Command deemed necessary for such an operation and whether it considered it promising. However, the army leader assessed the manpower requirement as high and the success as not proportionate to it. On March 29, the High Command of the 7th Army was asked to report what increase in forces was deemed necessary to clear the right bank from Berry au Bac downwards from the enemy, and on what day after receiving the order the operation could be carried out. The High Command declared the provision of an army corps and 33 mostly heavy batteries along with corresponding ammunition as sufficient.

Even before the results of the initiated major reconnaissance were available, two general directives were issued to the armies of the West at the end of March. The first, from the 29th, dealt with securing the branched positions, which, despite the withdrawal of troop parts from the front, had to be held against superior attacks with minimal losses. A series of measures were recommended for this, concerning the improvement of obstacles, the creation of protective shelters for the entire garrison of the front line, and the use of concrete, the expansion of connections, rear positions and support points, as well as the thorough preparation of artillery use. Subsequently, the army high commands generally demanded "detailed reconnaissance for the attack." "These can serve as a general basis, that in an attack possibly ordered by the Supreme Army Command, each division will be assigned a business strip of 2.5–3 km to three infantry regiments in double line. The attack plans must primarily deal with the overthrow of the opposing enemy with all technical and artillery means, but must be thoroughly prepared in this regard. It should be achieved that "both the defense and the attack are prepared for completion at every point."

## General Instructions.

The directive dated March 31, concerning "Training of the Reserves of the Supreme Army Command," was expressed in general terms. "The reserves made available behind the front for the Supreme Army Command are primarily intended for attack." They are to be trained for this purpose ("particularly careful training in the use of technical attack means"). The directive did not contain a unified instruction for the attack against fortified positions, but rather it should rely on "their own war experiences," which should be supplemented by "the study of the report on the attack at Soissons prepared by the 1st Army." Training grounds should be established "where fortified positions in several lines one behind the other serve as attack targets." The exercises were to begin in small units and increase to the division level. "For exercises in the division, it should be based on the fact that only the tactical breakthrough, which was preceded by very strong artillery preparation, falls to the front line. For the operational exploitation of the breakthrough, the higher command will provide further strong forces to other units in the second and third lines... The duration of the preparation time cannot be set for the individual parts of the army reserves. The sooner the individual units are ready for combat, the better it is. No day should be lost."

The instruction that the leadership for the training of the reserves should be based on their own experiences and those of the 1st Army from the battles at Soissons was inadequate. The tasks of the artillery, especially the heavy ones, and their cooperation with the attacking infantry were hardly mentioned. As a guide to train the Western Army for the extremely difficult and previously unknown tasks of a major breakthrough operation against the English and French, these instructions were insufficient.

On March 31, the reports of Colonel v. Goeßl, Chief of Staff of the Army High Command 1, and Colonel Tappen arrived. At the same time, he returned to his former position as Chief of the Operations Department.

---

1) The originally inserted words "breakthrough and" were deleted by General v. Falkenhayn.

2) The Army High Command lacked a commander-in-chief, as the initially appointed General of Infantry v. Fabek had taken over the command of the 1st Army for the wounded Generaloberst v. Kluck. See p. 66.

3) At the same time, apparently, the report of his deputy, Colonel v. Lobberg, was available, as well as one from Major General v. Moser, who was then wounded at home.

### Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

The memorandum of the High Command 11 examined at which point between the canal of La Bassée and the Avre stream near Roye a breakthrough would offer the best prospects operationally. Considering that the distance from Albert to the Somme estuary was the shortest route to the sea, that the left wing of a German attack was protected by the Somme, and that here the main railway Paris—Abbeville—Boulogne could most easily be cut, the stretch Arras (exclusive)—Somme was designated as the most favorable breakthrough front operationally. Accordingly, after a thorough assessment of the tactical conditions on the entire front, the memorandum proposed the breakthrough between Arras and Albert on the approximately 25 km wide stretch from slightly north of Ficheux to Thiepval. Here too, the difficulties were great. They were seen not so much in the strength of the forward enemy positions as in the number and construction of the villages suitable for resistance. In these richly cultivated parts of northern France, however, the area up to about the height of Doullens, thus in the initially relevant section, is still lighter than in most other fronts considered. The proposed attack avoided the pronounced and reinforced strongpoints, such as Arras, Albert, Lihons, and did not lead against any natural, easily defensible obstacle. The High Command 11 also did not count on a quick success. A separation of the connection of the enemy army front would then be achievable if the center of the breakthrough could be advanced. Already for this, a constant feeding of the attacking power of the deployed troops was necessary, so that the maintenance of the advance, "on which success primarily depends," could be achieved. Further steps, initially staggered to the left, would have, after succeeding in advancing the left wing of the breakthrough to about the area of Bonnevillle, to take over the cover against Amiens and the lower Somme to Condé Folie. Further downwards, the security to the south would be transferred to cavalry divisions. The right wing of the breakthrough attack was to take a northwesterly direction towards Warlus—Goudin, to fill the gap thus created with forces held in reserve in the direction of Avesnes le Comte. Whether in connection with a secondary attack to be conducted north of Arras the encirclement of the French forces located here should be carried out remained open. The further course, thus the advance against the French forces located north of the breakthrough front, seemed to depend significantly on their measures. If their behavior forced the center and

## Memorandum of the Army High Command 11.

left wing of the breakthrough army, to swing from the line Sus St. Léger-Doullens-Bonneville northwards, a following army had to extend behind the breakthrough troops to the west, positioning itself on their left wing. If the enemy was not in a position to exert such influence, the existing breakthrough army could continue its march towards the sea, while the following army filled the gap emerging west of Abesnes le Comte. The memorandum no longer addressed the execution of the decisive battle against the now isolated enemy at the breakthrough point.

For the breakthrough battle itself, it considered the deployment of one army corps per 5 km of front necessary. Including the divisions already in the front line, this resulted in two corps for the breakthrough stretch. Four more as front reserves, for protection against Amiens and for insertion towards Abesnes le Comte, brought the strength of the breakthrough army to nine army corps. For the following reserve army, five were required, making a total of fourteen army corps and four cavalry divisions, of which about one and a half army corps were already on site.

In terms of artillery, the memorandum demanded one steep-fire battery per 200 m of front to make it storm-ready, approximately 125 batteries, of which about two-thirds could be light field howitzer batteries. Additionally, about 30 more heavy batteries as well as pioneer and mortar formations. For a thirty-day battle over the slopes, around 75 ammunition trains of all kinds were considered necessary. Furthermore, about a quarter of these ammunition quantities were to be provided daily.

The reconnaissance report of Colonel Tappen is no longer available. According to his information, it largely agreed with the memorandum of the 1st Army High Command presented on March 13. He was convinced that the operation, after a successful breakthrough, would be decisive for the war by advancing on Paris, and that the necessary forces could be made available. He intended to initiate a precise determination of this upon his return to the Great Headquarters. Moreover, Colonel Tappen considered a breakthrough north of the Somme, if he

---

- 1) At the end of March 1915, there were approximately three German divisions in the Ficheux-Thiepval section.
- 2) According to entries in the war diary of the 7th Army, Colonel Tappen did not elaborate on March 9 during a meeting at the 7th Army Headquarters that the statements in the 1st Army's attack plan were correct.

## Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

was at all feasible with the available troops — as the reconnaissance of Colonel v. Seeckt had to reveal —, due to its better strategic exploitation, given preference<sup>1</sup>).

To what extent General v. Falkenhayn also considered the ammunition situation in his deliberations, corresponding to its great importance, cannot be determined. Although the new production of ammunition made further progress in the first months of 1915 and it was possible, thanks to economical use, to largely replenish the columns, the demands of the eastern theater of war and the high consumption of the defensive battle in the West only allowed the accumulation of an ammunition reserve of the Supreme Army Command to a limited extent. The most abundant were the stocks of field artillery ammunition, whose production had been increased to 100 trains in the month of February. Further increase initially failed due to a lack of powder. The difficulties in the production of ammunition for heavy artillery<sup>2</sup>) were still not completely overcome; however, the efforts directed at increasing the ammunition of heavy artillery by the army administration slowly began to make themselves felt; in February, the delivery of ammunition for the heavy field howitzers could be doubled compared to January, tripled in March and April, and finally, in May, almost four times the amount could be promised to the Supreme Army Command. The new production of 10 cm and mortar ammunition increased at the same rate. Assuming that the shortage of powder could be remedied from May 1915 onwards, the Supreme Army Command could hope to be less hindered by a lack of ammunition in its decisions in the coming summer months than before. Nevertheless, the available quantities of ammunition were not sufficient for the intended operation, which had to begin around the beginning of May. Although their needs for the breakthrough through the enemy front could be met, the risk that due to a lack of shooting supplies, the free operation, which had to be conducted with utmost exertion for at least a month following the breakthrough, could stall in a highly unfavorable situation remained so great that this venture could hardly be justified<sup>3</sup>). Also, as mentioned<sup>4</sup>),

---

<sup>1</sup>) Detailed report of Lieutenant General a. D. Tappen to the Reichsarchiv from June 3, 1930. — <sup>2</sup>) Volume VI, pp. 429, 430.

— <sup>3</sup>) The then field munitions leader, General of Artillery Siegert, informed the Reichsarchiv on May 21, 1930, about the field munitions crisis, stating that he had no knowledge of any plans, otherwise he would have unhesitatingly declared that the ammunition situation in the spring of 1915 absolutely excluded a large-scale offensive in the West. — <sup>4</sup>) p. 306.

## Considerations of General v. Falkenhayn.

It was to be expected with certainty that a major German offensive in the West would lead to diversionary attacks by the enemy in the East and thus to an increase in ammunition requirements on the Eastern Front as well.

Apparently, General v. Falkenhayn had been inclined towards an offensive north of the Somme since mid-March. That the forces to be deployed for this had to be substantial was beyond doubt. The own attacks at Ypres and the defense against those attempted by the enemy had clearly shown that a very significant superiority at the — not too narrowly chosen — breakthrough point and its sudden deployment was the prerequisite for success. General v. Falkenhayn had also reckoned with this, as his directive to the Army High Command 11 of March 16, 1915, shows. The High Command 11, however, demanded more than twelve new army corps and thus reached demands that did not fall significantly behind those of the memorandum of the 6th Army. It was possible that some numbers could still be reduced; but the result would then undoubtedly be greater. The memoranda of the 6th and 1st Army had rightly pointed out that under no circumstances should the operation fail, and one should not be deceived about the size of the forces to be deployed, a proof that even then the higher German leaders and their general staff chiefs had much clearer ideas about the enormous difficulties of a breakthrough operation than the leadership on the enemy side<sup>1)</sup>.

The draft presented by the 1st Army offered no way out. The troop forces it demanded were to be taken from the available reserves. But with them, the actual breakthrough was essentially to be achieved, by no means a subsequent large operation. The force requirement for this had to be set at least as high as for a breakthrough to the coast if a decision in the war was to be achieved in this way. At the Aisne, there was the possibility of inflicting a costly blow on the enemy and capturing a considerable piece of terrain; whether, on the other hand, a victory could be forced that would cause the French state to give up resistance had to appear at least doubtful given the existing balance of forces.

An operation seeking a decision in the war in the West required thorough and time-consuming preparations in any case. Did the Supreme Army Command give the necessary directives at the beginning of April

---

<sup>1)</sup> p. 36, 37, 41.

<sup>2)</sup> World War. Volume VII.

## Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

Thus, the operation could not be expected to begin before mid-May. Even under favorable conditions, it would take one to two months. Until then, any serious intervention in the events on other battlefields by forces of the German Western Army was excluded. General v. Falkenhayn could only take on such a burden if he had the firm belief that, by exerting all the forces of the Western Army, he could achieve a decisive victory in the West and thereby offset an unfavorable development elsewhere.

On April 6, Colonel v. Seeckt was again summoned to Mézières. General v. Falkenhayn informed him that he agreed with his reconnaissance report. His proposals should be the basis "if it came to a major breakthrough operation in the West." During this meeting, Colonel v. Seeckt also expressed his views on the prospects of a breakthrough operation over the Aisne in the sense of the draft submitted by the High Command of the 1st Army. The content of his statements is evident from a second memorandum he submitted on April 11. His proposal, slightly differing in details, required, in addition to the forces that were to execute the first breakthrough (six corps from those located at the front line), an operations army whose strength was not specified and which was to cooperate with the 7th Army advancing southeast, simultaneously bringing significant forces against the enemy on the right Marne flank. Overall, the forces Colonel v. Seeckt demanded here were apparently hardly less than for the attack between Arras and Albert. "The great breakthrough (at the Aisne)," as stated in his report, "offers the prospect of initiating a decisive operation under favorable conditions. However, for other reasons, the breakthrough north of the Somme is still considered more promising."

At the same time, on April 6, General v. Falkenhayn instructed Colonel v. Seeckt to deal with matters in the East that might necessitate the deployment of reserves prepared in the West. Parts of these reserves had to be deployed the following day to support the Western Front, as the enemy pressure on the positions of the Army Detachment Strantz became threatening. On the evening of April 12, the Supreme Army Command had ten rear

## The Political Situation.

Front divisions ready, whose number had to grow by four more<sup>1)</sup> by April 19. By withdrawing divisions from the front, it might be possible to increase the number further. Thus, General v. Falkenhayn discussed with the Chief of Staff of the 4th Army on April 10 the possibility of withdrawing several divisions from their front, but soon abandoned this idea. There was no prospect of withdrawing attack forces in the strength demanded by the memoranda of the High Commands 6 and 11 from the front for the time being.

There is no doubt that General v. Falkenhayn, since the reorganization of the German Western Army had opened up the prospect of strong reserves at his disposal, had intended to bring the war in the West to a decision. On March 16, he unequivocally expressed this intention in the directive to High Command 11. However, the threatening development of the war situation in the East, the inadequate balance of forces in the West compared to the demands of a breakthrough, and above all the growing tension of the political situation increasingly raised doubts in him about the feasibility of this intention.

## C. The Political Situation and Its Influence on Military Decisions.

### Map 1.

#### I. Until the Dardanelles Attack.

Already in January, the military decisions, especially those of General v. Conrad, had been made under the pressure of the wavering political stance of Italy and Romania, so the political situation in the coming months was to decisively influence the warfare of the Central Powers to an increasing extent. On January 11, 1915, the Italian ambassador in Vienna, on behalf of his government, for the first time unequivocally demanded the cession of territories from the Danube Monarchy. Which territories were involved was not initially stated. At the same time, disturbing news came from Romania. They be-

---

<sup>1)>/sup> X. Army Corps and X. Reserve Corps.

## Decisive Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

reaffirmed the close political relations between Rome and Bucharest. The Romanian Prime Minister had emphasized to the Austro-Hungarian envoy that his position would become untenable if the Russians were to occupy not only Bukovina but also Transylvania, as the general desire to "march in to be rewarded by the Russians with Transylvania" would be irresistible. General v. Conrad had hoped, however, to soon eliminate these threatening dangers to the foreign policy situation through the expected victory on the Carpathian front. In agreement with him, Baron Burian, appointed on January 13 (in place of Count Berchtold) as Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, was determined to await the outcome of the impending operations and to temporarily refrain from responding to Italian claims and related suggestions from the German side. The written and oral exchange of ideas conducted in January between the chiefs of staff of the allied armies revealed a sharp contrast in views on this issue, which, similar to the Serbian question, ultimately had its deeper roots in the conflict of opinions on the conduct of military operations. While General v. Conrad believed that the defeat of Russia was possible and that all difficulties of the political situation would then resolve themselves, General v. Falkenhayn did not count on a settlement of the war in the East and therefore considered it necessary to secure the neutrality of Italy and Romania through territorial concessions by the Danube Monarchy. The increasingly strong pressure exerted by the German political and military authorities on Vienna eventually caused such discontent that the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister Baron Burian deemed a personal discussion necessary. He accompanied the Archduke heir to the throne to the German Great Headquarters on January 24. The attempt to assert the Austro-Hungarian position on the cession issue was unsuccessful and did not change the existing opposition. When the battles in the Carpathians then brought the Central Powers only a hoped-for military success, General v. Falkenhayn felt it his duty to inform Chancellor v. Bethmann Hollweg in a telegram on February 6 about the poor prospects of the further Carpathian offensive, stating that "a general shift in favor of the allied troops could no longer be expected there in the foreseeable future."

---

1) Count Berchtold was replaced by Baron Burian, "Minister at the Royal Court Camp," at the instigation of the Hungarian Prime Minister Count Tisza.

## Significance of the Italian Question.

This surprising communication prompted the Chancellor to take a new step in the matter of cession before the neutral world fully recognized the arrest of the Carpathian offensive. He asked General v. Falkenhayn to support him in this by influencing General v. Conrad. On February 8, a serious admonition from the German Chief of General Staff arrived in Teschen, stating, after outlining the unfavorable military situation in the Carpathian region: "The solution of the Italian-Romanian question in our sense must occur by about the middle of this month<sup>1)</sup>, or it will be unfavorable for us. Therefore, there is even less time to lose, as I do not believe that any success will have Austrian influence on the question, especially since it can no longer be felt in time. Therefore, I allow myself to return to the matter once more, to present to Your Excellency my explanations as they are written: in unreserved, open camaraderie and unconditional brotherly love. The potential defection of Italy and even more so Romania to our enemies deprives us of the sure prospect of ending the war victoriously along the entire line. The consequences of a defeat, however, are clear: the great power status of both Germany and the Danube monarchy would be broken, indeed, it is to be feared that in connection with the Italian and Romanian peace, Panslavism might succeed in completely breaking the union of the monarchy. To avert this evil, no sacrifice is too great that does not endanger the existence of our empires. Such a case does not exist with the proposal of a peaceful understanding between Austria-Hungary and Italy with the involvement of Germany. It would naturally have to take place in the form of a treaty with mutually defined services, which would only have to be fulfilled after the conclusion of peace, thus meaning a kind of revival of the Triple Alliance. For the Italian government, which certainly has no interest in intervening in the war against us, such a treaty would offer the profitable means to win public opinion for us. For us allies, it would bring immediately desirable economic advantages, as well as the prospect that Italy and thus also Romania, after having once compromised themselves against the Entente, would eventually have to join our side..."

Upon receiving this letter, there was a confident mood in Teschen; the political situation was assessed after a meeting on February 5.

---

<sup>1)</sup> Due to the meeting of the Italian Chamber on February 18.

### Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

The discussion held by the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister Baron Burian with General v. Conrad was by no means alarming. However, the Italian ambassador in Vienna had declared to the Minister of Foreign Affairs on January 28, based on new instructions, that for the Kingdom, only a "territorial concession from the possession of the Monarchy" was in question; "Italy could not be referred to territories of another warring state, as this would entail a breach of its neutrality." Austria-Hungary was free to voluntarily give something up. Time was pressing, and in Rome, there was an emphasis on having a principal commitment from Vienna before the opening of the chamber on February 18. Nevertheless, Baron Burian hoped to prolong the negotiations with counter-demands until the military situation of the Central Powers improved through military successes against Russia; then, the transition of Italy to the enemy would hardly be expected. General v. Conrad shared this hope and therefore rejected the suggestion of General v. Falkenhayn outright in his response on February 10. A renewed attempt to persuade General v. Conrad through oral representations by the representative of the Austro-Hungarian army leadership at the German Great Headquarters failed. General v. Conrad and Baron Burian agreed that the outcome of the Carpathian battle and the newly begun German offensive in East Prussia should be awaited before making far-reaching disadvantageous political decisions.

General v. Falkenhayn, however, did not relent in his efforts. After Italy, on February 15, had become impatient due to the delay in negotiations and had lodged a formal protest in Vienna against new operations in the Balkans under sharp threats, he urged on February 18, pointing to the not fully satisfactory military situation in East Prussia, to yield again to Italy. Even at a meeting on February 20 in Teschen between the German Chancellor, the Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the two Chiefs of General Staff, it was not possible to assert this standpoint. The hope for a satisfactory military success still determined Baron Burian and General v. Conrad's negative stance.

To facilitate the decision of the Vienna government on territorial concessions, Chancellor v. Bethmann Hollweg made another proposal on March 1: "It is likely that they are ready, as compensation for the cession of Trentino, "in the event of a favorable war outcome, to acquire the entire coal region of Sosnowice on behalf of Austria.

### Significance of the Italian Question.

"join." This step was taken at the Chancellor's request through a memorandum by General v. Falkenhayn about the unfavorable military situation on the eastern front: one must even reckon with the fall of Przemysl in the absence of corresponding successes on the Carpathian Front, with all its unforeseeable consequences for the prestige of Austria-Hungary in the Balkans. "The situation is certainly not hopeless," it said, "but it is so serious that it would be a catastrophe if everything were not done to prevent new enemies from entering the fight against us."

Meanwhile, in Rome, excitement was rising due to Vienna's unfavorable behavior. On the evening of March 6, when the Chancellor, prompted by a serious report from General v. Falkenhayn about the unfavorable military situation in Bukovina and on the Carpathian Front, traveled to Vienna to personally influence the Emperor and Baron Burian, the message from the German ambassador v. Tschirschky arrived, stating that Austria-Hungary was ready to accept the Italian negotiating basis in exchange for the cession of the coal region of Sopronvice and further German counter-services, and that they agreed to the cession of Welschtirol after the conclusion of peace with a strategically favorable border for Austria. In return, Italy was expected to maintain benevolent neutrality and free hand in the Balkans. Thus, the Austro-Hungarian government seemed no longer able to ignore the necessities imposed by the political and military situation.

General v. Falkenhayn welcomed the possibility of a peaceful understanding with Italy, as he stated in his presentation to General v.

Conrad on March 10, "with sincere satisfaction," and urged for a speedy conclusion of the negotiations with the political leadership so that "we can derive full military benefit, especially in the Balkans and in Romania." In a later letter to General v. Conrad on March 13, he considered it "not impossible" that "Romania and perhaps eventually Italy might still join our side" if the negotiations with Italy were quickly concluded.

The apparent relaxation between the Danube Monarchy and Italy was used by General v. Falkenhayn to fully focus his attention again on solving the Serbian question. The establishment of a secure connection between the Central Powers and Turkey was made necessary by the development of the political and military situation.

### Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

on the Balkans during the past weeks became increasingly pressing. The calculations made at the beginning of the year in Constantinople had shown that the ammunition stocks, even with the most economical use, would last only until mid-March. The news that the German Admiral v. Usedom, responsible for the coastal fortifications at the Dardanelles and the Bosporus, had questioned the resistance strength of the Dardanelles forts after repeated enemy sea attacks, was alarming and had a highly depressing effect on the Turkish statesmen. To reassure them, General v. Falkenhayn had already emphasized in a letter to the Turkish ambassador in Berlin on January 14 that he still adhered to the idea of the campaign against Serbia; he hoped to be able to approach this undertaking in March. In a similar sense, he had thought of General Field Marshal Baron v. der Goltz in Constantinople.

The result of the previous military operations on the Turkish theaters of war was not conducive to restoring the lost confidence in Constantinople. Reports from the Caucasus front at the end of January left no doubt that the second offensive initiated at the turn of the year on that theater of war had ended in a severe setback after initial successes. The Turkish 3rd Army, which had been advanced under the personal command of Enver Pasha at the end of December against Kars and Tiflis, had completely collapsed in the snow and ice of the mountains under Turkish counterattacks. By mid-January, its remnants had returned to their original positions near and east of Erzerum, without being further harassed by the enemy for the time being. However, this Turkish failure gave the Russians the opportunity to use forces freed up in the Caucasus against the Central Powers. The prospect of inciting an uprising in the Caucasus and in the Turkish-Persian border areas by proclaiming the Holy War faded away.

By mid-January, the long-planned Turkish advance against the Suez Canal, on which the German Supreme Army Command had placed such great hopes, had begun. The Turkish expeditionary corps, about 20,000 men, had reached the canal on the night of February 2 to 3 at various points. However, attempts by stronger units to cross were thwarted by English vigilance. Although the losses were small, the retreat was already initiated on February 4, as the prospects for success were judged very unfavorably after the failure of the surprise.

## The Attack on the Dardanelles.

It had become apparent that a serious threat to England in Egypt with such small forces was not possible.

Soon after the retreat from the Suez Canal, an attack by the Entente fleets against the Dardanelles began. The first impetus for this venture seems to have been a Russian call for help in London to relieve the difficult situation on the Caucasus front around the turn of the year; at the urging of Grand Duke Nicholas, the Russian government requested a "demonstration against Turkey." As early as January 3, a commitment was made in Petersburg, with the Dardanelles designated as the appropriate location. A previously considered operational plan by the British Defense Committee envisaged, in conjunction with the armies of Greece and Bulgaria that were expected to join, an attack by parts of the army and the fleet on the Dardanelles with the aim of capturing Constantinople and opening the Black Sea. In contrast, Chancellor Lloyd George had proposed, given the hopelessness of all frontal attacks on the French theater of war, to leave only weaker English forces there to support the French, but to send the bulk of the British land forces, with the cooperation of the fleet, to the Balkans, to attack the Austrians from there together with the Serbian army and the armies of the other Balkan states and possibly Italy that were expected to join. At the same time, about 100,000 men were to land on the Syrian coast in the area of Alexandretta to cut off the Turkish troops being transported in the direction of the Suez Canal. Although Lord Kitchener was not opposed to the Balkan project, all these plans failed due to the firm objection of the British commander-in-chief in France, Sir John French, who declared a breakthrough through the German western front quite possible<sup>1)</sup>). Thus, it initially remained with the planned demonstration at the Dardanelles with parts of the English and French fleet. However, the admiralty tasked with it considered instead of a mere demonstration the possibility of a serious naval attack by English and French naval forces on the Dardanelles fortifications around mid-February with the aim of capturing Constantinople. In this sense, Grand Duke Nicholas was informed. In expansion of these intentions, the English war council decided at the end of January that later land troops would also be involved in the Dardanelles operation to be initiated as a naval attack.

---

<sup>1)</sup> p. 39.

## Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

were to participate, and for this purpose, an English and a French division were envisaged; Russia began forming a special landing corps in Odessa<sup>1)</sup> to be involved with troops in a possible capture of Constantinople.

At the same time, the Ballan enterprise was also actively supported. There was thought of bringing about a separate peace with Vienna by landing on Greek soil in Salonika and advancing the Serbian army, reinforced by Russian, French, and English divisions, against the Austro-Hungarian southern front.

Meanwhile, the English Admiralty had been actively promoting preparations for the naval attack against the Dardanelles; initially, it was to proceed only with united fleet parts without landing troops. On February 19, the enemy fleet launched an attack against the four outer works protecting the entrance. On February 25, the fleet continued the bombardment. The outdated forts were completely defeated, while the main resistance center, the fortress of Tschanak, remained untouched. The political and military impact of the Dardanelles operations was to create a new focal point of warfare in the Near East. The maintenance of the barriers at the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, which formed the protection of the Turkish capital, was primarily a munitions issue for the Turks. The rapid establishment of a secure connection between Turkey and the Central Powers became an undeniable imperative. In a telegram of March 1, Enver Pasha pointed out the impending dangers of a breakthrough through the two straits; in this case, the Turkish corps in Europe would be cut off from Asia. "With strong enemy landings from both seas and enemy involvement of the Ballan states," it continued, "the European position is ultimately untenable unless German-Austrian pressure on the Ballan states can be expected in the foreseeable future. Since the distribution of Turkish forces depends on this, a telegram response is requested." Additionally, some large submarines were requested to repel the enemy breakthrough.

General v. Falkenhayn attempted to

## The Attack on the Dardanelles.

next with the general promise to reassure that the requested "pressure on Balkan states is being prepared." However, Enver Pasha urged the subjugation of Serbia. "If Germany and Austria can spare troops on the home front," he urged on March 8, "it would be of utmost importance for both the situation in the Balkans and the connection of Turkey with the allied states to defeat Serbia and open the way for the army needs that have been required for months. This would undoubtedly lead the still wavering Balkan states to join the Central Powers. A rapid and permanent opening of the mentioned connection is a matter of life and death for Turkey."

The full seriousness of the situation was highlighted in a telegram presented to General v. Falkenhayn on March 10 by Admiral v. Usedom: "Despite the relatively minor success of the enemy, the defeat of all works of the Dardanelles cannot be sustained in the long run if ammunition and mines ordered months ago do not arrive quickly or if defense is not supported by domestic submarines." General v. Falkenhayn had already expressed to the representative of the Foreign Office at the Supreme Army Command, who was urging the swift execution of the Serbian campaign on behalf of the political leadership, that "such an action, despite its undisputed significance for the entire war, could hardly affect the Dardanelles issue, as the ammunition replacement issue must be resolved long beforehand, even in the best case, before success at Drinova<sup>1)</sup> could be expected. When he had made German troops available to Austria-Hungary for the Carpathians to relieve Przemysl, he had counted on rapid success and intended to quickly turn around and involve the Austrians against Serbia, as otherwise Conrad v. Hötzendorf would never have agreed to leave the north of the army marching against Serbia. The course of the war was less important than the Balkans, he was well aware, but convincing the Austrians of this was a futile effort."

The only way to bring prompt aid to Turkey in its highly distressed situation lay in repeating the attempt to induce Romania through strong pressure to release the transport route, in order to quickly supply the Turks with the significant ammunition stocks stored at its borders. The prospects seemed more favorable again at the time. On March 16, General v. Falkenhayn replied to Enver Pasha: "Military Attaché Leipzig reports (from Constan-

---

1) At the Negotin Tip.

### Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

tinopel), Dardanelles Governor has demanded immediate supply of ammunition via Romanian route, otherwise Dardanelles are lost. Accordingly, the strongest pressure will naturally be exerted on Romania. Your Excellency, I also ask you to use your high influence on the Dardanelles defenders to ensure they do not lose their composure. The Dardanelles are indeed impregnable even with very limited ammunition, as long as they are bravely defended, and a Turkish army certainly does not lack brave men. A winter campaign against Serbia was impossible due to road and weather conditions. However, even after improving these conditions, it will not be carried out quickly enough for its outcome to be significant for the current attack on the Dardanelles. Nevertheless, due to its importance for the general situation in the Balkans, it should be expedited by all means."

Romania's stance had been very fluctuating in recent weeks — depending on the war situation and the state of negotiations between the Danube Monarchy and Italy; here the close interrelations between the negotiations with Italy and the situation in the Balkans were clearly visible. The initial successes of the Carpathian offensive had urged caution in Romania, as did the threat from the German envoy, Baron v. dem Busche, that Romanians would encounter German troops if they invaded Transylvania. By mid-February, the German envoy could even report that King Ferdinand had admitted the improvement of the situation, albeit with the addition that the conditions were not yet ripe for Romania to join.

Just as in Romania, the mood in Bulgaria and Greece was calm at this time. This began to change in the second half of February when the decisive successes of the Central Powers expected on the eastern front failed to materialize and the attacks of the Anglo-French fleet against the Dardanelles began. The exaggerated reports of Entente successes caused understandable agitation among the Balkan states. One could not overlook that Bulgaria, if it lost faith in the victory of the Central Powers, might seek to join the Entente to avoid being left out at the peace settlement. In Greece, political agitation had reached its peak. The transition of Greece to the Entente camp became increasingly likely despite the king's serious attempts to maintain neutrality.

## Effect of the Attack on the Dardanelles.

A crisis atmosphere prevailed in Romania. Just as quickly as the situation there had improved in the first half of February, it now turned into the opposite, especially since Italy's stance against the monarchy had become increasingly threatening. The Italian declaration of war on Austria-Hungary seemed imminent. According to a report from the German envoy in Bucharest, the Romanian Prime Minister was said to have stated that in such a case neither he nor the King would be able to prevent the country from striking against Austria.

Only the reports of the limited actual successes of the Entente at the Dardanelles and the temporary relaxation between Vienna and Rome on March 6 finally had a calming effect on the Balkans as well. Bulgaria resumed the policy of stricter neutrality, and in Greece, King Constantine was able to continue his policy of neutrality in view of the resignation of Prime Minister Venizelos on March 6. Particularly in Bucharest, a much more sober assessment of the situation emerged, so that there was no longer talk of an imminent threat of war from Romania.

Thus, one could hope that Romania would now agree to the transit of munitions for Turkey under strong pressure; then the worst danger for the Dardanelles was averted. Already on March 9, General von Falkenhayn had the Foreign Office convey the request to "urgently apply the utmost pressure in Romania, taking advantage of the favorable situation regarding the Italian question, to achieve the immediate passage of munitions." Indeed, General von Falkenhayn considered the overall situation so favorable at this time that he even believed he could take another step forward with respect to Romania. He suggested "whether it might be possible to include Romania from the outset in the circle of negotiations of the old Triple Alliance powers and to bring it to strike as soon as possible."

The unfavorable military situation on the Carpathian front, especially the expected fall of Przemysl, prompted General von Falkenhayn to turn again to General von Conrad in mid-March with the request to "promote the political negotiations between Austria-Hungary and Germany on one side, and Italy and also Romania on the other side" so that the latter "bind themselves to us or

## Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

but in the eyes of the Entente powers hopelessly compromised." However, General v. Conrad did not expect much from diplomatic steps in Bucharest; he continued to hold the view that the arms issues could only be resolved by the defeat of Russia. "Romania's stance and the connection to us raised by Your Excellency," as stated in his response, "will largely depend on our situation and our successes in Eastern Galicia and Bukovina." General v. Falkenhayn, however, declared himself ready to provide further forces for the Austro-Hungarian front at the present moment.

Despite General v. Conrad's negative stance, the planned diplomatic step in Bucharest took place on March 19. The serious representations of the German envoy, Baron v. dem Busche, accompanied by veiled threats, did not achieve their goal. The Romanian Prime Minister insisted that it was impossible to meet the wishes of the Central Powers, considering the Entente and public sentiment. The German envoy gained the impression that too much pressure would have the opposite effect and might drive Romania into the Entente camp under certain circumstances.

Thus, the route through Romania for German munitions deliveries to Turkey remained temporarily blocked. This posed a serious threat to the defense on the Dardanelles front. Until it was possible to defeat Serbia, considerable time had to pass. Turkey was left to its fate for the time being; it had to try to overcome the ever-growing difficulties on its own.

## 2. Until the Deployment of German Army Reserves in the East.

On March 18, the expected new strike against Turkey took place at the Dardanelles. By the evening of the 19th, it was clear that the attack by the Anglo-French fleet had been repelled, and that the enemy's ship losses were significant, while the Turkish losses in material and personnel were only minor. Nevertheless, the joy over the success was overshadowed by anxious concern about what the coming days would bring. Halting the Dardanelles operation seemed unlikely, especially due to the setback suffered and the associated loss of prestige for the Entente; it was rather expected that the enemies would do everything possible to achieve their goal. This assumption was soon confirmed by the news that a comprehensive land and a new sea attack against

## Plans for the Serbian Campaign.

It was prepared at the Dardanelles to bring Greece, Bulgaria, and Romania into the Entente and to exert such pressure on the Central Powers with their forces that they would be forced into peace. This serious prospect confirmed General v. Falkenhayn in the intention to carry out the Serbian campaign with all forces, and indeed before the major offensive planned in the West.

Initially, he endeavored to secure Bulgaria's cooperation for the Serbian enterprise through the mediation of the Foreign Office or at least to achieve that Sofia would grant permission for the passage of Turkish troops through Bulgarian territory to attack Serbia. Then he tried again to win General v. Conrad for the Serbian campaign despite his negative stance. In a letter dated March 21, he proposed to switch to the defensive at the Carpathian Front and in Bukovina, to replace the four German divisions of the Southern Army with Austrian units and, if possible, reinforced by further German forces, to deploy against Serbia. These proposals were received unfavorably at the headquarters in Teschen, especially since the fall of Przemysl had become a fact on March 22, and now the arrival of further Russian forces at the Carpathian Front had to be expected. General v. Conrad refused, and the subsequent written exchange of ideas between the two general staffs led to no agreement.

Meanwhile, the Turks had helped themselves as much as possible. On March 24, Enver Pasha formed the 5th Army from the five divisions stationed at the Dardanelles and an additional division brought in, placing it under the command of the head of the German military mission, Marshal Liman v. Sanders. They had also not been idle regarding the ammunition issue. The commander of the Straits Front, Admiral v. Souchon, had modern ammunition for the Bosporus batteries transferred to the Dardanelles, while ammunition from the fleet's stocks was also worked on for the calibers stationed at the straits. Mines were brought in from Trebizond and Smyrna, although they were sorely needed there. Despite all difficulties, they proceeded with the production of artillery ammunition, even for the heaviest calibers. However, due to the lack of material and trained personnel, quick and satisfactory results were hardly achievable. Even with the appearance of German submarines

---

1) G. 307 ff. — 2) G. 123.

### Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

There was no expectation of action at the Dardanelles for the next few weeks. Without a quick connection to Central Europe, Turkey had to limit itself to pure defense on its main battlefields. What it could achieve in the event of replenishing its war equipment through the German arms industry was vividly described by Enver Pasha in a letter to General v. Falkenhayn on March 23: "I do not want our alliance with Germany and Austria to be a burden for these powers, but I am only striving to help the allies with all our forces. This would happen to a much greater extent if Serbia were overthrown, thereby making Bulgaria's stance reliable, also making Romania more compliant, and establishing the open connection between us and Germany-Austria. I hope to then be able to make further significant forces available for the common purposes. Turkey still has ½ million trained personnel on leave, who can be called up immediately if weapons are available... The resumption of the offensive against the Suez Canal and into the Caucasus could very well be considered in this more favorable case. Yes, since it can be assumed that Bulgaria and Romania would then also be persuaded to join the alliance, the possibility of direct cooperation with the German-Austrian armies on European soil is given. The direction of the same would have a great impact on Russia's resistance, hitting its weak left flank and leading into provinces where Russia can be hit most sensitively..."

These prospects were only suitable to strengthen General v. Falkenhayn in his intention to open the way to Constantinople. The first goal was to win Bulgaria. The prospects for this were not very favorable according to a report from the military attaché on March 26, due to the great demands made in Sofia, and not least because of the poor impression made by the fall of Przemysl. King Ferdinand apparently did not want to be pushed out of his waiting Serbian stance, despite the tempting offers made to him by General v. Falkenhayn in those days: He had presented the king with a joint campaign plan against Serbia. Two Austro-Hungarian divisions were to advance from Bosnia, ten German and Austro-Hungarian divisions from the north, and the Bulgarian army from the east and south. Since the total strength of the Serbian army, which could appear in northern Serbia, while Niš would be threatened at the same time, would amount to at most 100,000 men, so...

## Plans for the Serbian Campaign.

it would quickly succeed for the allies in such strength and distribution to deal with them. Bulgaria would then have full freedom to take as much of Macedonia as it deemed right. An attempt at the end of March by the Field Marshal Freiherr v. der Goltz, traveling through Sofia to the German Great Headquarters, to change the king's mind failed; he was not received at all. The Field Marshal, who continued his journey via Bucharest, had to note that the mood in Romania had also significantly worsened compared to his first visit in mid-December 1914. However, in Teschen, on March 29, he succeeded in convincing General v. Conrad of the necessity of the prompt execution of the Serbian campaign. He also offered support through two Turkish corps. Under certain reservations and conditions, the Austro-Hungarian Chief of General Staff was now ready for the operation against Serbia. Above all, Bulgaria must commit to participation, with Turkey covering its back and even actively participating in parts. General v. Conrad now established his view to General v. Falkenhayn that he considered a joint operation against Serbia feasible under the following military conditions: "Bulgaria mobilizes and assembles its main forces for an advance over Niš, with parts over Zaječar; as soon as it begins this, but not earlier, we will launch the offensive, supported by about four German divisions, which would not be taken from the German forces currently used against Russia, and which must be in place by then. Turkey protects Bulgaria against Greece and Romania, should they intervene hostilely, and participates directly with about two corps under Bulgarian command as far as possible. I have communicated this idea to our Minister of Foreign Affairs."

General v. Falkenhayn replied on March 30 that a final decision by Bulgaria had not yet been made. Meanwhile, preparations for the planned operation must be undertaken. Of importance was especially the question of the equipment of the German troops and the decision on the leadership of the command, for which a Turkish general might be considered, taking into account the German relations with Turkey and Bulgaria. General v. Falkenhayn generally agreed to the conditions set by General v. Conrad for the joint operation. He had already made similar proposals to Bulgaria some time ago. In his response, General v. Conrad spoke out decisively against a German command on the Balkans.

### Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

Since the political prerequisites for the operation against Serbia, the agreement with Italy, and Bulgaria's participation were not yet secured, further discussions about the Serbian campaign initially led to no tangible result, despite the mobile efforts of Field Marshal Baron v. der Goltz during his stay at the German Great Headquarters in early April. He notes in his diary entries: "To Falkenhayn around 10½, long conversation about the situation. He claims to be entirely of my opinion. He has heard it from many people, but no one could tell him where to get the forces. The Austrians barely held the Carpathians with our help. Everything is fixed, even in France. The attack of the new English army is now expected. Behind our flanks, six divisions must be assembled. These (Serbs) are 200,000 men strong. We must muster 250,000 men, equal to ten divisions, to achieve the necessary superiority. That is impossible... Falkenhayn claims to have been working on the convention (with Bulgaria) for six weeks... Bulgaria, however, is showing reluctance. Everyone advises intervention in Serbia, but no one knows new means to execute it. I replied that the accusation did not apply to me, as I would bring the help of conditions and good Turkish corps. General v. Falkenhayn acknowledges this, but initially does not fully commit to my proposal."

Upon leaving the Great Headquarters on April 3, Field Marshal Baron v. der Goltz could only take a letter from the Kaiser to the Sultan as a visible sign of his efforts, promising the Serbian campaign in the "near future." However, he was rightly convinced that he had found full understanding for his view of the Balkan situation with General v. Falkenhayn and had promoted his decision to implement the Serbian campaign as soon as the overall situation would allow. Just a few days after the departure of the Field Marshal from the Great Headquarters, General v. Falkenhayn had a written commitment from April 12 in hand, "to make two army corps available for a joint operation against Serbia under the Bulgarian army." In a subsequent exchange of telegrams, General v. Falkenhayn finally assured, after initial hesitation, that by the end of May, it would be possible for the Serbian campaign, provided that clarity about Bulgaria's participation was achieved by then.

---

1) Field Marshal Colmar Freiherr v. der Goltz, "Memoirs," p. 400.

However, these plans were soon to be pushed into the background by the changed political situation. The relationship of the Central Powers with Italy had meanwhile deteriorated again; the fall of Przemysl had undoubtedly contributed to this. On March 20, Italy had demanded a "concrete offer" from Austria. Such an offer was made on March 27, offering South Tyrol with Trent for benevolent neutrality. The Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sonnino, declared this offer to be "very inadequate" and now made extensive demands also in the coastal area. With increasing concern, General v. Conrad observed this development and expressed his thoughts in a telegram to General v. Falkenhayn on April 1: "The negotiations over territorial compensations with Italy on the one hand, and the news received today about Italian troop movements on our border on the other hand, which are equivalent to the preparation of a general mobilization and a deployment of Italy against us, justify me in assuming that Italy intends to conduct the negotiations with us — in which we, in the interest of the common cause of Germany and Austria-Hungary, have gone to the limit of possibility in accommodating — formally and to break them off shortly, in order then to realize all its aspirations on Austro-Hungarian territory at will with military means. I have repeatedly drawn Your Excellency's attention to the untenable nature of our military situation in such a case and allow myself to do so again herewith and to request that Your Excellency, in view of the unforeseeable consequences that would then also arise for the German Reich, should use all means at the German Foreign Office to ensure that it exerts its full influence on the Italian government so that it keeps its demands within those limits which still allow a peaceful settlement with us."

In his reply, General v. Falkenhayn had to explain that German policy was not in a position to do anything to allay the Italian threat. Nevertheless, efforts in Rome would be continued with the greatest emphasis. However, the key to the whole question rested in the hands of Viennese foreign policy. The official declaration of Austria's willingness to a possible territorial cession was made only several weeks after the change of throne in the imperial house of Franz Joseph, despite his urging. The peculiar nature of Minister Sonnino had to be taken into account. The delay only called for him to take worrying steps. If anything was still to be achieved now, then the

## Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

Negotiations between Vienna and Rome should be concluded immediately in the most generous manner. It is a matter of being or not being, where questions of demarcation and similar should not play a role. If Austro-Hungarian politics succeed in bringing Rome to a conclusion, its later connection to us is certain. "Your Excellency will accept me," concluded General v. Falkenhayn, "that I do not have full and unconditional understanding for the overcoming that the above-fixed approach demands from every participant in Austria-Hungary. In such serious matters, I can only express my conviction and can therefore only again ask Your Excellency to urgently influence Vienna in this direction."

General v. Conrad immediately replied that he had only exerted pressure on the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on April 1st with the clearest presentation of the situations. "With the perfidy of Italy," it was then said, "we must also be prepared for Italy to demand our coastal possessions, which would end our existence. In this case, we would have to come to terms with Russia in agreement with Germany and peace with it, in order to then be able to forcibly counter the Italian pretensions."

The statements of General v. Conrad, which for the first time spoke of peace with Russia, were immediately forwarded by General v. Falkenhayn to the Chancellor. An addition was a presentation by the German General at the Austro-Hungarian Army Command, General v. Cramon<sup>1</sup>), from April 2nd: "Excellency Conrad sent very serious written and telegraphic notes to the Foreign Office in Vienna yesterday, concerning an immediate decision with Italy. Any wishes regarding Pola and Adriatic coasts will not be granted. The approval of far-reaching Italian wishes will be preceded by an agreement with Russia in understanding with Germany in the cession of Galicia."

The concern that Austria-Hungary might seek special agreements with Russia in the event of an Italian attack had led General v. Falkenhayn to propose an oral discussion in Berlin for April 4th. The main subject of the discussion was the impending entry of Italy into the war and the difficult situation on the Carpathian front. General v. Falkenhayn pointed out that, according to his impressions, Austria-Hungary did not seem to be in a hurry to come to a conclusion with Italy. General v. Conrad disputed this and blamed Rome. Nevertheless, both Chiefs of Staff still hoped for the possibility of a

---

<sup>1)</sup> Promoted to this rank on 22.3.1915.

## Deterioration of Relations with Italy.

peaceful settlement if the conclusion of the negotiations were expedited.

General v. Conrad further stated that Austria-Hungary was not in a position to wage war against the new enemy until a separate peace with Russia was concluded. General v. Falkenhayn considered an agreement with Russia currently out of the question. He warned against deploying stronger forces against an Italian incursion into the monarchy, as this would only lead to fragmentation.

The situation in the Carpathians was assessed with concern by both chiefs. General v. Falkenhayn, however, opposed Conrad's repeated urging for support with new German forces, as it was still unclear where the deployment of the new formations in question was necessary — whether in the west, east, or against Serbia. Regarding the Serbian campaign, whose execution on the Austrian side was still dependent on Bulgaria's participation, General v. Conrad emphasized that this operation must be postponed, as the high water of the Danube would only allow a large-scale crossing at the end of May. Bulgaria also appeared extremely cautious upon renewed probing; it apparently wanted to await further clarification of the rather opaque situation.

The Berlin meeting had dispelled General v. Falkenhayn's concern that Austria-Hungary might reach special agreements with Russia without involving Germany. On the crucial question of what should happen if Italy entered the war, it had led to no agreement. General v. Conrad sought to achieve such an agreement in the coming days through written exchange of ideas. Immediately after his return to Lešchen, he reported

on April 5 that the signs of Italy's firm intention to enter the war had intensified; in Rome, they apparently were no longer satisfied with the Italian-speaking areas but also claimed German land up to the Brenner. Such concessions were out of the question. The Italian government was seeking conflict material in all cases to be able to escalate the situation as needed. The situation at the Carpathian front was not good. A serious setback there would bring Russia, in addition to Italy, into the picture. If this were the case, military measures would be necessary to prevent the enemy's incursion from happening unopposed. For this, he needed ten divisions, seven against Italy, three against Romania. If these forces were withdrawn from the k. u. k. front against Russia, their situation would become untenable. He therefore requested information on whether these troops could be replaced by German units.

## Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

General v. Falkenhayn did not address this specific question in his response but once again raised the demand that the Danube Monarchy should surrender the territories sought by Italy without a fight and postpone the settlement for later. First, the Central Powers must "shake off one of the main opponents"; whether this should happen on the Western or Eastern Front could only be decided when the necessary troops were available, which was not yet the case.

General v. Conrad was not satisfied with this. He could not allow it to happen without resistance, he replied, that Italy was reaching for territories inhabited by Germans and Slavs. The power position of the monarchy would thereby be shaken. It must also be expected that Italy intended to advance to Vienna. Allowing this to happen without a serious fight was out of the question. He therefore asked again for information on whether Germany was prepared to replace the relatively small Austro-Hungarian forces to be withdrawn from the Eastern Front in the event of a war with Italy. As for the use of the German reserves, he could only repeatedly emphasize that their unified deployment on the Eastern Front was the most promising for the development of the overall situation.

General v. Falkenhayn again evaded an answer to the question addressed to him in his reply of April 8. He again warned against a fragmentation of forces, emphasizing that it was now crucial to urge politicians with the greatest determination to conclude the negotiations between Vienna and Rome. Despite these statements, General v. Conrad persisted in his position and increasingly urgently demanded an answer to his question of April 5, whether the German Supreme Army Command was prepared to make German forces available for the Carpathian Front as a replacement for Austro-Hungarian units that might be deployed in battles against Italy. In his response of April 9, General v. Falkenhayn rejected this but noted the importance of "exploiting any favorable opportunity that arises in the East," provided the necessary forces were ready for use. The next day, he sent a telegram to the Chancellor with the request: "Strongest German pressure in Vienna to assist in accepting excessive Italian demands by declaring stronger military German support in the East and possibly Prussian territorial concessions." This proposal was followed on April 11 by a request to the Foreign Office to influence the Austro-Italian negotiations so that, "if war with Italy

## Deterioration of Relations with Italy.

inevitable, from the moment of the decision made, 16 days remained for preparation."

The behavior of General v. Falkenhayn in his negotiations with General v. Conrad regarding the measures to be taken upon Italy's entry into the war was based on the difficult military-political situation for the German Supreme Army Command. If promises were made to the Austrians, there was a possibility that Vienna would show so little flexibility in negotiations with Rome that they would be broken off and Italy would then appear as a new opponent. However, if no assistance was promised to the allies, there seemed to be a danger that a Russian invasion of Hungary would force the Viennese government into special agreements with Petersburg.

Thus, these April days of 1915 were filled with severe internal tensions for the head of German operations. At the same time, the decision on where the focus of the war effort should be placed in the coming weeks became increasingly pressing. The Duke's intention was to carry out a major eastern offensive after a brief strike against Serbia. Ultimately, this plan was the deepest cause of all disagreements with the allied army command. General v. Conrad sought the war decision in the East, General v. Falkenhayn in the West, and each held steadfastly to his goal. The serious situation on the Carpathian front and the escalation of relations between Vienna and Rome, as well as the growing realization of the inadequacy of available forces, made it increasingly doubtful for General v. Falkenhayn whether the goal in the West was still achievable. Since the Berlin meeting, he could no longer ignore that the existence of the Danube Monarchy and thus the common cause were threatened by the expected Russian invasion of Hungary and the seemingly inevitable entry of Italy into the war. Consequently, he seriously considered shifting the focus of the war effort to the East, abandoning his

previous plans.

On April 10, the Italian ambassador in Vienna demanded the immediate cession of South Tyrol with Bolzano, the Isonzo with Gorizia and Gradisca, furthermore Trieste as a free port and independent state; the islands near Lissa; Italian sovereignty over Valona; Austria's disinterest in Albania.

A straightforward acceptance of these excessive demands was impossible.

The aim was to gain time. On April 12, the Chancellor issued

## Changing Plans of General v. Falkenhayn.

v. Bethmann Hollweg, after prior verbal discussions at the Great Headquarters, issued the following directive to the German representatives in Vienna and Rome: "According to General v. Falkenhayn, the military situation in the West and East is very favorable. All French attacks have been repelled, new English offensives are not to be feared. If Italy remains calm, a favorable outcome of the war for us can be expected with certainty. Italy's intervention must be absolutely avoided." To this end, Prince Bülow in Rome was to seek to achieve "the abandonment of exorbitant demands," and Ambassador von Tschirschky in Vienna was to act with the greatest compliance. "But," continued the Chancellor, "in the extreme case, Austria must also be determined to accept everything, which would still be less disastrous than the otherwise inevitable collapse of the monarchy."

General v. Falkenhayn supported these efforts of the German Reich leadership through discussions he had these days with the Italian military attaché in Berlin, Lieutenant Colonel Bongiovanni. He reported on April 13 to the Chief of the Italian General Staff: "Just returned from the Great Headquarters, where the Chief of Staff spoke with great clarity, calmness, and cordiality with me about the situation arising from the Italian-Austrian negotiations, and that in two long discussions." General v. Falkenhayn explained to him how the German government and he had been tirelessly working to ensure that Vienna reached an understanding with Rome. Efforts are still being made for Austria to accept the conditions set by Italy. The kingdom must, however, be clear that Germany, if it came to war between Italy and Austria-Hungary, would have to fulfill its alliance obligations. The Italian army would be able to be held up for a long time in the Italian-Austrian border areas favorable for defense and would in any case face German troops before reaching Budapest or Vienna. General v. Falkenhayn then gave a description of the war situation and concluded that Germany was capable of enduring the war for a long time and could let events take their course, maintain its current excellent positions, and leave its reserves untouched. Any intervention by Italy would not be decisive and would not end the campaign. In his conviction, Italy must strive for hegemony in the Mediterranean, but it could not hope for this from an English-French victory. Finally, General v. Falkenhayn emphasized that negotiations by Austria and Germany with Italy and Romania to avoid the conflict were being examined, insofar as they concerned the territories over which Austria could dispose,

## Influence of the German Army Reserves in the East.

while the offers of the Entente were nothing other than "the bear's skin."

In clear recognition of the desperate military and political situation of the Danube Monarchy, General v. Falkenhayn now resolved to deploy the reserves of the Supreme Army Command in the East to achieve a decisive success against the Russians on the Carpathian Front, if possible, before Italy entered the war. This decision meant indefinitely foregoing the major offensive in the West as well as against Serbia, for which preparations had already been made to a large extent. It was facilitated by the confidence drawn from the brilliant defense against the French breakthrough offensive in the resilience of the German Western Front, which justified the risk of the not insignificant weakening of the local army reserves.

On April 10, the first presentation on the operation planned by the Chief of the General Staff in the East took place before the Kaiser. The offensive in the area of Gorlice, involving the formation of a new 11th Army, was decided. This shifted the focus of the war effort to the eastern theater of war. For the third time in a few months, the situation in the East had vividly demonstrated to the German Chief of the General Staff that without the prior complete subjugation of the eastern enemy, a decision in the West and thus the victorious conclusion of the multi-front war was unattainable. Everything now depended on deploying sufficiently strong forces from the outset so that the strength of the offensive would not again wane after the first successful strike, but could be increased to a sustainable, decisive effect.

That General v. Falkenhayn had only temporarily and provisionally abandoned his plans in the West can be inferred from his words to Colonel v. Seeckt on April 16, expressing hope that after the strike in the East, there would still be a possibility of a decision in the West.

---

1) Communication from Generaloberst v. Seeckt to the Reichsarchiv dated November 13, 1927.

## V. The Campaign in Galicia until Mid-May 1915.

### A. The Decision for the Breakthrough at Gorlice-Tarnow.

Hand in hand with the exchange of ideas among the allied military commands about the tasks of warfare on a large scale, the discussions about the combat procedures observed on the Galician front continued in the second half of March. For General v. Falkenhayn, the proven hopelessness of the timely capture of the fortress Przemysl eliminated the main purpose of the offensive on the Carpathian front. He therefore suggested to General v. Conrad on March 21, "whether one should not switch to the defensive in the Carpathians and Bukovina, against which the Russians could no longer bring new forces." He believed he could then deploy the German parts of the Southern Army for the long-planned strike against Serbia, for which he again strongly advocated in the same letter, considering the serious situation at the Dardanelles.

From the response given by General v. Conrad the following day, it seemed that he no longer expected anything from continuing the offensive in Galicia and Bukovina, at least at the present moment. He emphasized that "the defense against the Russian offensive, which is already underway and expected with increased force after the fall of Przemysl, must be pursued without fail." However, he assessed the potential impact of this enemy offensive significantly higher than the German Chief of General Staff and therefore believed he could not justify weakening the Galician front in favor of an offensive strike in Serbia.

General v. Falkenhayn then proposed replacing the German parts of the Southern Army in the Carpathians with Austro-Hungarian units, "which are now fighting in the plains and could be replaced by Germans." However, General v. Conrad did not want to agree to this either. He pointed out that the German officer engaged in fierce combat would be in a position to replace Austro-Hungarian forces in the plains. As a decisive reason against any troop movement within the current battlefronts, he then stated that

---

1) p. 335.

### General v. Conrad Requests Reinforcement of the Carpathian Front.

he also, after the fall of the fortress Przemysl, "continues to insist on pursuing the initiated offensive with a strong eastern wing as soon as the currently ongoing Russian attacks against the 3rd and 2nd Army are reliably repelled." Therefore, he does not want to withdraw all his forces to the Carpathian ridge, which would mean the evacuation of Bukovina and probably lead to Romania's defection. He is now primarily concerned with strengthening the Pflanzer-Baltin army group, which has already begun and will continue as soon as forces become available on the Carpathian front.

Due to the unexpectedly rapid escalation of the situation on the Galician front in favor of the Austro-Hungarian army, General v. Conrad was compelled on March 24 to inquire with the German Supreme Army Command "whether already available German forces — about two divisions — could be temporarily deployed on the Carpathian front." He justified his inquiry with the difficult combat situation and the condition of the 3rd and 2nd Army, whose troops were severely exhausted by almost four weeks of continuous fighting in the winter mountains, while the enemy continued his attacks with ongoing reinforcements and now also by bringing in strong parts of the previous encirclement troops from Przemysl. It is not ruled out that the Russians might succeed in the apparently intended breakthrough in the shortest direction to Budapest, which would also make the West Galician and Polish front untenable. General v. Cramon also expressed in a telegram on the evening of March 24 his view that the fall of Przemysl and the concentration of Russian forces had changed the situation of the Austrian 3rd Army to its disadvantage. He did not consider the situation there to be without concern.

General v. Falkenhayn immediately directed inquiries to the Commander-in-Chief East and the Supreme Command of the Southern Army as to whether the requests of General v. Conrad for the deployment of forces could be met. Both command authorities declared this to be excessive.

To form an opinion unaffected by the view of the Austro-Hungarian army command, General v. Falkenhayn asked General v. Cramon on the morning of March 25 whether "by deploying the two German divisions requested by General v. Conrad any advantage could be expected that would justify the value of the deployment." The authorized general replied immediately: "... Situation at 3rd Army

## The Decision for the Breakthrough at Gorlice

under the peculiar conditions, it is also not possible to assess with certainty within the troops. From a purely defensive deployment of the two divisions on the Carpathian front, I only expect local success. Provision for all cases and under the guarantee of uniform use is advisable ..."

General v. Falkenhayn initially only informed the allied Chief of General Staff that he was seriously considering his request for reinforcements. The next day, March 26, he then reported that, due to the ongoing restructuring of the units, unfortunately, no effective infantry units were currently available. Therefore, he could initially only recommend the redeployed German troops under the command of the Austro-Hungarian army command – Army Woysch and German South Army – for immediate deployment at the threatened positions. The Commander-in-Chief had also often been asked to reconsider whether he could provide an infantry division. Of course, unified German command would be necessary given the situation. At the same time, Generaloberst v. Woysch and General v. Linsingen were informed of this position by the allied Chief of General Staff, and the Commander-in-Chief East was urged to detach a division from the 9th Army, "to give the wavering Austrian 3rd Army a hold." After General v. Conrad had agreed, corresponding orders were issued on March 27 to form the "German Beskiden Corps" under General v. der Marwitz).

Meanwhile, a report modified on March 26 at 10 a.m. by General v. Cramon brought greater clarity about the overall situation at the front of the allies: On the eastern flank, no decision could be reached in the foreseeable future, the 2nd and 3rd Armies were pushed into defense by the Russian counteroffensive, pressed on the left flank and south of Lupkow, with no rested reserves available. The Russian attack was increasingly concentrating against the 3rd Army and also seemed to want to extend to the 4th. Following this, General v. Cramon made the following proposal: "Since it is not possible to determine if the 3rd Army can withstand renewed Russian attacks (partly non-defensive troops), it seems advisable to disengage them from the enemy and attack the advancing enemy with held-back forces. For this, all available forces of this and the South Army behind the left flank of the 2nd Army, behind the right flank of the

## General v. Falkenhayn Considers New Deployment in the East.

4th Army to provide German divisions. Despite difficult terrain, this seems promising."

As far as these proposals concerned the deployment of forces behind the left wing of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, they were addressed by the recently decided formation of the Beskiden Corps and its intended deployment at the junction between the 3rd and 2nd Army. However, the simultaneous suggestion to deploy German divisions behind the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army was only possible through a shift of forces from the western theater of war. General v. Falkenhayn was only willing to consider this in the event of a compelling emergency for the ally, given his particularly vigorous offensive plans in the West at that time. However, he did not conceal that such an emergency must be considered within the realm of possibilities.

By mid-March, the Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army had tasked Colonel v. Loßberg, the representative of Colonel Tappen, who was temporarily assigned to Army Command 7, with developing proposals for transport, deployment, and grouping of forces behind the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army for the purpose of conducting a breakthrough attack with a wide objective. Colonel v. Loßberg's proposals generally met with his approval. Only the idea of "attacking the Carpathian front south of the breakthrough point without reinforcements, to tie down the Russian forces stationed there as much as possible," was rejected by General v. Falkenhayn. He considered it better if this front withdrew shortly before the breakthrough began. Incidentally, he himself had not yet reached a firm decision regarding the choice of the breakthrough point in his considerations of a necessary breakthrough operation in the East by the end of March. On March 29, he sent the following telegram to the Chief of the General Staff of the Böhm Army, Lieutenant Colonel Heye: "Given a certain situation, a breakthrough of the retreating Russian positions at the Nida, below Malogoska, could be considered, with the intention of continuing the offensive over the Vistula in the general direction of Rzeszow after success. For the operation, 4 to 5 fresh army corps could be deployed." Lieutenant Colonel Heye was to make proposals for the manner of execution and comment on the prospects of the operation. He stated, as he informed General v. Falkenhayn the following day

## The Decision for the Breakthrough at Gorlice.

reported that a breakthrough of the enemy positions towards Kielce and southwards was feasible if a surprise succeeded. However, he pointed out the difficult-to-cross swampy river lowlands. Crossing the Vistula could only be considered if the second enemy line of defense was also taken.

General v. Falkenhayn had also discussed with the head of the German railway system, Colonel Groener, in the second half of March, "the possibilities of deploying army corps withdrawn from the West to the East"<sup>1</sup>. On March 28, Colonel Groener noted in his diary: "The situation has now developed in such a way that one is looking for the place where a decisive operation could be made." The head of the railway system was tasked with organizing freight trains for the transport of troops prepared behind the Western Front to the East. Various possibilities were considered for assembling these forces: an advance from northern East Prussia north of Kowno, in Poland on both sides of the Pilica, north of the Tatra, south of the Tatra. On March 31, Colonel Groener gave a lecture to the Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army about his operational studies. In particular, "the assembly of five to six army corps in Upper Silesia and adjacent Austrian territory for an advance north of the Tatra, as well as in the area between the Danube and the Tatra for an advance south of the latter" was discussed. At the end of the lecture, Colonel Groener explained the task of "assembling parts (three army corps) as far east as possible, approximately along the line Neu-Sandez—Tarnow." All this, however, was merely precautionary measures for an otherwise entirely undesirable emergency that would disrupt the plans of the German Supreme Army Command.

Faster than expected and feared, this emergency seemed to occur at the beginning of April. The exchange of ideas between both General Staffs about the Serbian campaign<sup>2</sup>, revived by Field Marshal Freiherr v. der Goltz at the turn of March/April, was abruptly interrupted on the evening of April 1 by a report from General v. Cramon about a dangerous turn of events on the Carpathian Front<sup>3</sup>: The Austrian 2nd Army, pressed at various points, was retreating to the approximate line Buzau—Uzsok Pass. Then it was said: "On your side, Conrad expects further support more than ever desired, either through a

### Proposal of General v. Cramon.

Infantry Division at his disposal to support the 2nd Army or through an offensive of stronger forces from the direction of Gorlice against the flank and connections of the Russian attack..."1).

Following this telegram, General v. Cramon sent a detailed report to the Supreme Army Command the next day. From it, it was initially apparent that "according to closer reports, the Russians actually only seemed to have succeeded in breaking into the Austrian lines at individual points and with strong superiority, inflicting very heavy losses there." General v. Cramon then pointed out the great discouragement that, as experience shows, takes hold in the allied army under the impression of such local failures. It was literally stated: "One partly no longer believes in the victory of the Austrian arms, although this is of course not officially admitted. Excellency v. Conrad remains consistently calm and determined. The failure of the 2nd Army, which was supposed to relieve Przemysl and now no longer even holds defensively secure, naturally concerns him. He sees the situation as serious, although not necessarily threatening, and hopes that the advance of the enemy, as so often before, will be halted. To ask Your Excellency for help again, he understandably hesitated and entrusted me with reporting the wishes he cherished in his heart to Your Excellency. All signs and reports suggest that the Russians are still concentrating forces against the Carpathian Front and want to break through at some point. As an intimidating measure of greater scope to halt the advance of the Russians, Excellency v. Conrad considers a vigorous offensive against the rear connections of the Russian army's attack wing from the area of Gorlice in an eastern and northeastern direction. However, since the necessary Austrian forces are lacking for this, such an action could only be

---

1) General v. Cramon reports on the background of this telegram in his book "Our Austro-Hungarian Ally in the World War". p. 12: "I had, prompted by unfavorable news about the 2nd Army, spoken again with Conrad. He had requested German assistance. I emphasized that German troops would hardly be made available for purely defensive use, something else would be: if the situation could be changed by the offensive. Conrad replied: not to think of an offensive at the moment, one would have to be glad to keep the Russians away from Hungary. Shortly after this conversation, Conrad informed me: I could have helped if I wanted to, I would release the division; if not, an attack against the Gorlice-Tarnow front would be extraordinarily promising and would cut the lifelines of the Russian Carpathian Front."

## The Decision for the Breakthrough at Gorlice.

To accomplish the assistance of strong German troops. I immediately emphasized here that the provision of the forces necessary for this purpose — about four divisions — would not be feasible under the current circumstances, which Archduke v. Conrad had already feared. "This report" from General v. Cramon included a map excerpt with the positions of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd and 3rd Armies. It featured an arrow from Gorlice to Zmigrod with the note: "Proposal 4 German infantry divisions."

In the discussion that General v. Falkenhayn had on April 4 in Berlin with the Austro-Hungarian Chief of General Staff, he expressed his concern about whether the allied army was capable of holding the Carpathian front against the new Russian assault. General v. Conrad could only assure that everything possible was being done on his part. General v. Falkenhayn considered further German support impossible at the moment. General v. Conrad gained the impression that the German Supreme Army Command had not yet decided on which theater of war to deploy the newly formed troop units. Apparently, an offensive thrust from the Gorlice area in the sense of the suggestion transmitted by General v. Cramon was not discussed on this occasion.

The German Chief of General Staff now felt compelled by the critical situation on the Carpathian front to address the question of deploying strong German forces on the eastern theater of war, despite how undesirable such a measure was for him due to already developed reasons. However, he based his considerations not only on the point made in General v. Cramon's proposal, "to halt the Russian advance," but also directed his thoughts from the outset towards a higher goal, towards an operation of larger scale to be carried out with significantly stronger forces, through which the Austro-Hungarian front and thus also the overall leadership of the allies would be relieved from the pressure weighing on them.

---

1) p. 340.

2) The German files contain no information about the content of the discussion. However, General v. Conrad reported extensively on this in a letter to General v. Bolfras on April 6. The idea of an offensive thrust from the Gorlice area is not mentioned. General v. Falkenhayn explicitly denied in a letter dated February 7, 1920, to the Reichsarchiv that this offensive thrust was discussed, because "any hope of persuading the Austrian army to yield to Italy would have been lost."

### Decision on the Choice of Breakthrough Location.

should be effectively liberated. Still from Berlin, he sent the following request to General v. Cramon on April 4, 6<sup>00</sup> PM, via telegraph: "The question of a strong advance from the area of Gorlice towards Sanok has been occupying me for some time. Execution depends on the general situation and the provision of necessary forces. Four divisions will not suffice, but probably four army corps. Great difficulties are likely posed by the limited performance of the Austrian railways on Tarnow and via Neu-Sandez. Nevertheless, I would like to receive a proposal from you soon on how you envision such an operation. Information on the performance of the railways, the possibility of using our vehicles on local roads, should not be missing. Strict secrecy of the entire matter, initially also towards the Austrian military leadership, is absolutely necessary."

After his return to Mézières, General v. Falkenhayn informed Colonel v. Seeckt at the already mentioned meeting on April 6, "the situation in the East is bad, it might force him to deploy available forces in the East." Colonel v. Seeckt should also deal with the situation in the East "from the perspective that Austrians must be helped quickly and effectively." In detailed discussions with Colonel Tappen and the Minister of War, General Wild v. Hohenborn, the head of operations became finally decisive about the choice of the breakthrough location in those days. It fell on the area of Gorlice – Tarnow. Colonel Tappen reports on this in his war communications made available to the Reichsarchiv, not published:

"There were two locations considered for the breakthrough, either between the Pilica and the upper Vistula or between the upper Vistula and the Beskids. General v. Falkenhayn originally preferred the former location, but decided, when General v. Wild also supported the section between the upper Vistula and the Beskids with me, for this one. Here we could better consolidate the troops, as their flanks were secured against further Russian counterattacks, to the right by the Beskid Mountains, to the left by the Vistula. There were also fewer terrain difficulties to overcome here as the advance progressed, than would have been required by crossing the Vistula. The Russians had relatively weak forces on this front section in consideration of their offensive in the Carpathians."

---

1) p. 322. — 2) Communication from Generaloberst v. Seeckt on November 13, 1927, to the Reichsarchiv.

## The Decision for the Breakthrough at Gorlice.

Forces. Their reinforcement had to take a long time due to poor connections. We could therefore expect to maintain the initial superiority in numbers for a longer time. The anticipated rapid progress of the offensive then had to provide the Austrians with the necessary quick relief."

In the considerations of the German Chief of Staff regarding the choice of the most suitable location for a major breakthrough attack on the Eastern theater of war, the position of General v. Cramon in favor of the operation from the area of Gorlice undoubtedly carried significant weight. On April 8, a detailed written report from him arrived in response to the request sent to him on April 4. After the General had once again described the endangered situation of the Carpathian front, he stated:

"I would like to give my judgment that the Russian army is indeed sustained by its numbers and continuous supply, but it is not equal to a blow delivered with superiority (not in terms of the number of units, but in terms of the number of rifles). However, the blow must have very strong forces and be deeply planned so that it does not stall after initial successes at rear positions, but also forces the fronts not involved to retreat. For it is to be expected that a retreat in the main front will free the disintegrating elements that undoubtedly exist in the army and population, and in this way, a collapse can occur. Currently, the efforts of the Russians are concentrated on the Gladyszow—Jaworka front. There they gather all dispensable forces, there they also expend all usable reinforcements due to heavy losses. An advance that forces this front to retreat hits the best and largest parts of the Russian forces standing against Austria-Hungary, and thus the line Gorlice—Jaslo is given as the operational base. However, this presupposes that the Russian troops standing in the line Gorlice—Tarnow would have been previously shattered in a frontal attack and pushed back over the Wisłoka section. The latter is supposed to be fortified by strongpoints at Pilzno, Brzostek, and Jaslo; but since the Russians have no reserves in this area, it is not to be assumed that the opponent overrun by strong forces in the line Gorlice—Tarnow will reestablish themselves at the Wisłoka section with prospects

---

<sup>1</sup> The same considerations are also made by General v. Falkenhayn in his work (p. 68).

<sup>2</sup> Southeast of Gorlice. — <sup>3</sup> South of Dulla.

### General v. Conrad's Statement.

can count on success. It should be noted, however, that the railways over Rzeszów—Tarnow and Rzeszów—Jasło as well as the connecting railway along the Carpathian front via Lisko—Sanok—Krosno—Jasło would enable the Russians to deploy forces from the front to the threatened points. The planned offensive cannot be carried out by the Austro-Hungarian army alone. German forces of about four corps, supported by Austro-Hungarian troops, would, in my opinion, be completely sufficient, as the Russians in the line Gorlice—Tarnow have about 56,000 men (excluding the Reichswehr), while the Austrian forces amount to about 60,000 men and 10,000 Landsturm men. I envision the entire operation roughly as follows: Bringing four German corps into the line Neu-Sandez—Bochnia, and further beyond to Grybow—Biadoliny. This includes using the railway to Krakow—Tarnow, which can transport 36 hundred-axle trains via Dzieidz—Dziedzitz, and the railways via Oderberg—Teschen—Sucha—Neu-Sandez or Teschen—Csolna—Csorba—Abos—Neu-Sandez, which have a capacity of 10 hundred-axle trains each. Finally, for the last stretch from the hinterland, the route Halbstadt—Precar—Csolna could also be considered. The deployment could thus be completed in at most 8 days. The surprise advance from the line Grybow—Biadoliny should be initiated so that Austrian troops are placed between every two German corps. At Gorlice, a rear German detachment would have to remain to provide flank protection against possible Russian forces and to form the later pivot point.

"If the Wisłoka section is taken, then the right wing of the assault army will be directed over Zmigrod to Dufla, the center to Krosno, while the left wing, depending on the situation, either advances over Strzyzow towards Przemysl or

in the general line

---

1) The information about the capacity of the Austrian railways was obtained by General v. Tarnow from the head of the Austro-Hungarian field railway service, Colonel Straub. See Straub's article in the "Reichspost", Vienna, January 1, 1921. Straub states here that he discussed his conversation with Tarnow in an open and objectively remarkable silence. He writes: "I am not aware that the Chief of the General Staff or the Chief of the Operations Department was occupied with the idea of a breakthrough of the Russian front at Gorlice—Tarnow at that time; at least his Excellency did not mention anything about it to me. However, the likelihood that the deployment of the masses of troops would be considered primarily by the head of the field railway service!"

## The Decision for the Breakthrough at Gorlice.

Rzeszow—Pilzno secures to the north. The army leader is a German general, deep echeloning of the corps is desired, preferably with many howitzers. The terrain in question is hilly, but not unfavorable for military operations. The paths marked on the 1:750,000 map are quite usable for German troop vehicles, the others depending on the weather. The most favorable time for the planned operation is around the second half of April, because then the snowmelt runoff can generally be expected, and the marching battalions of the k. u. k. troops will be organized. The neighboring armies must at least participate demonstratively so that the enemy does not withdraw forces from them. If the opponent retreats from their front, then a general advance."

This detailed report by General v. Cramon was not only important for the German General Staff Chief to form a judgment about the tactical and operational prospects of the planned offensive, but it also contained important railway technical instructions for the execution of the deployment at the front between the upper Vistula and the Beskids. Based on this, the head of the German field railway service, Colonel Groener, immediately worked on the railway transports. By April 11, these tasks were completed without the need for negotiations with the Austro-Hungarian field railway chief.

While the idea of the major breakthrough operation from the Gorlice—Tarnow area for the permanent relief of the Carpathian front gradually took firmer shape with the German General Staff Chief, General v. Conrad seemed to have completely abandoned his proposal, transmitted by General v. Cramon on April 1, to advance with four German divisions from the same area to hold back the Russians. In any case, his statements and suggestions to the German Supreme Army Command in the following days no longer suggested that he still held such a thought. Initially, he soon returned to his requests for immediate relief of the Carpathian front after the Berlin meeting. In a telegram sent on the night of April 5/6, he described it as very desirable, in order to reliably maintain the Carpathian situation with regard to Italy's current behavior, that at least two German divisions be immediately released and prepared for transport to the k. u. k. 2nd Army." General v. Falkenhayn declared himself "not in a position at the moment" to comply with the request. However, he was willing to support this transport as soon as the forces in

## General v. Conrad's Operational Plans in the East.

Available in the West. On April 7, the Austro-Hungarian Chief of General Staff developed a completely new, ambitious operational plan in connection with detailed considerations of the overall situation of the Central Powers. He proposed "to use the next German new formations uniformly against Russia to achieve the long-sought and so far unattained final superiority here and to use it to force the enemy behind the Vistula—San—Dnieper line." He envisioned the deployment of these German new formations in two separate large groups. One, deployed with the German Eastern Army, was to "reach and block the railway lines Warsaw—Białystok and Warsaw—Siedlce—Volhynia behind Warsaw with a strong thrust." The other group, together with the German Southern Army and the Pflanzer group, was intended to attack through southern East Galicia against the left flank of the enemy advancing over the Carpathians. "Only through simultaneous action," it was said, "from both wings of the giant front can this goal be achieved, and with the least expenditure of time."

General v. Falkenhayn expressed his disapproval of this proposal on April 8: Such an operation would mean a double encirclement and would only have a chance of success with considerable superiority. The forces required for its execution would never again be available to the German Supreme Army Command. Our next deployment of forces, which I could not follow with any other soon, must be set where we could hope for a quick and certain success. This proposed operation could not be considered in terms of time and space, roads, and railways. He could only decide on the nature of the deployment of his reserves at the time they would be available. In contrast, General v. Conrad persisted in his response on April 9 in the view that the mutual encirclement operation, "in full appreciation of the well-known conditions in the East regarding time and space, roads and railways," was the most promising to reach a decision; it was also the safest means to prevent the intervention of Italy and Romania; but it must also be carried out as soon as possible.

General v. Falkenhayn considered a continuation of this dispute pointless, especially as the worsening of the combat situation on the Carpathian front in the meantime completely ruled out the realization of Conrad's operational proposal for the near future. He be

---

1) p. 342.

## The Decision for the Breakthrough at Gorlice.

Therefore, he limited his response to the assurance that every opportunity to deliver a decisive blow in the East would be seized as soon as the necessary forces were available. He was doing everything to be ready for joint action in the East in case of an escalation of the situation.

In stark contrast to the far-sighted plans of the allied Chief of General Staff, General v. Cramon had already reported on the night of April 6th to 7th that the situation of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army was "critical, as breakthroughs had occurred at three points again." He pointed out that further retreat of the 2nd Army would have "militarily and politically far-reaching consequences" and considered "providing reinforcements" as "urgently necessary" in line with his earlier proposal (Gorlice). An immediate inquiry by General v. Falkenhayn to General v. Cramon revealed that the threatening turn of events for the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army had only become known to General v. Conrad after he had sent his operational proposal on April 7th. According to Cramon, he had hurried to personally request support from the Chief of General Staff in the changed situation and immediately after his telegram. General v. Falkenhayn now replied that it was "impossible in terms of time and space for forces to be moved from the West in time to prevent a retreat of the 2nd Army caused by the deteriorated conditions."

In the following days, the reports received by the German Supreme Army Command cast the situation of the Austrian ally in an increasingly unfavorable light. On April 10th, a report dated April 8th from General v. Cramon arrived, describing the difficult situation of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd and 3rd Armies as follows: "The troops of these two armies are exhausted and weary from the months-long battles in the Carpathians. Due to low combat strength and lack of reserves, they have always been used in the front line, suffering enormous losses and essentially losing their strength (the 2nd Army alone lost a third of its total strength in a month). In addition, there are the uncertain elements caused by the nationality question. Nevertheless, I believe that a greater mixing with German troops could help... The Russians seem to have been given a salutary shock by the sudden appearance of German troops." The situation of the 2nd Army is described as follows: "A complete retreat of this army would severely endanger the position of the Southern Army and thus the entire eastern flank, perhaps even

## Template of the Austro-Hungarian Carpathian Front.

Withdrawing these armies. The resulting political consequences, whether concerning the influence on Romania and Italy, or regarding the mood in one's own country, especially in Hungary, which would be directly affected in the event of a successful breakthrough, must also be considered."

The serious impression that this unvarnished depiction of the condition of large parts of the allied army evokes could not be dispelled by the reports from General v. Cramon in the following days about a gradual improvement in the current combat situation. A continuation of the Russian attacks with the deployment of fresh forces seemed imminent. On April 10, General v. Conrad himself pointed out in a telegram that "holding the Carpathian Front in the near future would be made more difficult because, according to reliable reports, in addition to the Russian forces freed at Przemysl, strong forces from the Russian Northwest Front (III Caucasian Corps and 4th Division of the VI Corps) would be brought by rail into the Carpathians." On April 12, the Commander-in-Chief East<sup>(1)</sup> also reported that, according to the reports repeatedly received in recent days from Captain v. Fleischmann, General v. Conrad considered the situation in the Carpathians to be very worrying; he himself was not in a position to release reinforcements for the allies. The next day, the Commander-in-Chief East reported: Based on communications from General v. Conrad, "he increasingly gained the view that support of the Austro-Hungarian army by two new infantry divisions was necessary if a catastrophe was to be avoided." He reiterated the impossibility of releasing forces from his command area.

Particular attention was drawn to reports from the Austrian military attaché in Sofia about the intentions of the Russians, which General v. Cramon passed on April 12: "For the time being, no further operations against East Prussia, because the terrain is too poor. Main thrust over the Carpathians. Troops are being moved there from the north, more will follow. By invading Hungary, they want to induce Romania to participate and facilitate an offensive by Serbia into southern Hungary. Troops in

---

1) The Commander-in-Chief East had already declared on April 9 to General v. Conrad that he was willing to work with the German O.H.L. for the deployment of a German corps from the west to the Carpathian Front, provided that the German command areas within the Carpathian Front were expanded. General v. Conrad had agreed to this proposal, finally wishing for the command takeover by General v. der Marwitz, should a new German corps be made available.

## The Decision to Break Through at Gorlice.

Russia has enough, rifles are missing, which America is supposed to deliver. Landing troops for Turkey under Radko Dmitrijew are to be ready at the Black Sea in about four weeks.")

In view of such alarming news, the German Chief of General Staff found the moment had come when the plight of the ally on the eastern theater of war compelled him to provide vigorous assistance on a large scale. General v. Falkenhayn had already been clear for some time about the "What" and "How" of the support, as previously described. On April 10, he presented his plan to Kaiser Wilhelm to break through at Gorlice—Tarnow. He encountered similar thoughts from the Supreme War Lord and thus received his approval. On April 13, at 2 p.m., the following telegram was sent to General v. Conrad:

"Your Excellency knows that I do not consider a repetition of the attempt to encircle the extreme Russian flanks advisable. Equally disadvantageous seems to me the further distribution of German troops on the Carpathian front, merely to support it. Instead, I would like to present the following operational idea for your consideration, but note that I have not yet worked on it within my staff due to the urgent need for secrecy. An army of at least eight German divisions will be made available here in the west with strong artillery and transported to Muczyn—Grybow—Bochnia to advance from there. To advance Gorlice—Gromnik in the general direction of Sanok. The army would need to include the Division Besser (47th Reserve Division), which is to be relieved in time by k. u. k. troops, and a k. u. k. cavalry division. The army and the k. u. k. 4th Army would also need to be united in a command structure, naturally a German one in this case. If during the deployment of the strike group the k. u. k. 2nd and 3rd Army could gradually withdraw and draw the enemy along the approximate line Leczow—Przemyśl—Homonna—Sambor—Boryslaw, such a movement would significantly facilitate and enhance the success of the operation. Your Excellency, I ask you to promptly provide me with your general position on this idea and the following questions. Is the operational area fully accessible for troops with German vehicles? Would the k. u. k. military administration be able to allocate all transport parks to the German army? What is the capacity of the railways Ruttka—Speries—Muczyn and Ruttka—Nawaryta, as well as Sucha—Neu-Sandec—Grybow, and finally Krakow—Bochnia? Further de-

## Agreements of the Army Commands.

agreements would probably have to be made verbally, for which I could meet Your Excellency tomorrow, April 14, in the afternoon in Berlin. The precondition for carrying out the operation remains, of course, the strictest secrecy, so that Italy is induced by utmost accommodation to remain calm at least until the strike is carried out on our part." On the evening of the same day — April 13 — General v. Conrad replied: "The operation proposed by Your Excellency corresponds to the one I have long desired, but which has not been feasible due to insufficient forces. The greatest possible deployment of forces is necessary to ensure success ..."

The next day, April 14, the meeting proposed by General v. Falkenhayn of the two chiefs of staff took place in Berlin. Agreement on the execution of the offensive was reached relatively quickly. The next goal was set to force the Russians to evacuate their front in West Galicia up to the Lupkow Pass. Considering that the development of events on the German front in France and Belgium and the outcome of negotiations with Italy were still uncertain, a decision on what should happen after achieving the first goal was postponed.

The newly to be formed German 11th Army was to be moved into the area of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army south of Krakow and then, advancing eastward along the general line Gorlice—Gromnik, break through the Russian positions in conjunction with the 4th. The 4th Army was also assigned the task of covering the left flank of the 11th Army in the further course. General v. Conrad declared himself ready to reinforce both armies with two powerful infantry divisions each, and additionally to strengthen the 11th Army with at least one cavalry division, also to equip the attack front with heavy artillery as far as possible and to provide the 11th Army with extensive assistance in light transport. Furthermore, he assured to hold the Carpathian front and prevent the withdrawal of Russian forces from there, in order to conduct an offensive himself later, if the successful breakthrough of the 11th Army offered the opportunity. General v. Falkenhayn's proposal to initially withdraw the Austro-Hungarian 2nd and 3rd Armies step by step to the line Peresecyn—Homonna—Baranow—Boro, thereby drawing the Russians deeper into the mountains, was something General v. Conrad openly believed he could not agree to. However, he did not make the reasons for his refusal more precisely known. General v. Falkenhayn attributed them to the "understandable reluctance to voluntarily relinquish

## The Decision for the Breakthrough at Gorlice.

Hungarian soil and the difficulty of bringing troops, once in retreat, back to the front<sup>1)</sup>. Perhaps General v. Conrad also feared the ominous influence that such a retreat by the Austrians would have on Italy's stance.

Although the planned deployment of forces ensured a very significant numerical superiority over the enemy, General v. Conrad deemed it desirable to prepare additional notable forces behind the 11th Army to maintain the offensive as vigorously as possible. General v. Falkenhayn fully agreed with this view but was not yet in a position to provide German forces for this purpose. He reserved the right to send additional units.

Significant difficulties were encountered in arranging the command relationships for the upcoming operation. General v. Conrad was unwilling to accept that the leadership would be in German hands. Eventually, it was agreed that the German 11th Army, led by the designated Generaloberst v. Mackensen, would also command the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army. The Generaloberst himself was bound to the directives of the Austro-Hungarian military command, which in turn had to coordinate with the German Supreme Army Command before all major decisions.

On April 16, General v. Falkenhayn informed the allied Chief of Staff that the Kaiser had approved the agreements made in Berlin. At the same time, a brief communication was sent to the Commander-in-Chief East, adding that his cooperation "through the longest possible deception of the enemy about our intentions and by tying down the Russian forces currently north of the Pilica was a prerequisite for the success of the operation." Field Marshal v. Hindenburg noted in his response that "he could not guarantee that the enemy, currently in a strong position and almost twice as strong in infantry, would not free up forces for other uses." In contrast, the Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army expressed the Supreme War Lord's conviction that the Commander-in-Chief East would succeed in overcoming the considerable difficulties of his task as much as possible.

On April 22, General v. Conrad again communicated via telegram

---

<sup>1)</sup> v. Falkenhayn a. a. D., p. 70.

### Exchange of Opinions on the Follow-up of Reinforcements.

referring back to his request already made in Berlin, to have another German corps follow immediately if possible for the breakthrough operation, to expand and complete the success through vigorous pursuit. Despite fundamental agreement, General v. Falkenhayn still did not find himself in a position to comply with this request. He then continued: "On the other hand, I am firmly convinced that the ten infantry and six to two cavalry divisions now assigned to the 11th Army, along with the seven infantry divisions of the 4th Army (excluding the Landsturm at the lower Dunajec), are sufficient to carry out the operation for the foreseeable future, assuming that very weak forces below Gromnik to the Vistula will suffice to bind the enemy there. However, two preconditions must be met. Firstly, Colonel General v. Mackensen must not lose the advantage of surprise. He must therefore attack with the 11th Army and the main parts of the 4th Army as early as possible, after the first echelon of German forces, six divisions, will have arrived on the 27th. I foresee that the k. u. k. troops designated for this will also be on site. Secondly, it may soon be necessary for the enemy on the remaining Carpathian front and in Bukovina to be sharply attacked to prevent him from making shifts."

The questions touched upon here were again the subject of oral discussions between the two chiefs of staff in Berlin two days later, on April 24. In response to General v. Conrad's request for the earliest possible delivery of further reinforcements, General v. Falkenhayn remained firm in his refusal, stating that his priority was to repel the expected attacks by the English on the German Western Front. Perhaps things would be clearer in five to six days. If possible, he would then comply with General v. Conrad's request. There was full agreement on the necessity to conduct the strike on the Galician front with the greatest acceleration.

The political situation also required this. When the two chiefs of staff agreed on the attack at Gorlice-Tarnow during the Berlin meeting on April 14, there was hope that this would keep Italy from entering the war, or at least delay it. Was this

---

\*) In fact, the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army at the time consisted only of six divisions. It was to be reinforced by two more divisions.

## The Decision for the Breakthrough at Gorlice.

However, the prerequisite for carrying out the offensive against Russia was still needed. Austria-Hungary required "at least four more weeks" of freedom from Italy. The task of diplomacy was to "prolong the negotiations as long as possible and under no circumstances allow a war with Italy during this time." In the subsequent negotiations between Vienna and Rome, the German Chancellor, effectively supported by simultaneous representations from General v. Falkenhayn to the Austro-Hungarian military leadership, repeatedly pushed for extensive concessions to Italy's demands. The Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, however, demanded that General v. Conrad clarify the extent of German military aid in the event of Italy's entry into the war. In the ensuing exchange of ideas between the two chiefs of staff, General v. Falkenhayn again avoided a specific answer; "the question of the extent of German assistance in the event of an Italian attack could only be answered in a concrete case." At the discussion in Berlin on April 24, in which, as mentioned, besides the two chiefs of staff, the leading political figures also participated, an attempt was made to clarify the existing disagreements, but only agreement was reached that Italy's entry into the war would lead to Romania's entry; this meant the loss of the war. Nevertheless, Baron Burian was only willing to make concessions regarding Albania and Trentino, and at most the area around Shkodra, to the Italian demands. The question he raised again about Germany's military measures in the event of Italy's entry into the war was again described by General v. Falkenhayn as "premature"; it could only be answered after the ongoing operations in Galicia.

The question of the Serbian campaign was also the subject of negotiations; the two chiefs of staff agreed that the most favorable time for its execution would be around the end of May, as by then the effects of the operations in Galicia would be clear and there would be enough time for negotiations about Bulgaria's and Turkey's involvement. The following day, on April 25, a serious escalation of the situation in Turkey occurred due to a major landing attempt by the British and French on the Gallipoli peninsula. Strong enemy forces had gained a foothold on the peninsula. As a result, the

---

1) Letter from General v. Conrad to Baron Burian dated April 15.

2) Letter from General v. Falkenhayn to General v. Conrad dated April 19.

3) p. 343. — 4) p. 338.

## The Russian Plans.

For some time, the Russian military leadership had been facing the future with increasing concern. As General Danilov explained in a telegram to the Northwestern Front on April 12, they had received reports suggesting that some infantry and three cavalry divisions of the German army were in transit. It was considered likely that the Germans were bringing in strong forces to counter the Russian Carpathian offensive and had "indications of the likelihood of a German attack against the center of the 3rd Army with the aim of hitting the right flank of the Russian troops that have advanced over the Carpathian ridge." The already ordered withdrawal of a corps, meant to be the III Caucasian, from the Northwestern Front was therefore all the more urgent. Furthermore, the Grand Duke again approached General Joffre regarding the constant redeployment of German troops from the French to the Russian front. Since the beginning of the war, not counting second-line troops, 14 infantry and 6 cavalry divisions had been moved from the west to the east, and recently again three cavalry divisions. There were also indications of the transport of additional forces. The Grand Duke requested that further such redeployments be prevented as much as possible so that they could "settle with the Austrians."

On April 17, however, there were also disturbing reports at headquarters about 7 or 8 German troop concentrations on the East Prussian front. One corps and three cavalry divisions were to be stationed at Marjampol, with five corps behind them at Insterburg-Königsberg.

---

1) As in Bontsch I, G. 93. — Njesnamow II, G. 12/13. — Danilov, p. 465.

2) Cf. G. 359.

## The Decision for the Breakthrough at Gorlice.

The commander-in-chief of the Northwestern Front did not believe these reports<sup>1</sup>; he thought that if the Germans were really planning something serious, they would not prepare their troops long in advance, as their railways were efficient enough to bring them up unexpectedly at the last moment. Nevertheless, he took two corps (XV of the 12th Army and XIX of the 1st Army) as reserves behind the front, while he also had to assign the 63rd Reserve Division to the Southwestern Front. From April 22 to 25, the Tsar visited the Southwestern Front and awarded the Grand Duke a George's saber with the inscription: "For the Liberation of Galicia."

On April 26, the alliance of the coalition powers with Italy was concluded<sup>2</sup>, and the following day<sup>3</sup> the Grand Duke informed the Northwestern Front that future offensive operations would require his explicit permission, and such operations into East Prussia were out of the question. Rather, considering the recently concluded Italian alliance, the attack over the Carpathians retained its decisive importance and had to be promoted by all means. The Northwestern Front was therefore to provide another division for transfer. The Southwestern Front was to proceed with further local actions. General Quando, however, left, stating that before a general attack could succeed, he expected to resume such an attack around mid-May. Whether this timing could be adhered to was doubtful due to the extremely serious ammunition situation. The French ambassador Paleologue had even noted on April 9: "How can the Kaiser think of undertaking a general offensive against Silesia next month under such circumstances?"

Around the same time, General Joffre, in his response to the April 10 warning, also envisaged a major attack by the Western powers and suggested that Serbia should also be urged to take new action. The Grand Duke therefore turned to the Serbian Crown Prince. The response, which arrived from him on April 22, stated that a 12- to 15-day supply reserve must first be accumulated; however, it was believed (according to a later report) that this could be achieved by mid-May. By May 26 at the latest, Italy declared itself ready for the attack. Even if its army was not particularly high

---

<sup>1</sup> In fact, misleading reports were spread by the German side at this time.

<sup>2</sup> Iswolskij in the World War, p. 191.

<sup>3</sup> Nejasmow II, p. 23. — Bontsich I, p. 102.

## The Russian Plans.

estimated<sup>1)</sup>, they hoped to bring the war against the Danube Monarchy to a victorious end with the simultaneous attack from the north, south, and southwest in the second half of May, while Germany's strength was to be tied down by the Western powers.

These plans of the allied powers were to be decisively shattered by the German breakthrough at Gorlice.

### B. The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

#### I. Preparations for the Battle.

Maps 16 and 17.

On April 16, the Chief of the General Staff of the 11th Army, Colonel v. Seeckt, was informed orally by General v. Falkenhayn at the Great Headquarters about the attack plan so clearly and definitively that, according to his own statement<sup>2)</sup>, everything seemed "quite self-evident" to him. The written instructions handed to him for the 11th Army corresponded to the agreements made in Berlin between Generals v. Falkenhayn and v. Conrad. A meeting that Colonel v. Seeckt had on April 19, following his report at the headquarters in Teichen with General v. Conrad, also showed complete agreement on the planned operation. Colonel v. Seeckt received some documents for use in the preparations for the breakthrough battle. However, they only contained the depiction of attacks of small and smallest scale in the area of Gorlice. Any operational preparations for the upcoming breakthrough offensive of the 11th Army had not yet been made by the Austro-Hungarian military leadership<sup>3)</sup>.

The necessary instructions to the German military railway authorities were issued on April 15. The following units were ready for transport as the forward echelon: the Guard Corps near Strasbourg in Alsace, the XXXI Reserve Corps at Busigny, the 119th Infantry Division at Möhringen, the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division at Lille. All these units had been given the opportunity, albeit for a short time, behind the Western Front to train for the attack against fortified positions and for breakthrough operations. March and other exercises

---

<sup>1)</sup> Krosvitsl a. a. O. C. 191 ff.

<sup>2)</sup> Communication from Generaloberst v. Seeckt dated 13.11.1927 to the Reichsarchiv.

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

the troops had been retrained for mobile warfare, good replacements had raised their combat strength. According to the capacity of the Austro-Hungarian railways in the assembly area, each corps and the two divisions together were assigned a transport route with 20 trains daily. The X Army Corps was to follow as the second echelon. To deceive the enemy intelligence service, formations initially intended for East Prussia were transported there by rail, and the actual transports were diverted to Silesia only in Stettin, Berlin, and Posen. At the same time, numerous replacement transports to the Western Front were running on two routes. A meeting with the Austro-Hungarian chief of the field railway service on April 16 presented no difficulties, so that the transports began on April 17. The main body of heavy artillery followed the leading infantry-occupied trains to be able to carry out their time-consuming deployment early.

The officers of the German units of the 11th Army, who had been sent ahead, received instructions for the first assembly in Teschen on April 19 from Colonel v. Seeckt. The unloading began on April 21. The XXXXI Reserve and the Guard Corps were to reach their assembly areas west of the upper Biala below Grybow from their unloading points on the double-track railway line Krakow—Tarnow between Podgorzell and Biadoliny. The unloading of the 11th Bavarian 119th Infantry Division took place within their assembly areas, in Stróze and Grybow for the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division, in Kamionka and Neu-Sandez for the 119th Infantry Division. As the second transport echelon, the 20th Infantry Division was unloaded by the X Army Corps at Neu-Sandez, the 19th Infantry Division east of Krakow for deployment behind the right and left army wing.

To gain an impression of the attack terrain as soon as possible, a reconnaissance order was issued on April 21 to the German units in assembly. As soon as the first staffs were unloaded, these reconnaissances were to begin, with the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division in the front section from Ropica ruska to Selowa, with the 119th Infantry Division subsequently to Ropa, with the XXXXI Reserve Corps subsequently to Wola Luzanska, and with the Guard Corps subsequently to Gromnik.

On April 22, the newly appointed commander-in-chief of the 11th Army, Generaloberst v. Mackensen, arrived at the headquarters in Neu-Sandez. Here he received

## The Transport of the German 11th Army.

He signed the fundamental order for the upcoming operations from Archduke Friedrich. In addition to the initially to be brought in eight German divisions, the 11th Army was also assigned the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps (12th Infantry Division and Hungarian 39th Infantry Division) and the Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division, as well as Austro-Hungarian heavy artillery, which had been deployed in the defensive front on both sides of Gorlice. The attack directive already given by the German Supreme Army Command was further added: "General direction for the strongly held southern flank Amigrod—Dukla—Sanok."

The protection of the southern flank of the 11th Army during this attack movement was assigned to the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army. It had to unite all its dispensable forces on its left wing to proceed with the attack of the 11th Army with detachments from the northern wing south of the Przegonina Valley and the Magora Ridge." The remaining front of the 3rd, the 2nd, and the German Southern Army were to bind the opposing enemy. The task assigned to the commander of the northern flank of the 11th Army and the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army under Generaloberst v. Mackensen, now stationed in the area between Gromnik and the Vistula, was described as "attacking along the Biala and on the heights between Dunajec and Biala to defeat the enemy located there."

Through this order, General v. Conrad clearly expressed the main goal of the entire attack operation as the quickest possible relief of the allied armies stationed in the Carpathians. By placing the focus of the planned thrust in the direction along the northern foothills of the mountains, he intended to collapse the Russian attack front entrenched in the Carpathians. However, it was to be expected that the enemy, as soon as he noticed the deployment of German troops at the front of Gorlice, would take countermeasures at the nearest Carpathian front in recognition of the danger. To preempt this and to maintain the element of surprise in the attack of the 11th Army as much as possible, as General v. Conrad aimed for an early start of the attack, especially since the growing tension between Austria-Hungary and Italy made an imminent military success of the Central Powers urgently necessary. The full deployment of the German X Army Corps should therefore not be awaited.

To prevent a reinforcement of the enemy front to be attacked from the Carpathians, the Austro-Hungarian 3rd received orders.

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

and 2. as well as the Southern Army received the order: "Any withdrawal of enemy forces from the Carpathians must be answered by an immediate vigorous attack." Furthermore, General v. Conrad decided on April 23 to assign the 4th Austro-Hungarian Infantry Division, assembled on the left bank of the Vistula, to the 4th Army, to enable a strong attack over the lower Dunajec and thereby reliably prevent the enemy from bringing reinforcements over the Vistula and on the railway via Debica—Tarnow."

The advance into the assembly areas took place immediately after unloading, avoiding the times most favorable for Russian aerial reconnaissance. It was associated with great efforts for the troops, exhausted from days of rail travel, in the mountainous terrain on mostly very poor roads and was particularly difficult for the train, whose vehicles were not suitable for such a theater of war, but was at least favored by dry weather.

Reports from German officers of all arms, sent in Austrian uniforms for reconnaissance up to the foremost trenches, revealed that the expansion of the combat positions did not meet the demands that had to be made on the western theater of war; artillery-proof shelters were almost completely lacking; also, cover trenches for reserves were not available, but the reserves could be deployed and moved in the valleys extending from Ropa and Biala. The Austro-Hungarian artillery, previously deployed on detours, was too far back for an attack effect reaching into the depths. The advancement of the entire attack artillery was favored by the terrain configuration and ground cover. However, the supply of ammunition in the pathless mountainous area was difficult, for which pack animal columns also had to be used.

The present valuable Austro-Hungarian reconnaissance material could be checked and significantly expanded by immediately commencing aerial reconnaissance, hardly disturbed by the enemy and extraordinarily favored by the weather. In particular, the seamless photographic capture of the entire enemy defense zone provided the most valuable documents for the launch of the attack formations.

The Russian position system, which could be widely observed, was deeply structured, apparently well developed, and equipped with strong entrenchments, numerous flanking installations, and wide obstacles. Main strongpoints were the heights 554 (Samlisko) and 346, the heights dominating Gorlice north of the city, the steeply rising Pustki, and height 405. Against them, the artillery preparation had primarily been directed.

## The Reconnaissance Results.

preparations to direct. Behind the first position, there were two more in the line Ferdelberg (649)–Wilczaf Hill (373)–Lipie Hill (425) and in the line Ostra Gora (365)–Sarlolowa–Hodlowa.

The main Russian forces were identified in the Carpathians. Their western flank was covered by the Russian 3rd Army, estimated at about ten infantry and one cavalry division, under General Radko Dimitrijew, stationed between the Carpathians and the Vistula; on their southern flank, in the foothills of the Carpathians, four divisions seemed to be deployed, with four divisions also in the section designated for the attack of the 11th Army. Behind the now shortened front of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, there apparently stood only two infantry and one cavalry division, as well as militia troops. Opposite the 11th Army, the infantry deployment in the front line was apparently not strong, but numerous machine guns were installed. The seemingly weak Russian artillery fired little.

Based on the first reconnaissance results, the Army High Command 11 issued the order on April 25 for moving into combat positions. Generaloberst v. Mackensen decided to extend the left wing of his 11th Army not to Gromnik, but only to Tursko. Had the 11th Army, as originally intended, been pushed up to Gromnik located in the Biala Valley, it would have been necessary to include the heights north of Gromnik in the attack field to eliminate the flanking from the northern Biala Valley. However, this would have excessively stretched the front and impaired the striking power of the 11th Army. The 11th Bavarian and the 119th Infantry Division were consolidated into a corps under the command of the former's commander, Bavarian Major General Ritter v. Kneußl. This corps, the XXXXI Reserve Corps, the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps, and the Guard Corps were now assigned their combat sections. The replacement of the Austro-Hungarian troops still standing in those front sections was to be completed by the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division by April 27, and by the other divisions on April 28. By April 29, the X Army Corps with the General Command in Neu-Sandec, with the 20th Infantry Division behind the right, and the 19th Infantry Division behind the left army wing west of the Dunajec, was to be ready as an army reserve. The Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division remained assembled around Zakliczyn. Through this deployment of the reserves of the 11th Army, it was once possible, on the large behind the Carpathian front

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

leading main road through Gorlice to reinforce the attack by the 20th Infantry Division if necessary. On the other hand, the forces positioned on the northern wing could cover the left flank that would become free during the planned right-wing pivot of the army, should the forces of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army prove insufficient for this task.

April 26.

On April 26, the distribution of the attack artillery was regulated. The Austro-Hungarian heavy artillery already positioned in the attack sectors was not relieved but remained in their familiar sectors. Additionally, further artillery units were assigned to the attack corps of the 11th Army.

Accordingly, the corps could dispose of the following artillery strengths:

Combined Corps Kneußl (18 battalions) = 60 light and 56 heavy guns,

XXXI Reserve Corps (18 battalions) = 96 light and 32 heavy guns,

Austro-Hungarian VI Corps (28 battalions) = 100 light and 32 heavy guns,

Guards Corps (24 battalions) = 96 light and 24 heavy guns.

In total, the 11th Army thus had 352 field and 144 heavy guns at its disposal for their attack. Additionally, the X Army Corps had 96 light and 12 heavy guns, while the Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division had 18 light guns. The distribution of heavy artillery revealed the Army High Command's intention to place the artillery focal point in the sector of Corps Kneußl.

The following ammunition was to be deposited in the firing positions for each battery:

Field artillery ..... 1200 rounds

Heavy field howitzer ..... 600 rounds

21 cm mortar ..... 500 rounds

Each attack corps of the 11th Army was assigned two light, one medium, and one heavy trench mortar detachment. The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps lacked the heavy detachment.

The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, which had 350 light and 103 heavy guns at its disposal, was ordered by Colonel General v. Mackensen on April 26: "The 4th Army must position itself by April 30 in its sector from Height 371 Bialawola to the Vistula in such a way that it is able to carry forward the attack with emphasis on the right wing simultaneously with the 11th Army. For this purpose

## The Deployment for Battle.

it will be necessary to prepare strong forces behind the right wing. In the further course, the 4th Army is tasked with covering the left flank of the 11th Army. The Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army was requested to establish close contact with the southern wing of the 11th Army and, above all, to neutralize the expected enemy flank effect from the ridge northeast of Malastow early on.

Meanwhile, the deployment for battle proceeded according to plan. To accelerate, the recently unloaded troop units were immediately brought to the position zone. The deployment posed high demands on the troops and the train due to the underdeveloped transport network, poor roads, and mountain and forest paths. Instead of the heavy German baggage vehicles, light local carts were provided by the Austro-Hungarian military leadership. Particularly careful arrangements were needed for the supply of the troops and especially for the ammunitioning of the strong attack artillery. On April 27, Generaloberst v. Mackensen could report to the Austro-Hungarian military leadership that the artillery would cease fire on May 1 in the afternoon and the attack would begin on May 2 in the morning. An even earlier start, suggested by General v. Falkenhayn on April 28 out of concern that the enemy might have recognized the attack intentions and preparations, was declared impossible due to the difficult road and transport conditions.

The army command issued fundamental instructions on April 27 for the preparation of the breakthrough. The attack of the 11th Army was to be carried forward quickly to prevent the enemy from "renewed resistance in rear positions and the planned use of stronger reserves." To keep the advance within the attack sectors in steady flow, "depth formation of the attacking infantry and rapid following of the artillery effect" was demanded. The army command refrained from setting specific daily goals to not restrict the unity of the attack. However, the unity of the army's attack should still be maintained. "It is not to be expected," the instructions stated, "that the attack will progress evenly across the entire front. The necessity to swing from the initially northeast-directed front to the east already results in a longer path for the left wing. The faster advance of one part of the front will often temporarily facilitate and bring into flow the more difficult advance of another part, especially when the depth formation allows the achieved effect

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

to transfer to the secondary front. On the other hand, the part that manages to advance further is at risk of being flanked. Then the very troop that least deserves it due to its rapid progress would be exposed to setbacks. This consideration forces the army to determine lines whose uniform and as simultaneous as possible achievement is desired, without binding the troops to them, if possible, to reach the next sections of joint action. Every further occurrence of the attack will be gratefully welcomed and utilized by the army." Furthermore, the closest communication was demanded so that the army command could "create a balance between the individual parts of the battlefield and deploy its reserves according to the situation." By granting full freedom of action for the lower leadership in energetic forward-looking, the army command still maintained strict control, which was deemed necessary especially due to the shifting of attack formations from German and Austro-Hungarian troops.

From various indications, it was to be inferred that the Russians had been informed since April 25 about the arrival of German troops at the front west of Gorlice, presumably through prisoners or deserters. However, from the results of aerial reconnaissance on April 28, the overall impression was gained that no new forces were brought in for defense. The findings from the forward battlefield had also not changed the previously taken picture. Thus, Generaloberst v. Mackensen was able to issue the order for attack on the evening of April 29. It stated: "... The breakthrough of the enemy front is to be carried out in agreement with all army corps and divisions, so that on the afternoon of May 1, the shelling of the batteries takes place, during the night of May 1/2, a wave-like fire is maintained at precisely set times, between which the advance work of the infantry and pioneers begins, so that on the morning of May 2, the effective firing takes place, followed by the storm along the entire line as a continuation of the attack. The continuation of the attack in the attack sectors follows immediately after the breakthrough. Timely advance of artillery fire and following of the batteries enables the execution of the attack on the enemy's rear positions."

The line initially designated to be reached as evenly as possible was: Height north of the Pregzomina Valley—Zamczysko—Urzystko—course of the Wolszczanka stream—east of Repeinient Biskup—height line west of the Rostowka stream. The Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division was to

## The Attack Order of the Army High Command 11.

be ready to march on May 2, with the X Army Corps standing with its attachments at the Dunajec in the morning of that day.

A special order was issued to regulate the artillery's activities. On the night of May 1/2, the enemy's work was to be disrupted by lively irregular fire. From 10 PM to 11 PM and from 1 AM to 3 AM, fire pauses were to be observed to give advancing pioneer patrols the opportunity to destroy enemy obstacles. Heavy flat fire was to be directed at enemy accommodations. On May 2, from 6 AM onwards, intensive firing was to commence against the first enemy position zone. The heavy flat fire guns were initially to keep villages and approach routes under fire and only disengage from flanking tasks, also extending into neighboring sections, a quarter of an hour before the start of the assault. The fire control of the heavy artillery remained in the hands of the general commands. Far forward, individual field artillery units were to be prepared in cover to combat machine guns appearing later. The mortar units were essentially deployed against the enemy's western protruding position parts, where close approach was possible from the outset.

Based on the army order, the general commands had to deploy their troops for the attack in the short time still available.

Major General v. Kneussl, the leader of the combined corps, intended to force a breakthrough on the inner flanks of his two divisions, with the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division against the Zamczysko Massif, with the 119th Infantry Division north of Gębowa. The enemy positions, some of which had advanced to the valley floor, were meanwhile pushed back to their main position by the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division. As early as April 29, the foremost Bavarian line reached across the Gębowa ground up to the northeastern edges of the Ropica rufst and otherwise up to the northern slopes to the enemy positions. Stubborn fighting occurred here due to an enemy counterattack at the confluence of the Mecina Valley and on the western slopes of the Zamczysko Massif. The Bavarian infantry was also able to hold its ground firmly against the enemy here.

The commanding general of the XXXXI Reserve Corps, General of Infantry v. François, designated the main attack points for the 82nd Reserve Division as the southwestern edge of Gorlice and the height 357 southwest of the place, for the 81st Reserve Division Mszana and the Kamieniec Forest. In the flanking impact of the enemy against the

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

To prevent the main attack points, the combat of the Sokole

Height east of Gorlice and the Pustki was considered with heavy artillery.

The actual storm position was to be reached only on the night before the attack under the protection of artillery fire. Only the previously advanced positions were occupied and expanded. The enemy did not disturb these works.

In the attack section of the Austro-Hungarian

VI Corps, there were two points dominating the entire terrain,

the Pustki Mountain and the Wiatrowki Height. The commanding general,

Field Marshal Lieutenant Urs v. Straunzenburg, had assigned the 12th Infantry Division, which was assigned to a narrow

combat strip, the task of taking the Pustki Mountain, while the 39th Infantry Division had to attack the height of Wiatrowki lying in front of its right wing.

Already on April 30, the Russian outposts in both divisional

sections were pushed back, the northern edge of Rzuna and the height of

Ostrzankowa were reached, and the combat line was also advanced south of Staszkowa.

General of Infantry Freiherr v. Plettenberg, the commanding

general of the Guard Corps, gave the 2nd Guard Infantry Division, deployed in the southern section, the height 437 southwest of Staszkowa and the

enemy position protrusion at height 382 as the first main attack target. Only after eliminating the fortified flanking possibilities there should the corresponding attack against

the protruding Russian main defense section around height 405

be carried out. The 1st Guard Infantry Division was instructed

to first seize the forward position part east of Turko,

height 358, to then roll up the enemy position

from here on both sides.

The leader of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army,  
General of Infantry Archduke Joseph Ferdinand, intended to deploy two  
divisions of his IX Corps on both sides of the Biala and two divisions  
of his XIV Corps subsequently massed closely up to the Dunajec.

West of the Dunajec, Landsturm troops initially closed at  
the bishop's seat Sogumilow — Radow, where the Russians still held the western riverbank,  
stood, subordinated to the Austro-Hungarian XIV Army Corps,  
the German 47th Reserve Division. In the adjacent area up to  
the Vistula, a special unit was assembled from the 4th Infantry Division and Landsturm troops  
under the command of Field Marshal Lieutenant v. Stoeger-  
Steiner.

In this formation, the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army intended

## Orders of the Assault Units.

with the parts deployed east of the Biala in closest contact with the Prussian Guard Corps to advance to the attack and also to push forward from the left bank of the river to the heights in the area of Tuchow—Tarnow. The German 47th Reserve Division was to be deployed in such a way that the enemy units standing on the western bank of the Dunajec would have their retreat to the east cut off. The Stoeger-Steiner group had already crossed the Dunajec the night before the attack to divert enemy forces or at least hold those standing there.

The grouping of the army reserves was primarily to serve the protection of the flanks of the 11th Army. However, the German X Army Corps was to reach the area of Grybow—Neu-Sandez with the 20th Infantry Division and the area of Podole—Tropie with the 19th Infantry Division by the evening of May 2. The Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division was prepared to advance between the 11th and 4th Armies. The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, to lend the necessary emphasis to its right wing and, if necessary, to extend it to the right, was to hold back its army reserve, the Hungarian Brigade Szende, at Zakliczyn. Thus, on the night of the 11th and 4th Armies, sufficient forces were available to both armies for deployment, should a shortage of forces occur on the northern flank during further operations with the main focus on the southern flank of the 11th Army.

The commander of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army, General of Infantry v. Boroevic, decided to use his X Corps, deployed on the left flank, essentially to capture the massif of Ostra Gora. The first objective of the attack was agreed with the German neighbor to target the ridge of Malastow.

Hand in hand with the deployment of the troops in their attack sectors, other preparations, particularly the ammunitioning of the assault artillery, continued. The adequate supply of ammunition, both in the positions for the attack itself and for the creation of a mobile ammunition reserve for the rapid continuation of the attack after a successful breakthrough, was one of the most important prerequisites for the success of this first major breakthrough battle. Despite all the friction, which arose mainly due to terrain difficulties, it was nevertheless possible, under the favor of continuously dry weather, the vigor of the artillery command posts, and the discipline and performance of the artillery and supply formations, to master the difficult task in time. The staging facilities of the 11th Army could not yet be fully utilized in this process.

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

since the stage inspection, for reasons of secrecy, only arrived in the deployment area immediately before the start of the offensive on April 30, and only then did the stage formations roll in. Meanwhile, the Austro-Hungarian stage authorities helped extensively and courteously with supplies.

Thanks to the zeal of leaders of all ranks, the understanding of troops of all arms, and the careful work of the general staffs day and night, it was possible to complete all preparations despite the short time span. On May 1, Generaloberst v. Mackensen was able to report to the Austro-Hungarian army command that the time of the assault had been finally set for May 2 at 10 a.m. The spirit of the troops was full of confidence in victory.

No significant new information about the opposing enemy had been received by April 29. From the movements of weaker enemy detachments in front of the front of the 11th and Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, no conclusions could be drawn. On April 28, about one division was identified near Zmigrod. Troop movements were noticed around Jaslo and at the local station as well as near Biecz. Large fires were detected in the Tarnow area. Moreover, no clues could be found for the deployment of reinforcements of greater scope or for the intention of the Russians to evade the German attack.

### 2. The Battle of Gorlice until noon on May 5, 1915.

Maps 16 and 17.

#### a) The Breakthrough of the 11th Army on May 2, 1915.

On the evening of May 1, at the onset of dusk, the artillery of the 11th Army opened strong disruptive fire. The counteraction of the Russian batteries was hardly noticeable. During the planned nightly fire pauses, patrols advanced to make the necessary determinations before the assault. Pioneers created gaps in the enemy obstacles. During the disruptive fire, the assault troops moved up to and just behind the assault positions. Field batteries or individual guns, tasked with accompanying the attack or dealing with enemy supply movements occurring during the assault from close range, were brought forward with the help of the infantry into the most secure positions. When the mutual artillery fire ceased at 4 a.m., the setup of the assault front for the storm was completed.

## The Assault of the Kneußl Corps.

At 6 o'clock in the morning on May 2nd, a massive barrage began the effective firing; the clear morning sun favored artillery observation from the heights. As enemy counteraction was almost entirely absent, all telephone connections remained usable, ensuring close cooperation between artillery and infantry. The overwhelming effect of the assault artillery soon became apparent. From 9 o'clock in the morning, the mortars bombarded the breach points to prepare them for assault. At 9:45, the long-range flat fire began to flank the enemy positions. Precisely on the second, at 10 o'clock, the infantry rose to the assault along the entire front, while the artillery shifted its fire forward.

In the Kneußl Corps, the infantry of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division, under the leadership of Major General Ritter Karl v. Schoch, had steep heights to climb. Therefore, it was not possible everywhere to reach the foremost enemy positions simultaneously with the advance of the artillery fire. From the high-lying trenches, the defensive fire revived and forced the attacking lines down the slopes. Once again, the artillery had to target the Russian positions. The main task of the division was to wrest the core of the enemy mountain front, the Zamczysko Massif, from the enemy. While the heavily affected regiment on the right and left flanks managed to advance into the first trenches in the first leap, the further attack of the entire regimental front against the terraced, defended trenches up to the forward summit of Zamczysko, height 507, proved extremely difficult and costly. A third of the attackers fell on the battlefield. By 11 o'clock, the summit was taken after fierce fighting. Soon after, the heavily fortified position south of the Mecina Valley at height 469 also succumbed to the repeated assaults of the Bavarian infantry despite heavy losses. The pursuit initiated through the rugged forest mountains was temporarily halted by a flank attack from the Russians from Naphta Br. Shortly after 2 o'clock in the afternoon, however, the intervention of the attackers overcame the danger of a setback here. The initially held-back right flank of the division also succeeded in gaining ground from Ropica Rusz. over and beyond height 501. This forced the enemy to retreat from his combat section in front of the center of the division. Thus, the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division had captured the most important high points in and behind the enemy mountain position on the eastern bank of the Selowka stream within a few hours.

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

The repositioning of the artillery, primarily the mountain and field artillery, across the Setowa ground was initiated. The task of the 119th Infantry Division was to break through east of the village of Setowa and then roll up the front towards Gorlice. The right wing of the division managed to break through the enemy position at noon on the Setowa-Ropkałna road despite heavy losses. After this success, the main forces swung north, securing their right flank to expand the breach towards Sokol. By 3 p.m., the height 349 south of Sokol was in the possession of the Polish infantry. The far left wing of the division had also already penetrated the suburbs of Gorlice on the southern Ropa bank early on. Until around noon, fierce house-to-house fighting raged there. While a heavy, costly frontal attack unfolded around the heavily fortified height 346 north of Sokol, the victorious right wing of the division pushed deep into the enemy's rear. Under this pressure, the resistance on the front collapsed. After losing height 346, the enemy's ability to influence the Gorlice basin diminished.

By swinging the mass of the 119th Infantry Division north, a gap had formed in the center of the Kneussl Corps, into which the composite cavalry regiment of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division was inserted for reconnaissance against the Dominikowice section. In the afternoon, General v. Kneussl decided to advance the attack of his two divisions to the line height 461 east of Mecina, the edge of the Zamczysko forest—height 361 east of Dominikowice—height 288 in Kobylanka. However, the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division urgently needed new artillery preparation for this, especially against the still untaken parts of the Zamczysko massif. Heavy artillery also had to be brought forward over the Setowa section to effective range. It was not until 6 p.m. that the artillery fire preparation could begin. By 7:15 p.m., the Bavarian infantry was ready to storm against the highest peak of Zamczysko, enduring the heaviest artillery fire. In fierce close combat, with effective support from Austro-Hungarian mountain artillery, the enemy was driven out. Its remnants disappeared into the darkness of the forest. In the pursuit, the infantry reached the forest edges and openings of Zamczysko. The southern adjoining parts, which had to make do with very little artillery support, were also able to break through the forest zone, the slope of height 461, and the forests further south around height 587 east.

## Successes of the Kneuffl Corps.

Ropica Rusz. reach. In this line, the units were to organize for the tasks of the following day and secure the movement of the entire artillery of the division over the Setzowa ground.

The commander of the 119th Infantry Division, Major General v. Behr, after the decision on the heights around Sokol was made, positioned the right wing on and over Dominikowice in an easterly direction, the remaining parts of the division on the Ustronice Mountain and the S. H. north of it. While the further advance of the right wing was closely linked with the battles of the Bavarians around Zamczysko, the main forces of the division, concentrated from the south and west on the battlefield around Sokol, needed considerable time to clear the traversed, largely wooded terrain with numerous groups of houses up to Ropa. Only at dusk had they worked their way to the eastern edge of the woods north of Sokol and gained connection to the southern part of the division north of the Sokol—Kryg road. The extreme left wing of the division was still lagging behind. Strong mixing of the units, which had a particularly adverse effect in the confusing, difficult forest terrain, and the exhaustion of the troops from the battle caused the command with the enemy to be temporarily lost. Since thousands of overpowered Russians were behind the front, whose resistance in the forest terrain occasionally flared up again, and fresh reserves were not available, the continuation of the attack into the night was refrained from.

In the combat area of the XXXXI Reserve Corps, the storm preparation at the 82nd Reserve Division had shown brilliant results thanks to the excellent cooperation of infantry and artillery. In the first attempt, it was possible to gain the Bildstock height west of Gorlice, advancing to the west with negligible losses. Immediately overrunning several enemy lines, the infantry penetrated the heavily fortified cemetery at the city border. By 10:15 a.m., after a short but fierce battle, the Jewish cemetery southeast of height 357 was also taken, and by 10:50 a.m., this height itself was taken. The Russians, shaken by the artillery fire and completely discouraged by the storming attack rushing over them like a thunderstorm, had defected in bright swarms. The heights to the north were also in German hands soon after 11:00 a.m., so that the enemy had cleared his entire first line of defense barely an hour after the start of the attack. The battle for Gorlice proved more difficult. As the own

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

The forces positioned on the western city front, acting on their own initiative and against the division's orders, advanced to attack, encountering the still unshaken Russian defense. Russian machine guns cleverly built into wood stacks of the sawmills caused disproportionately high losses. The city itself was not reached. Captured prisoners reported that Gorlice was heavily fortified. Therefore, the commander of the 82nd Reserve Division, Major General Fabarius, decided on another thorough bombardment of the city, especially the western edge, before entering the urban area. Under the impact of this massive fire, the combat strength and resistance of the defender collapsed. Large masses rushed out of the burning city, unarmed and with white flags, to surrender. Considerable ammunition and weapon depots fell into the hands of the victors.

In the attack section of the 81st Reserve Division, which was largely wooded and therefore not as visible to the artillery, the artillery's storm preparation was insufficient, and the attackers were met everywhere with unbroken strong infantry and machine gun fire. Intense flanking fire was also coming from the Russian batteries in the forest around height 335 and from the left. Heavy losses occurred. The weak center and the left attack wing initially stalled after minor initial successes. Only the right wing managed to make progress against the forest height 335, in conjunction with the neighboring division. After new artillery preparation had taken effect, and infantry support batteries had fought the forest edges and enemy flanking positions from close range, the assault line of the left wing broke into the forest area south of Kamieniec. Here, too, large numbers of Russians were captured. The weak center of the division initially held firm opposite Mzanta. The division commander, Major General v. Stöcken, had his reserves follow into the Kamieniec forest to roll up the enemy front more strongly from the south. The enemy's resistance gradually decreased in their positions at Mzanta. They began to retreat to the heights located to the east.

After General v. Francois had ordered his divisions at 4 p.m. to reach their given daily objective today, the 82nd Reserve Division, under the protection of heavy artillery that had been brought forward, began the forward movement at 5 p.m. on their entire front north of Gorlice in the direction of Glinitz. They encountered no more resistance. The severely shaken enemy retreated everywhere.

### The XXXXI Reserve Corps Storms Gorlice.

In addition to heavy bloody losses, he left more than 3500 prisoners in the hands of the division. On the evening of the 8th, it reached Glinitz and occupied the local heights. Advance troops were pushed forward to the ridge 323 at the Mosczanka stream.

The right wing of the 81st Reserve Division worked its way through the woods northeast of height 335 and found Zagorzany and the heights north of the Mosczanka stream still occupied by the enemy at 10 in the evening. The infantry of the center and left wing, heavily affected by the severe local and forest battles, could no longer reach the Mosczanka section set as their day's goal. They did not get far beyond the crossroads 308 and the eastern edge of the Kamieniec forest. Although this division also captured several thousand prisoners and seized several guns and machine guns, it suffered heavy losses, especially among officers. The lower leadership had to take firm control of the troops again.

The 12th Infantry Division of the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps, standing on the right wing, under Field Marshal Lieutenant Lestraine, directed its main attack against the steeply rising mountain massif of Pustki. On a narrow front, closely coordinated artillery fire cleared the assault path for the infantry on the southwestward projecting ridge. Here, the foremost trenches were overrun in the first assault. Numerous Russians surrendered. During the ascent on the wooded steep slope, the assault line encountered further fortified defensive positions, and powerful Russian counterattacks forced bloody close combat. Nevertheless, the attack was carried forward with great momentum, and by 11:30 in the morning, the summit of Pustki Mountain was stormed. A stream of prisoners poured down the slopes to Rzuna. Numerous batteries followed the victorious assault troops. By midday, a success of decisive importance was achieved. The strong attacking part of the brave Austro-Hungarian infantry pushed beyond Pustki further in the direction of the church of Mosczanica and height 320. The right attack wing was increasingly turned from its northeastern attack direction towards the Kamieniec forest, against which the neighboring 81st Reserve Division had not yet been able to make significant progress. A strong artillery group formed behind this wing directed its fire on the enemy positions in and around the Kamieniec forest, thereby facilitating both the Austrian-

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

Hungarian combat group south of Pustki as well as the connecting wing of the 81st Reserve Division advanced. In the battle for the Kamieniec Forest and within it, there was close cooperation of the infantry of the allies in the early afternoon hours.

The attack field of the left wing division of the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps, the Hungarian 39th Infantry Division of Field Marshal Lieutenant v. Hadfy, rose from the stream bed gently against an elongated ridge line, behind whose southern end the steep Wiatrowki Height towered. Heavy fire, which struck the attack lines from the front and both flanks, initially thwarted the repeated storm attempts of the Hungarians. Even when parts of the right wing of the division succeeded at 11:30 a.m. in breaking into the shell strip of the 12th Infantry Division towards Brzezina into the transverse enemy positions, the frontal attack was still denied success. New artillery preparation involving neighboring divisions was followed by futile blood sacrifices of ever-bravely attacking infantry. Only in the middle of the division front was it possible to break into the enemy positions on the Luzna-Staszkowa road. Only when, around 4:30 p.m., batteries that had advanced into the Luzna area effectively flanked the Russian positions and, moreover, the artillery effect of the two breakthrough points, especially against the Wiatrowki Height, was closely coordinated, did the overall attack of the division from the left wing come into flow. Now flanking pressure from the neighboring wings was also felt, on the one hand by parts of the 12th Division, which advanced from Pustki on the ridge leading to the Wiatrowki Height, and on the other hand by the right wing of the Guard, which had been able to bend forward through Staszkowa.

At 6:15 p.m., the enemy resistance also collapsed on the Wiatrowki Height; 1000 Russians surrendered here. The rest flowed back east. The entire front of the VI Corps followed the fleeing enemy. The right wing of the 12th Infantry Division stood in the evening in connection with the 81st Reserve Division on the western edges of the Kamieniec Forest, the center reached height 320 west of Moszczenica. The right wing of the 39th Infantry Division advanced to the Dniestr of the Wiatrowki Height, its left wing swung forward to Moszczenica and had made contact with the Guard. Although both divisions were very tired due to the exertions and the fighting continuing into the evening hours, they were able to advance detachments over the Moszczenica section during the night.

## Attack of the Austro-Hungarian VI and the Guard Corps.

driven. They found the elongated village free from the enemy. Even on the strong ridge further east, even on the heights 412 and 409 northeast of Folw. Krotowsti, the enemy had not re-established a front in the prepared positions here.

In the combat zone of the Guard Corps, the storming infantry of both divisions managed to reach the three protruding height positions, 437 (southwest of Staszkowka), 382 and 358 (east and northeast of Ciezkowice), albeit with heavy losses, in the first leap. On the southern flank of the 2nd Guard Infantry Division, under Lieutenant General v. Winkler, a heavy, hours-long battle ensued for the close removal of the village of Staszkowka, which had been expanded as a strong pillar of enemy defense. Further north on the Davidowka heights, no progress could initially be made in the flanking fire from Staszkowka and in the Ostruza valley. Heavy losses occurred in the regiments of the 3rd Guard Infantry Brigade deployed here. The situation on the northern flank of the division was initially significantly more favorable. Infantry support guns immediately swept the trenches leading to the enemy's main stronghold at point 405 from height 382 by longitudinal fire. Quick successes were also achieved south of height 405. By 11 a.m., the commanding hill was itself in the possession of the Guard Infantry. Numerous guns were removed. Batteries that had been moved up took position on the heights 382 and 405 and opened devastating pursuit fire on the retreating Russians. This meant that the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade had shattered the central piece of the entire enemy defense in the attack section of the Guard Corps. Around 3 p.m., the brigade crossed the line M. H. east of 405 — height 367, without encountering significant resistance.

The 1st Guard Infantry Division also managed to expand the initial successes at height 382 and at height 358 in a rapid advance against the stronghold at height 376 and against the ridge northeast of 358. Thus, after barely 1½ hours, a 5-kilometer-wide breach had been made in the enemy front north of the Ostruza brook. During the pursuit immediately undertaken, the left wing of the 1st Guard Infantry Division swung southeast in accordance with the course of the Russian position, thereby establishing immediate combat connection with the Austro-Hungarian neighbor to the left. The flanking effect, which was constantly felt from its combat area, forced the 1st Guard Infantry Division to hold back its northern wing. To be prepared for all possibilities here,

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

The commanding general, General of the Infantry Baron von Plettenberg, and the division commander, Colonel Prince Eitel Friedrich of Prussia, had their reserves, almost the entire 2nd Guard Infantry Brigade, follow behind this wing. By 2 PM, the heights west of the main road had been captured over the line 357 (west of Rzepiennik—Biskupic) — 253 east of Bialowka. The division temporarily turned into a northeast-facing front while holding its left wing. After the threat of flanking for the left wing had been eliminated by the successes of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, the division commander ordered at 3 PM to continue the pursuit to the height line on both sides of 366 south of Kolkowka. The enemy continued to retreat.

In contrast to the extremely successful development of the combat situation north of the Ostruza section, the 3rd Guard Infantry Brigade on the southern wing of the 2nd Guard Infantry Division had been unable to make progress in the attack on Staszkowka for a long time. It was only around 1 PM that their left wing, supported by following artillery, managed to swing in against the northern part of the village and penetrate here. Under this pressure from the north, which was also exerted against the height 402 east of the place, the enemy's resistance weakened. A subsequent advance into the village around 3 PM was successful. In the south, too, it was possible to encircle the enemy around S. H. Staszkowka. From the north, west, and south, the battalions of the 3rd Guard Infantry Brigade now entered the burning village, but it was not until 4:30 PM that the eastern edge was reached after bitter close combat. Parts of the left wing had already reached height 404 on the road to Turza and then Turza itself. To counter this comprehensive pressure from the north, the enemy once again threw forces against height 402 at 5 PM, a futile sacrifice that could no longer avert the catastrophe. The Russian masses, as far as they did not fall into captivity, streamed southeast and were driven into the army over Hungary. Since the neighboring 4th Guard Infantry Brigade on the left had already reached the stream bed between 322 and 266 southwest of Rzepiennik Biskupic, the pursuit was now in full flow across the entire front of the Guard Corps. It was continued by the 2nd Guard Infantry Division to the height area around 340 southeast of Rzepiennik Biskupic. The 1st Guard Infantry Division attacked in the evening on the ridge specified as their day's objective.

## The Battles of the Neighboring Armies on May 2.

Kolkowka—Jodlowka Tuchowska, where they connected with the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army.

The army commander, of the X Army Corps, had been ordered in the early afternoon hours to reach Ropa with the 20th Infantry Division, with the beginnings of the 19th Infantry Division Olszowa, by the afternoon. Reinforcement was anticipated from the 56th Infantry Division<sup>1)</sup> rolling in from the western theater of war.

The result of the first day of battle meant a complete victory for the 11th Army along the entire line. Thanks to careful preparations and exemplary cooperation between infantry and artillery, a broad breakthrough into the enemy defensive position and several kilometers of free terrain gain were achieved in the form of a relentless frontal attack. This tactical success already marked the beginning of a major breakthrough, as the combat cohesion of the enemy defensive front had been torn apart everywhere. This created one of the most important prerequisites for further operational exploitation of the battle success. Whether and to what extent this would be possible, however, still depended on the course of the simultaneous battles of the two neighboring armies to the left and right.

### b) The Battles of the Austro-Hungarian 4th and 3rd Army on May 2, 1915.

On the southern flank of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, the 10th Infantry Division of the IX Corps had already occupied the eastern protruding ridge of Height 371 (Bialowka) during the night of May 2 to secure the advance of the Prussian 1st Guard Infantry Division and had advanced to the Repieninif Brook. The inner flanks of the 106th and the subsequently adjoining 3rd Infantry Division of the XIV Corps had also broken into the enemy positions in the early morning hours at and south of Height Wal. The 8th Division gained ground on the main road to Tarnow by 9 a.m.

These initial partial successes achieved during the night and early morning were followed by a general assault in coordination with the 11th Army. The 10th Infantry Division intended to emphasize its attack on the right flank to maintain the connection to the 11th Army, also to avoid the difficult advance over the wide lowland at the confluence of the Repieninif Brook into the Biala east of Gromnik. The high

---

<sup>1)</sup> p. 304.

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

The towering mountain massif east of Golanka was to be brought down by encirclement from the south. The lines of riflemen advancing against the height front 344—305 in the early morning of May 2 were soon forced to halt by flanking fire from both sides, as their own artillery was insufficient for effective support. The capture of height 358 by the 1st Guard Infantry Division also brought no relief. Only after fresh forces were allowed to enter the combat area of the Guard, was it possible by noon to eliminate the enemy flanking northeast of height 358 and now also to successfully carry out the attack in the front against the ridge 344—305. The center of the division slowly worked its way over the Rzepiennik depression towards the heights still held by the enemy, the left wing launched an attack in the Biala valley against the Golanka height, which formed the pivot of the Russian defense on both sides of the Biala and had therefore been the target of the combined artillery fire of the IX Corps from the beginning. A counterattack by the Russians from the height collapsed. Only after the right wing of the 10th Infantry Division had taken possession of the height line 377—370 in the evening did the enemy also give up the Golanka height.

Until the fall of this height, the heavily suffering right wing of the 106th Infantry Division had barely advanced in its attack area immediately north of the Biala. An improvement in the situation only occurred here when the successes achieved to the north by the 10th Infantry Division allowed their attack artillery to intervene flanking from the south bank of the Biala. Between 5 and 6 in the evening, the enemy vacated their positions on the extended ridge between 404 and 430. The left wing of the 106th Infantry Division had only been able to slightly expand its initial success achieved early in the morning at 430 east of Wal. The two Austrian-Hungarian divisions of the XIV Corps deployed to the left up to the Dunajec, the 3rd and 8th Infantry Divisions, were also able, apart from small local advances east of Wal and on the road to Tarnów, to carry no attack forward on May 2. However, since the course of the battle at the XIV Corps on the right bank of the Dunajec depended on the crossing of the bank by the northern adjacent Morgenstern group, the situation there remained unchanged. Opposite the German 47th Reserve Division inserted into the Austrian-Hungarian formations, the enemy had deployed considerable forces in their bridgehead on the west bank of the Dunajec. The division was ordered to early on May 2

## The Battles of the Neighboring Armies on May 2.

Bridgehead position to be crushed by attack from the south and north. The division commander, Lieutenant General v. Besser, intended to advance over the Dunajec as soon as the intervention of the XIV Corps (8th and 3rd Infantry Division) and in the north the advance of the Stoeger-Steiner group would be felt by the enemy. On the morning of May 2, only the bridgehead position and the crossings were initially taken under artillery fire. It was not until the evening that the division commander decided to throw weaker forces from the Stoeger-Steiner group across the river at Glow. The execution was postponed until the night. On the northern flank of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, the Stoeger-Steiner group had already begun the crossing over the Dunajec at Sietzroze and Wyspa the previous night, surprising the enemy. During the day, they expanded their bridgehead there. Further advance was initially refrained from due to strong enemy presence in the front and left flank.

On the southern flank of the battlefield, with the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army, by 8 a.m. the X Army Corps had already succeeded in wresting the stronghold on the northern ridge northeast of Malastow from the enemy. The 11th Infantry Division then participated in an outstanding manner in the battles of the right wing of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division and maintained its position during the further course of the attack in the forested mountains on both sides of the Dragaszow Valley at the same height as the German neighbor. By midnight, they reached the heights of 657 and 522 on both sides of the Przegomina Valley. The 45th Infantry Division, which was adjacent to the south, fought its way up the ridge east of Malastow in fierce battles until the afternoon, while the 2nd Infantry Division captured the height south of Petna. Both divisions continued their advance even at night in the very difficult mountain forest against the Ostra Gora and the height 757 east of the Petna Valley.

### c) Continuation of the Breakthrough Battle on May 3, 1915.

Colonel General v. Mackensen had gathered from all the reports received from the battlefield in the afternoon hours of May 2 the definite impression that the 11th Army had broken the enemy's resistance in its first position as well as along the entire line. By evening, the corps were positioned approximately along the line Dragaszow-Height 507 west of Zamczysko-Heights north of Solol-Heights north of Gorlice-Kamieniec-Forest-Pustki-Mountain-Staszkowa-Rzepien.

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

nif Strzyzowski accepted. The pursuit was initiated everywhere. According to the current results of aerial reconnaissance, significant reinforcements on the Russian side had not yet been brought in, only about two divisions were reported assembling in the Jaslo-Biecz area. Generaloberst v. Mackensen expected that the enemy would do everything possible to renew their resistance in the rear positions the following day by bringing in reinforcements. This naturally resulted in the task of the 11th Army to continue the attack along the entire line. In line with the leading operational thought, the focus had to be increasingly placed on the southern flank to reach the rear of the Russian Carpathian front in the shortest possible way. Therefore, at 7 p.m., it was ordered that the Kneussl Corps be reinforced by the 20th Infantry Division and that General v. Emmich, the commanding general of the X Army Corps, should take over the general command of this group. The left boundary of their advance strip was extended to the Ropa, while the Guard Corps located on the northern flank of the army from Jodlowka Tuchowka was moved slightly further south over point 300 south of Zurova-Radozylce. The "next, approximately jointly reachable line" was designated as: "693—598—488—Kryg—Libusza—Wilczaf—371 Dalaj Krzemienny—Rozembart—364 south of Folw. Przylaski—388—428" (south of Aubazjowa). The 19th Infantry Division, which had been assigned four light and two heavy field howitzer batteries from the Guard Corps, was to reach Dolna as the army reserve by noon on May 3rd.

The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army was ordered to continue its attack in the previous directions the following day. The 10th Infantry Division was expected to maintain the connection to the Guard at height 388 east of Jodlowka Tuchowka and to gain height 428 south of Aubazjowa. To best ensure the cooperation of the inner army wings in continuing the offensive attack, Generaloberst v. Mackensen ordered simultaneously to the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps, the Guard Corps, and the High Command of the 4th Army: "For further advance, the closest connection of the wings of all corps is a prerequisite for victory. Any lagging of a wing can call into question the successes achieved by the neighboring corps and demand unnecessary losses from it." To give the 4th Army a boost in strength for its important task of flank protection without weakening the striking power of the actual breakthrough army, it was instructed to "only exploit the success" as

## Successes of the Emmich Corps.

The left wing had been reinforced by the Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division. The use of cavalry in pursuit seemed more feasible here in the open terrain than in the difficult hilly area in front of the 11th Army's front. They could also quickly reach and interrupt the important Tarnow–Rzeszow railway.

A telegram arriving at 11 p.m. at the Army High Command 11 from the German Supreme Army Command expressed the justified hope that "the army would fulfill the task assigned to it under all circumstances." The course of the battles on the morning of the second day of the attack seemed to fully justify this expectation.

General v. Emmich had ordered the 11th Bavarian and 119th Infantry Divisions to be ready to continue the attack in their positions gained by 7 a.m. the next morning. The 20th Infantry Division was to arrive at the same time with its advance at Szymbark. According to the findings made by early morning on May 3, the main line of resistance of the enemy was assumed to be south of the Ropa on the heights east of Robozie, following the course of the Libuszanka northwards, and on the heights east of Libusza. However, on this side of the lower Libuszanka, he seemed to be holding the high ground around point 320 east of Urwis in a south-facing flank position. General v. Emmich decided to focus the main thrust of his attack initially on this section of the front. To this end, he provided the 119th Infantry Division with the bulk of the heavy artillery as well as an infantry regiment and a field artillery detachment of the 20th Infantry Division. The 119th Infantry Division was ready to attack early. By dawn, it had been possible to organize the units, which had been in considerable disarray the day before. Reconnaissance revealed that the enemy had vacated his position south of the Ropa on the Urwisko mountain during the night and had re-established himself in the maze of houses of Kobylanka and on height 288 in connection with the high ground of 320 northeast of Kobylanka. By 8 a.m., the weather had worsened again, with light rain setting in, making movements in the wooded mountainous terrain even more difficult. In addition, large parts of the battlefield south of the Ropa were enveloped in the dense heavy smoke of burning oil wells east of Gorlice. An impenetrable veil lay over the battlefield. From time to time, the noise of artillery fire flared up, only to quickly subside again. The difficult development of the division's attack from the forest area

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

Once east of Gorlice had been set in motion, the enemy resistance in the house groups of Kobylanka quickly weakened. By 11:00 a.m., the heights around point 288 at the northern edge of Kobylanka were reached. The forward movement was initially continued to the road Kryg-Libusza. The main attack target of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division was the forest heights on both sides of point 488 west of Rozdziele. The right wing was to initially take possession of the saddle 542 south of Wapienne and the ridge stretching northwest from there, encircling the upper Libuszanka to the south. Given the strongly prepared position of the enemy, thorough reconnaissance and artillery preparation of the attack seemed necessary. It was noon before the troops, still exhausted from the previous day, had completed their deployments in the very rugged mountainous terrain and reliable communications and command connections were established. The 20th Infantry Division, following in reserve, reached the road to Gorlice around noon with the beginning of Nowydwor.

General v. François intended, in continuing the attack on May 3, to emphasize the right wing of his XXXII Reserve Corps, where the Ropa lowland promised rapid advancement. At the same time, he considered a right turn into a more eastward-directed front. However, the 82nd Reserve Division on the left wing advanced at 6:00 a.m., an hour earlier than the 82nd. Almost without combat, it reached the ridge 296–440 west of Kwiatonowice by 7:45 a.m., and soon after 9:00 a.m. the height 422 south of this village. From here, the division executed the ordered right turn, with its right wing turning against the strongly fortified and entrenched height of Wilczaf. Soon, a fierce firefight erupted along the entire line, as the enemy had also set up new defenses on the heights east of the stream of Strzeszyn. In the 82nd Reserve Division, the weak part of the outermost right wing had crossed the Ropa early at G. St. Zagorzany. They occupied the height east of H. S. north of Urywie by 10:45 a.m. Otherwise, the deployment of the division's right wing in the wide open and completely dominated Ropa lowland by enemy artillery from Wilczaf was only slow and hesitant. The left wing also gained ground only slowly in the development against the enemy-occupied heights from Kleczamy until noon. Opposite the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps

## Ambitious Goals for the 11th Army.

The enemy had abandoned the Mojszcznica section during the night and early morning of May 3rd. The divisions then began their pursuit at 6 a.m. They encountered no significant resistance. A Russian column was observed retreating from Bugaj to Rozembark. According to other reports, the enemy was also expected to abandon their further eastern positions. The commanding general, Field Marshal Lieutenant v. Arz, therefore believed that his corps could set a very distant goal, the Olszynta, which was agreed upon by the army command and the general command of the neighboring guard corps. By midday, the pursuing Austro-Hungarian infantry was already approaching the line Dzial Krzemienny (371)—Rozembark.

General Freiherr v. Plettenberg had also anticipated the further retreat of the enemy on May 3rd and ordered the continuation of the pursuit for the guard corps at 6 a.m. They advanced briskly in the morning. The commanding general therefore believed by 11 a.m. that it would also be possible for his corps to reach the Olszynta today. A counterattack by the enemy from the Lipie Heights (425) against the middle of the 2nd Guard Infantry Division failed. However, the enemy seemed determined to offer stubborn resistance here. The division received the order at noon to attack the Lipie Heights. In the 1st Guard Infantry Division, the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade, deployed in the front line, attacked the high ground west of the Olszynta section Olszyny—W. H. Todlowka Tuchowka around midday.

The 11th Army Command concluded from the favorable news and reports received during the morning that there was hardly any expectation of uniform resistance from the enemy in one of the prepared rear positions. By midday, the pursuit columns of the army corps had often reached the goals designated in the army order for May 3rd. Thus, Generaloberst v. Mackensen believed he could significantly expand the day's tasks. At 12 p.m., the following army order was issued:

"The previous successful advance of the attack makes it possible to give the army corps the following general line to reach as soon as possible today: 569 west of Folusz—514 Cieklin—Pagorzyna—Hartlowa—Kumowa—Smeczyna—Olszynta-Bach—Szczerezyn—Radwicz. For tomorrow, the crossing over the Wisloka in the Imbrów—Kolaczyce area is planned, for which all preparations are to be made."

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

Anticipated crossing routes: Corps Emmich near and south of Imigroß, XXXXI Reserve Corps in the area of Dsjek—Dembowiec, VI Army Corps at Jaslo, Guard between Jaslo and Kolaczyce. The 19th Infantry Division as Army Reserve will reach the area of Turza, Rzepiennit Biskup, and Rzepiennik Strzyzowski today.

In the early afternoon hours, this order reached the general commands. By the time the necessary orders reached the troops, the situation had changed almost everywhere from what the leadership had expected.

General v. Emmich instructed the 11th Bavarian Division at 3:30 p.m. to first secure the right flank along the approximate line Wapienne—Bednarka, while the 119th Infantry Division was to secure possession of the high ground Cieklin—Walachy—"to Lipinki." This order no longer reached the combat group pushed forward as flank protection at the southern foot of the division in the extraordinarily difficult to traverse mountain forest south of Mecina Wk. The connection was severed here. By evening, this combat group worked its way to height 542 south of Wapienne without encountering the enemy. Security was advanced against the Przegomina Valley and the Korsun Ridge. Further north, the enemy had retreated before the main forces of the division to the Libuszanka. As they reached the outskirts of Mecina Wk. and the area around point 488 in the afternoon, they were met with heavy artillery fire. Russian infantry was identified in strong positions on the steep ridge northeast of Wapienne, particularly on the fortified Bergnasz 577 east of the sulfur bath, and on the heights east of Rodziele. Only parts of the light artillery could accompany the infantry's advance due to terrain difficulties. Without sufficient artillery support, however, the attack on these positions could not be expected from the troops, who were completely exhausted by the arduous marches on the worst roads; they remained in the positions reached by the division commander's orders. The right wing of the 119th Infantry Division had advanced beyond height 381 east of Kryg in the early afternoon hours under light pursuit fighting. Its left wing approached Libuza. Finding no resistance, the regiments could advance over the road Kryg—Libuza and up to height 307 east of this place. Then they too came under heavy enemy artillery fire. The advance of the right combat group of the division, which at Rodziele connected with the 11th Bavarian

## Stubborn Battles of the 11th Army.

The infantry division found itself halted at the local stream section for the same reasons as its neighbor. The left pursuit group, however, advanced without encountering resistance, far ahead of all neighbors, reaching "to Lipniki" by 11 p.m. despite very poor roads. Advanced units even occupied the Walachy Heights and the eastern edge of the Debina Forest. Opposite them, the enemy held Dzielec and Radosc on the Bednarka.

Thus, the right wing of the army was able to achieve the daily objectives set by the command, at least partially, while the neighboring XXXXI Reserve Corps on the left fell significantly behind its own goals. Here, the enemy's heavily fortified positions on both sides of the Ropa formed a formidable barrier to the pursuit. The Wilczaf proved to be a particularly strong bastion. The fortified lines rose in five tiers to the summit of this mountain mass. From its Ropa bank, the height suddenly flanked its southern front effectively. Only a well-prepared attack, supported by extensive artillery, promised success. However, due to the road conditions, the heavy artillery could only gradually engage in the battle during the afternoon. Until then, the fight against the enemy was almost exclusively the responsibility of the field artillery. On the Wilczaf and the heights near Korczyn, the enemy had excellent artillery observation opportunities. Thus, the attacking German infantry suffered greatly under the concentrated defensive fire. Nevertheless, the attack made visible progress during the afternoon. By 3 p.m., the battle line of both divisions had worked its way up to the stream bed west of the Wilczaf. As the battle progressed, the increased artillery effect gradually allowed them to climb section by section up the slopes leading to the Wilczaf. Also, from the south, the attacking ring tightened more and more around the summit of the mountain. A Russian counterattack in the Ropa Valley failed to break it. Towards evening, the German infantry rallied for an assault on the last enemy positions. On the summit, a fierce bayonet fight ensued. The inner flanks of both divisions joined hands in victory. However, the forces were no longer sufficient to exploit the success achieved in the hard-fought battle. South of the Ropa, the attack of the right wing of the 82nd Reserve Division on Libuza could not be carried out on the evening of May 3rd. It was expected that the capture of the Wilczaf would also affect the battle situation south of the river the next morning. As the 81st Reserve Division

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

had to lay down their attack against the Wilczak, so their weaker left wing could not expand its rapid initial successes achieved in the morning.

The advance of the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps also encountered significantly greater difficulties on the afternoon of May 3 than the leadership had assumed. Although the line 365 north of Strzeszyn—Rozembart was reached without significant resistance, it soon became apparent that the enemy, in connection with their position on the Wilczak, had also set up new defenses on the heights southwest of Binarowa and north of Raclawice. According to prisoner statements, the Russian XXVII Corps was supposed to have been brought forward for reception. After that, the deployment of fresh troops was to be expected. The 12th Infantry Division engaged in combat at 5 p.m. in the line Naphtha—Brunnen northeast of Strzeszyn—"to Binarowa." Further north, the 39th Infantry Division probed the enemy positions. As the Russians deployed strong artillery, ground was gained only slowly. Only at the extreme northern flank of the 39th Division, where their main forces were deployed to maintain the connection with the Guard, was a local success achieved against the plateau north of Raclawice at 8 p.m. Otherwise, the day ended without the VI Corps' attack being carried out.

The battles at the Guard Corps in the afternoon and evening bore a similar character to those at the XXXXI Reserve Corps. The attack of the 2nd Guard Infantry Division, which began at 3 p.m. against the heavily occupied Lipie Heights by the enemy, gained ground only slowly. Only after the artillery, which had also remained behind the infantry here, had arrived and engaged in the battle, was it possible late in the evening to take possession of the stubbornly defended positions of Lipie and the height 421 to the east. In the attack sector of the 1st Guard Infantry Division, the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade reached the Olszynka section by 3 p.m. Their further advance encountered fierce resistance from the enemy, who had entrenched themselves on the heights east of the stream. Here too, the battle was decided only in the evening in favor of the German infantry. In the attack on the elevated part of Olszyn, the inner flanks of both Guard Divisions joined forces. Due to the uncertainty about the combat situation with the allied forces to the left, the 2nd Guard Infantry Brigade was also held back behind the left wing.

The pursuit of the 11th Army on May 3 was again rich in prisoners and war booty, having been in the afternoon

## Course of May 3 with the Neighboring Armies.

and evening had not yet achieved the territorial gain that the leadership had hoped for. Despite heavy losses, the enemy had managed to halt the pursuit along the entire line.

The course of events with the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army corresponded even less to expectations. Decisive successes were only granted to its southern wing, the IX Corps. This was tasked with taking possession of the high ground of Brzanka-Dobrotyn. The 10th Infantry Division advanced in the morning almost unmolested by the enemy over Podolowka Tuchowka to the road to Olszyn and further north to the Rofstowka ground. Parts of its right wing, turning left, then moved westward from the south, losing connection with the left wing of the Guard Corps. Advance troops reached Dobrotyn late in the evening. Opposite the 106th Infantry Division north of the Biala, the enemy had evacuated its strong positions east of the Chojnik stream during the night and morning of May 3 and had retreated to the heights southwest and west of Tuchow. The advancing division launched a comprehensive attack. Its left wing was the first to succeed, penetrating the Russian positions at height 331 near Meszyna to the east around 2 p.m. In the evening, the division stood on the contested heights of the western Biala bank. The army commander had made the main part of his reserves available to the IX Corps.

Under the impact of this successful advance, the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian XIV Corps, the 3rd Infantry Division, which had made only slight local progress in the forest northeast of Wal at dawn, was able to advance to W. h. Brzezie by evening. The fighting continued here into the night. With the neighboring 8th Infantry Division on the left, the day passed without decision. Their assault troops only approached the vicinity of the enemy positions in the evening. On the army front, the Russians, under the cover of the nightly river crossing by parts of the German 47th Reserve Division, stubbornly maintained their bridgehead positions on the west bank. The division then brought more forces across the river and repelled enemy troop counterattacks in the evening. The Stoeger-Steiner group was unable to expand its bridgehead beyond the Biala.

To the right of the breakthrough army, the X Corps of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army continued its advance on both sides of the

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

Przegonina Valley and in the forest area of Ostra Gora successfully continued. By 11 a.m., this entire ridge was occupied. The Russians retreated eastward to the Kornub and Magora ridges without offering significant resistance. The army leader, General v. Boroevic, ordered his left wing, in coordination with the advance of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division, to move forward on the Magora ridge and simultaneously in the Przegonina Valley towards Bartne, to further roll up the enemy front to the east.

### d) The Completion of the Breakthrough.

Despite the not entirely satisfactory progress that the pursuit seemed to have made on the afternoon of May 3, Generaloberst v. Mackensen steadfastly adhered to the goal he had set. In his army order issued at 6 p.m., he described it as the task for the following day to "keep the enemy in retreat and, if possible, force the crossing of the Wisloka before new enemy forces are deployed." It was known that the imminent intervention of the III Caucasian Army Corps, advancing from the area south of Przemysl, was expected. The commander-in-chief therefore moved his army troops to the right against the line Zmigrod—Wisloka bend south of Kolaczice. The begun right envelopment of the 11th Army was to be continued simultaneously.

In front of the Emmich Corps, the enemy had evacuated his positions at Wapienne and north of Bednarka during the night. Early in the morning, aircraft had detected the departure of enemy columns from Krempna towards Zmigrod. The enemy thus apparently withdrew parts of his Carpathian front under the flank pressure exerted by the Emmich Corps. Therefore, General v. Emmich decided to employ the fresh 20th Infantry Division to quickly seize the Wisloka crossing at Zmigrod and block the valley road there. The 11th Bavarian Infantry Division was to clear the way for this new deployment by advancing through Bodringen to the Wisloka; the 119th Infantry Division secured the northeast. The army command ordered the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army to also advance with its left wing against the upper Wisloka. Against the advance of the Emmich Corps, the enemy apparently brought fresh forces from Dembowiec to the southwest. The 11th Bavarian Infantry Division, following the road from Bednarka, encountered the enemy in a strong position at Wola Cieklińska around noon. In the afternoon, a heavy frontal battle developed here.

## The Enemy Retreats to the Wisłoka.

When the encirclement of the enemy from the south through the parts of the division advanced on Froliż in the mountains had taken effect, the decision fell at 6 p.m. In disarray, the enemy retreated northeast to the Wisłoka. Meanwhile, the 119th Infantry Division had swung left to cover the advance of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division northward and had thrown itself against the enemy advancing on the Bavarians' flank. It succumbed to their assault at 4 p.m. However, the Russians then launched a powerful counterattack and temporarily broke through the lines of the 119th Infantry Division. Eventually, they were also pushed back to the northeast here.

The combat connection to the XXXXIst Reserve Corps, which was adjacent to the Emmich Corps to the north, had been severed at the beginning of the day. The enemy had also retreated in front of this corps. The pursuit over Pagoreź–Harlfowa was delayed, particularly by the bridge construction over the Ropa. The army command had therefore pointed out the need for close cooperation among the five divisions operating south of the Ropa and the necessity to relieve the Emmich Corps by taking over flank protection soon. The divisions of the XXXXIst Reserve Corps encountered the enemy in the forested hills west of Pagoreź–Harlfowa in the afternoon. In fierce fighting, the 82nd Reserve Division only managed to push them back to Dobrinica by 9 p.m. and entered the village that night. However, the 81st Reserve Division was unable to break through. Parts of it remained tied down south of Kunowa due to the difficult combat situation at the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps to protect the left flank.

This corps was embroiled in heavy fighting north of the Ropa. Even freshly deployed forces threw themselves against it in fierce counterattacks. Nevertheless, the 12th Infantry Division managed to push the Russians back from the heights north of Biecz to beyond the Olszówka directly north of the Ropa and then took the heights south of Siepietnica at 5 p.m. The Hungarians of the 39th Infantry Division threw the enemy standing on the heights west of Gwoźnica in another attack at 6 p.m., but were no longer able to reach Olszów.

North of the Olszówka, east of Olszyny, and north of Ołpiny, on the left flank of the Guard Corps with the 1st Guard Infantry Division, the 2nd Guard Infantry Brigade in the front line, succeeded in repelling the enemy in the early afternoon hours. Under the

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

Facing an encirclement from the north, the enemy retreated from Olpiny to Szerzyny at 4 p.m. Soon after, their resistance also collapsed on the heights south of Olpiny against the 2nd Guard Infantry Division. In the pursuit, the Guard Corps reached the eastern bank heights of the Olpinka stream. The left wing had to remain withdrawn over Radoszyce against the Olszaz Mountain, as the Austrians were again pushed back from there.

Otherwise, the enemy also retreated against the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army after evading over Tuchow to the ridge line Butowina—Gorskie and had also withdrawn their front between Biala and Dunajec to the same level. The Austrians had followed over the Biala, their advance aimed east of the Dunajec towards Tarnow, to pave the way east for the troops of the Dunajec front. Generaloberst v. Mackensen ordered the 4th Army in the afternoon to join the rightward bend of the 11th Army with the two army corps of its right wing (IX and XIV) in an easterly direction towards Brzozów—Pilzno and to leave the cover against the north to the remaining parts of the 4th Army alone. The further advance of this army had to proceed in a deep left echelon, as the Russian front still held at the lower Dunajec.

Given this situation of the 4th Army, it was foreseeable that especially with the rightward bend of the 11th Army, the deployment of the army reserve, the 19th Infantry Division, on the northern wing of the 11th Army would soon become necessary. The army command therefore ordered the assembly of the advancing 56th Infantry Division behind the left army wing at Zaczliczyn.

The northern wing of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army was already ascending the Magora in the morning and had swung right in connection with the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division to gain the Wisłoka below Rzepnua. By evening, the ridge height of the Magora ridge was reached, and they stood before Bartne in combat.

Even with the deployment of fresh forces, the enemy again failed to halt the advance of the right German army wing. The thrust of the Gemünd Corps had also thrown them out of their third position. Despite the late hour, Major General v. Kneussl persisted in his intention to push through to the Wisłoka immediately. At 7 p.m., he ordered parts of his division to bypass Gamolkieti during the night to block the Wisłoka valley above Smigrod. By the morning of May 5, the Wisłoka was reached up to Smigrod. The valley road was in German hands. Thus, the tip of the attack was

parts of the Emmich Corps penetrated deeply through the front of the Russian 3rd Army and now stood between the mountain front and the part of the Russian 3rd Army protecting the connection of this front. The enemy also retreated further eastwards from Bartne in the early morning hours before the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army. The breach in the Russian front achieved on May 2nd was now expanded at this point to a full breakthrough. For its operational impact, the advancing 20th Infantry Division on the Gorlice—Zmigrod road was to drive the wedge further with fresh forces.

Against the front of the 119th Infantry Division, which secured the northern flank, the Russians launched heavy attacks; they were unsuccessful. The division was to be followed up as soon as the XXXXI Reserve Corps could take over flank protection. General v. Francois had his corps advance as early as 4 a.m. to relieve the Emmich Corps of concern for its left flank as soon as possible. However, in the forested mountains, the advance, particularly the artillery, encountered significant route difficulties. Thus, the 82nd Reserve Division could only connect with the 119th Infantry Division in the morning and continue the attack against Dobicina. The 81st Reserve Division made no progress at Harlkow. The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps sought to connect with this division south of the Ropa, while north of the Ropa it encountered an enemy position between the river and Baczał Dl. The Guard Corps initially faced no stronger enemy. Aircraft observed retreating movements from Jaslo and Kolaczyce east of the Wisłoka in a southern and northeastern direction at 10:30 a.m. Therefore, Generaloberst v. Mackensen urged his army corps to press forward vigorously.

### e) The Enemy.

On May 1st, the Russian 3rd Army faced the attack front of Generaloberst v. Mackensen over a width of 80 km from the Vistula to west of Zmigrod with six infantry and reserve divisions and five Landwehr brigades, with 1½ reserve divisions west of Jaslo and near Zmigrod as reserves, and five cavalry divisions spread across the entire line.

By the evening of May 1st, the army commander, the former Bulgarian General Radko Dimitriew, had no doubt that a strong attack against the western front of his army was imminent. Therefore, in the early morning of May 2nd, he assigned parts of the 63rd and 81st Re-

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

serve Division. The 63rd Reserve Division was brought forward for the local counterattack on Gorlice. A counterattack on a broad front was intended only after the arrival of the III Caucasian Corps, which was advancing from the area south of Przemysl. To support the front threatened at the lower Dunajec, the 2nd Composite Cossack Division and an infantry regiment of the XXXI Corps were brought in from the northern Vistula bank.

The reserves sent to support the X Corps were unable to stop its rapid collapse. It retreated to the second position. This created a gap between this corps and the still-standing IX Corps, which was to be closed by marching two infantry regiments and about 1½ cavalry divisions south of the Brzanka mountain range. However, these forces were not sufficient. The northern flank of the X Corps remained threatened. Therefore, another cavalry division was sent from Krosno to help. Meanwhile, on May 3, setbacks also occurred further north in front of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army. The 70th Reserve Division of the IX Corps was thrown back to Tuchow in full disarray, and the 5th Infantry Division also retreated to the east bank of the Dunajec. On the afternoon of May 3, the High Command of the 3rd Army no longer trusted the combat troops of the IX and X Corps on either side of the large forest zone to have any resistance power. It no longer hoped for salvation from the deployment of the III Caucasian Corps and urged the army south of the Ropa to hold out on the afternoon of May 3, to enable the planned deployment of the relieving corps. This did not succeed. On May 3, once again defeated, this front retreated to the third position.

For May 4, General Radko Dimitrijew subordinated the defeated X Corps to the commanding general of the advancing III Caucasian Corps. This new combat group was to counterattack against the line Olszyny–Riecz–Wola Cieklińska and, leaning on the left wing at the Magora, re-establish the connection with Gorlice. This attempt also failed. The forces deployed from the northern flank of the counterattack were thrown back by Prussian Guard Corps to the Wisłoka. The 52nd Infantry Division, brought forward by the III Caucasian Corps from Jasło to Olszyna, could no longer compensate for the setbacks suffered by the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps. The 21st Infantry Division of the III Caucasian Corps was to publicly engage in battle with the 9th Infantry Division of the X Corps on the afternoon of May 4 against the

## The Operational Impact of the Breakthrough at Gorlice

Korps Emmich intervened. But it too was caught up in the retreat to the northeast towards the Wisłoka.

All units deployed against the German 11th Army from May 2 to 4 suffered such heavy losses that the III Caucasian Corps could only cover the retreat. Under the pressure of this situation, the Russian 3rd Army also had to initiate the withdrawal of the IX Corps into the line Wisłoka-Knee north of Pilzno—Dunajec estuary. In the Carpathians, the northernmost Corps (XXIV) was also withdrawn. The intention to close the torn defensive front forward of the Wisłoka at Samokłeski failed. Between the mountain front and the southern flank of the III Caucasian Corps, which had retreated far north to Zmigrod, a wide gap yawned.

### 3. The Operational Impact of the Breakthrough at Gorlice

from May 5 to 10, 1915.

Maps 16 and 17.

#### a) Advance to the Jasiotka on May 5 and 6, 1915.

At Korps Emmich, around noon, the 20th Infantry Division crossed the intact bridge at Zmigrod over the Wisłoka as the new spearhead of the 11th Army's attack wedge. The division was further directed towards Bieczno, with the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division following it towards Dukla. The 119th Infantry Division was to be concentrated at Zmigrod to protect against the enemy who had retreated further north to the bank of the Wisłoka. On both sides of the Popa, however, the Russians still held a bridgehead west of the Wisłoka around Jaslo. The XXXXI Reserve Corps and the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps launched an attack against this. To maintain the connection to the advance of the Guard Corps, the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army had pushed its southern flank forward to the Wiszniawa Heights.

Based on this situation, the Austro-Hungarian High Command issued the order to the 11th Army in the afternoon of the 1st, "to continue with a reinforced northern flank and advance in the general line Dukla—Jasło—Krosno—Strzyzow," with protection to the north by the 4th Army. The Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army was to advance its left flank over Krempna to Tylawa and otherwise try to hold the enemy in the mountains through a general attack, to effectively support the thrust of the 11th Army along the mountains. According to the general report by H. Macheinsk, his corps were assigned their tasks. Korps Emmich was also to continue as soon as possible from the

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

To block roads leading north through the mountains. The XXXX1 Reserve Corps was to align with it as soon as possible. The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps advanced over Jaslo towards Krosno. The Guard Corps was initially to advance north of the Jasiołka towards Moderowka and move the 19th Infantry Division under its command in stages via Kolaczyce.

From the Emmich Corps, the 20th Infantry Division reached the Jasiołka at Wietrzno by 8 PM in a vigorous advance. North of Dula, the valley road was blocked. The 11th Bavarian Infantry Division was positioned further west in the evening opposite the Carpathian exit at Glosce in a blocking position, secured to the north by the 119th Infantry Division. The enemy, retreating eastward within the mountains under this threatening pressure from the Emmich Corps, was followed by the northern wing of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army up to Krempna. Here, the 21st Infantry Division, now freed by the army's sharp right turn, was to be deployed.

While the enemy could no longer hold at the upper Wisłoka, he still tenaciously maintained his bridgehead around Jaslo. The XXXX1 Reserve Corps sought to envelop the enemy from the south here. The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps also aimed to encircle the particularly strong enemy position south of its 12th Division, moving the Hungarian 39th Infantry Division across to the southern bank of the Ropa during the night. The fighting continued in the darkness. Further north, south of Kolaczyce, the Russians also sought to hold their ground on this side of the Wisłoka. The sharply southward-drawn Guard Corps only encountered this enemy in the afternoon. In the confusing mountainous terrain, it could not advance to the river valley by evening. The 19th Infantry Division was moved up behind the left wing of the corps.

As a result of the battle, by the evening of May 5th, the 11th Army was split into two unequal groups east and west of the Wisłoka. Generaloberst v. Mackensen, to ensure the cooperation of all parts in further operations, instructed General v. Emmich at 10 PM to temporarily remain with his advanced divisions in the blocking position and only reconnoiter east of the Jasiołka towards the Rymanow—Krosno line. Shortly before midnight, however, the army command received instructions from the Austro-Hungarian military leadership that it was now of utmost importance for the success of the attack on the Carpathian crossings of the Russian 3rd Army and for the immediate impact against the retreating enemy Wisłoka front.

## Corps Emmich Advances over the Wisłoka on May 5th.

The advance of Corps Emmich continued to the road Rymanow—Miejscie Piastowe, and the XXXX1 Reserve Corps was to cross the Wisłoka south of Jaslo. Recognizing the growing operational significance of the breakthrough, the Austro-Hungarian military command had already instructed its 2nd Army to join the advance of the 3rd Army. However, Generaloberst v. Mackensen initially did not issue any modifying orders for Corps Emmich, as he considered further advancement possible only if stronger forces of the army crossed the Wisłoka and if the reconnaissance already underway showed that the enemy was also withdrawing further east of Jaslo than from Corps Emmich. By evening, Russian marching columns retreating from Jaslo were observed on both sides of the Sajfolka from Kolaczice to Frystat.

The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army had pushed its connecting wing beyond the Wisznova Heights towards the Wisłoka. East of the Biala, the enemy continued to swing back its front on May 5th under the cover of the Gorklize Heights in front of the IX and the right wing of the XIV Corps. Reconnaissance units were deployed against the Wisłoka line Brzozów—Pilzno. The divisions pursuing northwards reached the line Lubcza—Zalasowa. To also bring down the Gorklize Heights, forces from the area between Biala and Dunajec were to be brought in. The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army was to hold its forces south of the Tarnow—Pilzno—Dębica road and create an opportunity for strong cavalry action with its northern wing.

General v. Emmich received the order only on May 6th at 11:15 a.m. to continue his advance on Rymanow at the foot of the Carpathians, as soon as parts of the XXXX1 Reserve Corps had crossed the Wisłoka. For this advance, the 11th Bavarian and the 20th Infantry Division were not considered due to the still unclear situation in the forested mountains. Since the morning, scattered troops of the Russian 48th and 49th Infantry Divisions (XXIV Corps) had been advancing against their front from the mountains. Thus, initially only the 119th Infantry Division, which was further back, began the forward movement north of Smigrod, after the foremost marching columns of the XXXX1 Reserve Corps appeared advancing over Dembowiec east of the Wisłoka by mid-morning. The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps was also in the process of crossing over Jaslo by noon after the enemy's withdrawal. The Guard Corps had already reached the river by 7 a.m. and crossed it, turning left, ahead of the 19th Infantry Division.

Before the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, the enemy had vacated the Gorklize Heights and Tarnow during the night.

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

IX and XIV Corps followed the Wisloka route Butkowa—Pilzno. In front of the German 47th Reserve Division, the enemy had retreated to the high positions around Ligtagora, north of Tarnow. Parts of the division then moved north at noon to assist the Stöger-Steiner group.

The pursuit order issued at noon by Generaloberst v. Mackensen directed the Emmich Corps towards Rymanow, the XXXXI Reserve Corps to cover the left flank of the decisive wing at Miejscie Piastowe, the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps towards Krosno; the Guard Corps, which the 19th Infantry Division was to follow on the left, was directed to the Wislok below Orzyzon.

The Emmich Corps did not reach the target of Rymanow that day. The 119th Infantry Division, which had been set in motion, found itself compelled in the evening, despite strong fatigue, to support a detachment of the 20th Infantry Division left behind as a rear guard at Wietrzno, which still had to hold the enemy in a strong position on the eastern bank of the Jasiolka. The division was deployed comprehensively against this enemy from the south during the night, in order to take possession of the heights of the eastern bank as soon as possible and to be able to deploy long-range guns against the enemy's retreat route to Rymanow. The XXXXI Reserve Corps reached the Jasiolka at Zrecin in the evening with the 81st Reserve Division, the 82nd Reserve Division followed on the march route. The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps had been ordered by Generaloberst v. Mackensen to immediately continue the march over Jedlicze to Krosno after crossing the river at Jaslo. However, the corps did not reach the Jasiolka. Only cavalry was sent to Krosno. The Guard Corps encountered fighting on the heights of the eastern bank of the Wisloka in the evening after crossing the river. Parts of the 19th Infantry Division crossed the river southwest of Kolaczyce and then turned north.

The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army also reached the Wisloka further north at Brzostek with the IX Corps at noon. The enemy still held on the eastern bank. The left wing of the corps pushed back strong enemy cavalry on the eastern bank towards Brzostek. The XIV Corps, directed towards Pilzno, was unable to break the resistance of enemy rearguards west of Leki and Pogorska Wola. In front of the German 47th Reserve Division, the enemy continued to retreat under the influence of the encirclement of Tarnow, but still held the heights southwest of Ligtagora. The 11th Cavalry Division, positioned further north, did not reach its target Dabrowa.

## The 11th Army Crosses the Wisłoka on May 6.

The Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army followed from the Dukla Pass towards Szklary and Tylawa, pursuing the enemy retreating northward. West of Tylawa, parts of its X Corps scattered enemy forces. Thus, the Russian units still in the Carpathians before Emmich's Corps were surrounded on three sides.

Aerial reconnaissance, favored by the weather, identified a large-scale retreat across the enemy's entire front. Numerous marching columns moved in the morning through and east of Krosno towards the northeast and from Jaslo and Kolaczyce towards the east. Columns also converged on Frystak and Wisłok, forming a large, cohesive march movement over Strzyzow towards Rzeszów. Numerous transport trains and marching columns were observed moving from Debica towards the east and north. In the afternoon, a strong marching column moved from Pilzno to Debica. Cavalry units were withdrawn from Dabrowa to the northeast. Persistent resistance from the enemy at the lower Wisłok and upper Wisłok was therefore hardly to be expected. Generaloberst v. Mackensen thus considered advancing partly beyond the Wisłok in his evening pursuit order. Emmich's Corps was to secure the Wisłok crossing at Besko, blocking the valley roads leading to Dukla and Rymanow. The XXXX.I Reserve Corps was to aim for the line Miejsce Piastowe—Haczow, with the 82nd Reserve Division held as army reserve at Zrecin. The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps was to cross the Wisłok at Krosno, the Guard Corps at and south of Lacki, and then reach the heights at and west of the Korczyna—Wisłoka road, with the 19th Infantry Division gaining connection over Frystak.

The right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army (IX Corps) aimed to force the crossing over the Wisłoka west and south of Brzozów. The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army intended to execute a sharp right turn, with the German Beskiden Corps, engaged in frontal combat on the Carpathian ridge at the Osława, forming the pivot: VII Corps on Bukowsko, XVII Corps, which had descended from the Dukla Pass, on Orzechowno, the 1st Cavalry Division advancing against the railway road leading to Sanok, X Corps and 3rd Cavalry Division to join the 11th Army south of Besko. The enemy was now also in motion at the junction of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd and 2nd Armies at the Lupkow Pass.

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

Transport and departure movements were detected from there in the Oslawa Valley heading north.

The realization of the first objective set by General v. Falkenhayn for the breakthrough operation, "to make the Russian Carpathian front west of the Lupkow Pass untenable," was thus approaching. The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army also had to prepare for an immediate follow-up attack.

b) Advance to the Wisłok on May 7, 1915.

On the left wing of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army, the 45th Infantry Division of the X Corps attacked further parts of the Russian 48th Infantry Division, which had made a front again southwest of Dulla, in the early morning of May 7 and dispersed them by noon. Further east, the 4th Cavalry Division, pursuing the enemy already fleeing from the mountains, captured Rymanow at 1:30 p.m. The remnants of the Russian XXIV Corps were thus completely encircled. The area south of Rymanow was free of Russian troops according to intercepted radio messages. In the march towards the upper Wisłok, the foremost parts of the XVII Corps of the X Corps reached the area of Deszno. The center and right army wings still encountered strong resistance.

The 119th Infantry Division of the Emmich Corps had pushed the enemy back to the northeast at Wietrzno in the early morning hours. However, it then encountered fierce resistance before Iwonicz, which was only overcome in the afternoon. While their cavalry sought to block the road from Rymanow to the north, the division itself aimed for this place. This created a gap between it and the 20th Infantry Division still tied down at Dulla. General v. Emmich therefore moved the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division behind the 20th Infantry Division to the east and positioned it at Wietrzno. The 119th Infantry Division was able to extend beyond Rymanow and secure the Wisłok crossing at Besko. This ensured the junction of the two allied armies operating within the mountains and on its northern edge. During the day, as a result of this cooperation, the remnants of the Russian 48th Infantry Division surrendered to the 20th Infantry Division<sup>1</sup>. Their commander, General Kornilow, escaped into the mountains and was later captured.

General v. Francois intended to move the XXXXI Reserve Corps over Mejsce Piastowe to gain the high ground east of Haczow

---

1) Only 8 battalions and 14 guns were saved.

## The Attack Section of the Emmich Corps Reaches the Wisłok.

to advance over the Wisłok. The 81st Reserve Division had followed the retreating enemy to the east bank of the Jasiołka at 10<sup>00</sup> in the morning. Their advance was halted at 12<sup>00</sup> noon in Mejsice Piastowe by heavy enemy artillery fire. Contrary to the division's intention to continue the advance only after nightfall, General v. Francois ordered at 4<sup>15</sup> in the afternoon to push beyond the Wisłok to Jabłonica Polska today. However, it was no longer possible to drive back the enemy still standing on this side of the Wisłok. The division had to be prepared for an attack on Mejsice Piastowe, the 82nd Reserve Division, which General v. Francois had meanwhile made available again, further north for the following day.

The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps was advancing on Krosno against the enemy at 3<sup>00</sup> in the afternoon, who stood on both sides of Jedlicze behind the Jasiołka. Soon after, the news came that Krosno was already occupied by Hungarian cavalry and cyclists of the 81st Reserve Division. Nevertheless, the advance of the VI Corps was further delayed because the 12th Infantry Division was held up by a flanking position of the enemy at Potok and strong parts of the southern 39th Infantry Division were withdrawn there. Only in the early night hours could the 39th Division pass through Krosno. The occupied eastern heights were secured. The 12th Division remained at Potok. The Guard Corps had crossed the Wisłok early in the morning at and north of Jasło, the 19th Infantry Division at Kolaczyce with the last parts. The 2nd Guard Infantry Division, advancing eastwards on both sides of the main road, was repeatedly confronted by the enemy. Only after nightfall was it possible to penetrate the enemy positions west of Moderowka, but further advance beyond that was not achieved. The 1st Guard Infantry Division and the 19th Infantry Division also advanced only laboriously in the section-rich mountainous terrain further north against enemy resistance.

On the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, the IX Corps was engaged in combat at Butowa, Brzozów, and Ramenica OI.; the army reserve, Brigade Szende, was inserted in the middle. Parts of the 106th Infantry Division, intended to move northwards to Bielowy, sought to facilitate the advance of the XIV Corps. This corps was to attack southwest of Leżajsk and northwards on both sides of the railway. The left echeloned German 47th Reserve Division was still held south of Liguszno and east of Dabrowa. Thus, the left wing of the army was tied down at the lower Dunajec, while the right wing continued to stretch further east. At 9<sup>00</sup> in the morning, the army-

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

The IX Corps was given Fryštat and Chełm, the XIV Corps the line Kamieniec—Debica—Jasło—Zabłka Str. as their target. Before this, an advance to the north was supposed to free the left wing of the army from the lower Dunajec. Generaloberst v. Mackensen objected to this intention of the 4th Army, as the 11th Army could not advance its left wing further east without danger. The Austro-Hungarian military command agreed with his view. Ruthless advancement of all parts into the assigned areas to the east was necessary. The connection to the 11th Army was thus maintained; even towards midnight, the Austro-Hungarian 10th Division, together with the German 19th Infantry Division, pushed eastwards on the ridge east of Butowa. Fighting continued at night at Opatowica, Brzozów, and Gorzyczyna. Progress was made against Pilzno on both banks of the Wisłoka from the south and west. The situation on the left wing of the army changed little. To ensure unified action here, the German 47th Reserve Division, the Stoeger-Steiner Group, as well as the 11th and 2nd Cavalry Divisions were consolidated and subordinated to the Austro-Hungarian General of Cavalry Freiherr v. Kirchbach (I Corps).

Based on the reports received during May 7th, Field Marshal Archduke Friedrich issued a new operational order at 6 p.m. It was known from radio intercepts that the enemy intended to withdraw its northern wing to the line Szczucin—Pilzno during the coming night. Thus, the enemy's battlefield began to completely disengage from its old position immediately south of the Vistula. The Russian X Corps, mixed with the III Caucasian Corps, remained further south behind the Wisłoka. The remnants of the XXIV Corps were assumed to be in the area of Jacozyn and further south. The Russian corps still in the mountains up to the Lupków Pass (XII and XXI) also intended to retreat further before the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army during the night. To prevent the enemy from holding again, the offensive was to be continued by the 11th Army over the Wisłoka stretch Besko—Fryštat towards Myszłów and San—Ryczyn (south of Rzeszów), by the main forces of the 4th Army towards Rzeszów.

Generaloberst v. Mackensen then ordered the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army to advance the IX and XIV Corps as well as the 11th and 2nd Cavalry Divisions over Fryštat—Debica towards Rzeszów—Sedziszów. He thus tied the bulk of this army to a left wing to ensure its advance to the east. The 4th Army thus retained the task of blocking in the further advance.

## The Operational Consequences of the Breakthrough Grew.

of the Carpathian exits, until an even firmer connection to the 3rd Army was achieved. From the other corps of the 11th Army, the XXXXI Reserve Corps was directed over Brzozow to Gieblitzka, the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps with its left wing to Blazowa, the Guard Corps with its left wing to Tyczyn, and the 19th Infantry Division to the Wisłok Valley Road.

For the Austro-Hungarian Carpathian Armies, the new operational order issued on the evening of the 6th was: "The 3rd Army now assumes the task of enveloping the Russian Carpathian front opposite the 2nd Army and seeks in particular to catch the enemy standing before the Beskid Corps in the rear. The 2nd Army joins with detachments from the left wing in the advance of the 3rd Army."

The operational consequences of the victory of the allied armies continued to expand. Also north of the Vistula on the Nida front, the retreat of the Russian 4th Army began.

### c) Hard Fighting at Wisłok on May 8 and 9, 1915.

Already in the early morning hours of May 8, enemy marching columns were observed retreating from Brzozow and Domaradz (at Brzezanka) to Dynow at the San bend and from Strzyzow in the Wisłok Valley to Rzeszow. The enemy thus continued the retreat before the 11th Army. It was important to follow quickly.

Contrary to expectations, the day brought heavy fighting for the 11th Army along the entire front at Wisłok. General v. Emmich wanted to advance the 119th Infantry Division to Pakoszowka and the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division to Humniska. The 20th Infantry Division was to follow to Rymanow. However, the parts of the 119th Infantry Division that had entered Bełko the day before were driven out again during the night. The division had to prepare for a planned attack on Bełko. It was not until the afternoon that they advanced to the Wisłok at the aforementioned location. The enemy seemed to offer particularly strong resistance at this point. After flank battles, the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division continued the attack. The 11th Bavarian Infantry Division could not bring support from the north. They crossed the Wisłok in the hot sun only around noon far north of Bełko, but were then forced by strong enemy forces on the left flank to swing northward at Jacoslaw. For the frontal attack against this enemy, the 81st Reserve Division was deployed from the XXXXI Reserve Corps, while the 82nd Reserve Division

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

was to aim for the encirclement from the north. However, since the enemy could flank this encirclement movement from the heights north of Kroscienko Wz., the cooperation of the 82nd Reserve Division with the Hungarian 39th Infantry Division against these heights was initially agreed upon. The Hungarians were positioned east of Krosno at 9 a.m., while the other division of the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps, the 12th Infantry Division, was still regrouping after fierce rear-guard actions near Potok. Meanwhile, a continuous enemy front had been established east of the Wislok between Krosno and Odrzykoń, with the strong cornerstone being the height of Kroscienko Wz. The planned attack of the 82nd Reserve Division from the south and the 39th Infantry Division from the west was directed against this. By noon, the height was captured. After eliminating the flanking from the north, the attack of the 81st Reserve Division also advanced over the broad valley line towards Haczow at 2 p.m., but only entered the town at 9 p.m. Meanwhile, contact with the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division had been established. The battle continued into the night. Further north, decisive combat actions had not yet occurred. The 12th Infantry Division reached the enemy's height positions on the Olszuse only in the evening after crossing the Wislok. As long as the 39th Infantry Division was also hindered in its advance eastward. Similarly, the Guard Corps encountered unexpectedly stiff resistance at the Wislok. Only the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division could advance to Odrzykoń in connection with the Austrian forces by 8 p.m. The 1st Guard Infantry Division remained in front of Lacki and Leki, the 19th Infantry Division was tied up at Frydkał on the western riverbank. The Russians seemed to have deployed unexpectedly strong rear troops against the 11th Army to cover their retreat.

The Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army also faced the enemy on the mountain heights and in the narrow valleys with success. The army advanced on both sides of the Olawa Valley but could only reach the heights southwest of Butowisko-Odrzykoń. The left wing corps (X.) reached the upper Wislok near Sieniawa in the evening. Parts of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Cavalry Division advanced east of the river towards Besko. However, the 119th Infantry Division did not engage in the battle. This stubborn resistance at the Wislok was explained by the enemy's effort to extend the flank of their Carpathian front as long as possible. After the victorious breakthrough of the left wing of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army on May 8, the Russian

### Strong Resistance of the Russians at the Wisłok.

The Carpathian front was retreating up to the middle of the 2nd Army. In the evening, the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army had already crossed the upper course of the Osława in pursuit. The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army did not encounter such strong resistance. Here in the open terrain, the pursuit of the enemy proceeded almost without pause. Without significant fighting, the line Frystat—Chelm—Debica was reached. Further advancement from Debica to the north, as intended by the XIV Corps, was halted by the army's high command, as it wanted to maintain the left flank position against surprises from the Vistula. Therefore, the 47th Reserve Division was to remain west of the Wisłoka. They encountered an enemy position in the line Jaszow—Dulcza Wk. Radgoszcz and Smęgorzów were reached by pursuit columns.

To complete the success achieved so far through relentless pursuit, the high command of the 11th Army emphasized again in its evening order that each unit must advance relentlessly in the assigned sector in the deepest possible flank echelon.

Even on May 9, the resistance of the enemy rearguards proved to be very strong. All available divisions of the 11th Army were already in the battle line. A fresh, powerful reserve was missing, which could have maintained the effective, exhausting thrust of the Emmich Corps after the breakthrough at Zmigrod on May 5. To save the retreating Carpathian front, the enemy opposed this corps with all its might. The 119th Infantry Division, having resumed its attack in the morning, was initially left to its own devices. Effective cooperation with the neighboring Austro-Hungarian X Corps on the right had not yet been achieved. The 11th Bavarian Infantry Division, fighting further north and acting against the flank of the Russian Wisłok position east of Jaszow, found itself in a severe combat crisis in the morning hours, as the enemy advanced from the southeast over Wzdow against its right flank and rear. As all reserves of the division were exhausted, General v. Schmieg was compelled to send parts of the 119th Infantry Division for quick assistance and to bring parts of the 20th Infantry Division over Rymanow to Besko. By noon, the danger to the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division was averted. Meanwhile, the enemy opposing the 119th Infantry Division was also worn down, particularly by strong artillery fire, and the encirclement south of Besko across the Wisłok caused the front to collapse at 3 p.m. In droves, they surrendered.

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

the enemy. The rest found reception before Zarzyn by fresh troops, which were immediately brought forward against Besko. In strong defensive fire, this counterattack collapsed. However, the Russians dug in again in the afternoon close to Besko. By 6 p.m., further forces were reported at Zarzyn. Airmen observed columns advancing from Sanok to Zarzyn. Thus, further counterattacks were to be expected here, which apparently aimed to cover the ongoing withdrawal of the Russians from the Carpathians to the upper San. But also on the rest of the front of the 11th Army, the enemy still resisted. The 11th Bavarian Infantry Division continued its attack in the afternoon in cooperation with the XXXI Reserve Corps. By 4 p.m., Jaslow was taken, and the encirclement movement was extended further east by evening, although the situation remained difficult on the right flank and in the rear of the division. The frontal attack of the XXXI Reserve Corps against the heights east of Jaslow initially made no significant progress. The 81st Reserve Division, which had become quite disorganized due to the local fighting, had to reorganize itself for the attack against the heights of the eastern bank. To the left next to it, the 82nd Reserve Division had swung from its front directed north over Kroscienko Wz. to the east and had already advanced in the morning hours together with parts of the Hungarian 39th Infantry Division to the Wisłok bend north of Jaslow. General v. Franck now hoped for a double encirclement of the enemy standing before the 81st Reserve Division. However, this enemy withdrew from the

encirclement on the afternoon of the 4th. While the 81st Reserve Division advanced frontally, the 82nd Reserve Division moved out over Jablonica Polska through difficult forested mountains to Brzozow. The place was reached by the infantry of the 81st Reserve Division by 11 p.m. At the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps, following the successes of the right wing of the Hungarian 39th Infantry Division, its left wing had now also advanced well against the heights northwest of Jablonica Polska, west of Staszek. The 12th Infantry Division, held up by fresh Russian forces, also brought in from Pressburg, gained ground at Korczyna only by 11 a.m., while its left wing tried to encircle the enemy from the north from Odrzykon. When the Guard Corps came closer and took over the flank cover, this attack made good progress. By 6 p.m., the enemy also gave way here. Without a fight, the VI Corps could follow up to west of Jaslow. At the Guard Corps, the 2nd Guard Infantry Division was already engaged in hard

## Eventful Battles of the Emmich Corps at Besko on May 9.

entangled in battles. To the left, the 1st Guard Infantry Division had crossed the river at Laczki and Leki in night and fog and advanced effectively against the northern flank of the river defense at 10 a.m.

This made the entire defensive front before the Guard Corps untenable by noon. Both divisions followed the retreating enemy to the Brzazanta section.

The 19th Infantry Division had driven the enemy from the heights east of Frystak in the morning. However, their advance in the Wislok Valley to the east was halted at Wisniowa. Even units that were deployed through the mountains from the south against this enemy barrier did not break through.

General Baron von Plettenberg therefore ordered the 1st Guard Infantry Division in the evening to send units against the Wislok west of Strzyzow to relieve the 19th Infantry Division.

In the advance area of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army north of the Wislok, the enemy had retreated the day before to a prepared line of defense that extended from the Wislok bend at Wisniowa via Wielopole—Lopuchowa—Zawada and then from Debica to west of Szczucin.

The entire front of the army was here engaged in ongoing combat.

To break through the enemy front north of the Wislok and thus resume the further retreat of the Russians, ten battalions of the 10th and 106th Divisions were concentrated south of Wielopole during the afternoon.

However, no decision was reached on this army wing.

Nor was it possible on the left wing of the army to create space for the 11th Cavalry Division by advancing on Radgoszcz in the direction of Mielec.

The 2nd Cavalry Division had marched on Debica and hoped to advance

to the railway junction there. However, it was drawn into particularly intense fighting south of Debica to support the front.

The Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army remained in the advance. The X Corps crossed the Wislok with its right wing, but still had no combat connection to the 119th Infantry Division.

At the base of the left wing of the XVII Corps was Drzezhova.

The VII Corps had advanced under considerable terrain difficulties towards Butkowko with the intention of also advancing against the lower Olawa and thereby facilitating the exit from the mountains for the German Beskiden Corps, which had gained considerable ground in the Olawa Valley.

The left wing of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army was also advancing rapidly.

Unable to support the 3rd Army at 11 a.m. at the GÜlitza Heights, 15 kilometers southeast of Butkowko. The center and right wing of the 2nd Army were up to the adjoining heights.

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

advanced west of the upper San. Russian rearguards attempted to halt the pursuit across the entire front.

### d) Advance over the Brzezanka on May 10, 1915.

The enemy attacks expected by General v. Emmich for May 10 did not fail to materialize. As early as 4 a.m., Russian masses stormed with great force, but in vain, against the eastern edge of Besko. An hour later, General v. Emmich ordered the continuation of the attack. The 119th Infantry Division was to advance frontally against Zarzyń, while the 20th Infantry Division, swinging far north of Besko over Jacmierz, was to envelop the enemy from the north. This movement was again covered by the continuation of the attack by the right wing of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division on Jacmierz, while a left wing advanced on Grabownica—Humniska, seeking to connect with the 81st Reserve Division at Brzozow and to relocate the enemy from withdrawing over Grabownica to the San. Feeling their own superiority, the leader of the Bavarian Division, Major General v. Neureuth, decided on this attack, which was still unsecured on both flanks, from the Brzozow pocket, without waiting for the arrival of the 20th Infantry Division. By 2 p.m., the heights west of the Grabownica—Humniska road were in the possession of the Bavarians. Meanwhile, a relief of the right flank of this strong outpost had also been achieved by bringing up the 20th Infantry Division. By 11 a.m., it had developed from the northwest to attack the heights east of Jacmierz, holding back the right wing in the Wisłok plain. In a rapid assault conducted jointly with parts of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division, these heights and the town of Jacmierz fell. Over Bazanowka, the 20th Infantry Division now pressed against the road and railway east of Zarzyń. By 3 p.m., the enemy's departure from Zarzyń to Sanok was observed. His retreat route was already under the fire of the artillery of the 20th Infantry Division. By evening, the 119th Infantry Division had meanwhile held its ground in Besko. Their artillery fired against the already forming front of the Russians and the masses converging at Zarzyń. By 4 p.m., a hasty retreat of the enemy was observed in some front sections. The 119th Infantry Division also now advanced to the assault. The resistance of the Russians completely gave way before the 20th Infantry Division. The Russian rearguard reached Bazanowka by 5 p.m. Cavalry pursued the enemy retreating along the main road east of Zarzyń.

## The Russian Defense Collapses on May 10.

This success was also contributed to by the actions of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army. It intended to exit the mountains on May 10. The left wing corps (X.) with the 4th Cavalry Division and the corps to the right (XVII. and VII.) encountered the enemy, who was strongly positioned on the heights of Orzechowa-Nowotaniec and Butwówsko, covering the left flank of the counterattack on Besko. The Beskiden Corps aimed west of the Oslawa towards Butwówsko to relieve the center and left army wing. East of the river valley, however, it faced the left wing of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army in fierce combat at the Stuzla Heights. Further east, the Russian rearguards successfully opposed the advancing 2nd Army. Their right wing was firmly positioned at the upper San. The resistance of the Russians in the mountains stiffened. However, the left wing of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army managed to capture the enemy's elevated position at Orzechowa before the enemy's marching reinforcements could take effect. They retreated to the last ridge south of the Zariczyn-Sanok road, allowing the Austro-Hungarian artillery to intervene in the ongoing battle of the Emmich Corps along this road. Thus, it ended here with an encirclement from the south as well. By 10:30 PM, Zariczyn was in the hands of the 119th Infantry Division. The way to the San was clear. Due to the ongoing battles in the difficult mountainous terrain and the three-day battle for Besko, the divisions of General v. Emmich were, however, greatly exhausted. This also affected the advance of the Bavarians towards Pakoszowka. Their left wing also did not advance further east. The connection to the XXXXI Reserve Corps was not achieved. The Emmich Corps prepared for a follow-up attack early the next day.

General v. Francois received the surprising report at 9:00 AM that Brzozow had already been occupied by the 81st Reserve Division and the 82nd Reserve Division had been in combat against Stara Wies since 7:00 AM. However, the enemy was still directly opposite the 81st Reserve Division east of Brzozow. In the early morning, the place was under Russian artillery fire. Major General v. Stofeln decided to free his division from this critical situation by an infantry attack, despite the still missing artillery. Until this arrived after overcoming great logistical difficulties, the division was in a difficult position. Then, both divisions of the XXXXI Reserve Corps withdrew.

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

However, the enemy initially withdrew to the heights northeast of Brzozow and was then thrown back from section to section in a joint attack until around 6 o'clock in the evening when the enemy's elevated position west of Izdebki fell. This victorious advance of the XXXI Reserve Corps had also exposed the northern flank of the Russian forces still facing Corps Emmich in battle, thus contributing to the rapid collapse of the Russians in the Zarszyn area.

Further north, the enemy no longer seriously opposed the advance of the 11th Army. The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps reached the Wesola-Lekla line after a brief battle by evening, while the Guard Corps reached the area on both sides of Polomyja and the Wislok bend at Czudec. The 19th Infantry Division wheeled northward at 1 o'clock in the afternoon from Strzyzow and drove the enemy through the mountainous terrain ahead of them, straight into the arms of the 1st Guard Infantry Division, which had already advanced in the Wislok Valley toward Czudec, capturing thousands.

Also at the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, the attack led with concentrated force on the right wing threw the enemy back beyond Pstragowa at the Wislok bend, and by evening the position at Laczki and Lopuchowa also fell. However, around Debica the enemy still held out stubbornly. The attack of the XIV Corps undertaken to support Corps Kirchbach on both sides of the Wisloka to the north could not gain ground. But upon receiving news that the enemy was weakening in front of this line west of the Wisloka, a general attack was ordered again at 10 o'clock in the evening, and the army reserve was directed to the XIV Corps for an advance east of the Wisloka toward the bridge at Przecelaw. The Austro-Hungarian Army Command also wanted to direct the 21st Infantry Division, which had been withdrawn from the 3rd Army, for an advance across the Vistula to bring down the enemy's Nida front. But the Nida front also now seemed to be wavering. Intercepted radio messages indicated the relocation of Russian general commands.

The Russians, having drawn up forces (XXXI Corps) that had just been withdrawn from the Carpathians, had suffered considerable casualties in the area around Besko over several days in order to conduct their retreat from the mountains in an orderly fashion further east. This withdrawal took place in front of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd and 2nd Armies under effective protection of rear guards. Also in front of the 11th and Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, aerial reconnaissance had confirmed the retreat of strong forces from Dynow at the San bend toward Przemysl and in the Mleczka Valley toward Przeworsk, from the southwest, west, and north toward Rzeszow and beyond.

## General Retreat of the Russian Armies.

to Lancut, as well as from Kolbuszowa to Glogow and from there to the south and north. These observations, together with the reports received from the troops, gave a clear picture of a general retreat of the Russians to the lower San. There, adjacent to the fortress of Przemysl, bridgeheads were under construction at Radymno, Jaroslau, and west of Sieniawa. According to troop observations and other reports, the Russian units retreating before the 11th Army were in severe disarray and increasing dissolution. Even the smallest units faced vastly superior enemy forces. Russian artillery was hardly present anymore. However, the sacrificial perseverance of the rearguards had enabled the enemy to save the bulk of the defeated army from the pursuer, even before the 11th and Austro-Hungarian 4th Army. Extensive destruction of railway and road structures, effective demolition of the hard surface of the few paved roads over long distances, and the burning of countless villages along the retreat routes showed the now also here commencing systematic nature of the retreat. The difficulties and march separations for the pursuit columns had thereby increasingly grown. Disruptions in the supply of food and ammunition were already noticeably hindering them.

### 4. The Pursuit to the San from May 11 to 13, 1915.

Maps 1, 16, and 18.

#### a) Operational Considerations.

The uncertainty of the political situation, especially the still opaque stance of Italy, meant a constant, heavy burden for the decisions of the allied military commands, which, although not yet directly affecting the course of operations in Galicia, strongly influenced the extent of force deployment. When General v. Falkenhayn decided to assign the 56th Infantry Division from the western theater of war to the 11th Army, he suggested to General v. Conrad on May 4 that he should also consider the Austro-Hungarian 5th Army, which was facing Serbia; for there, given the high water levels of the Danube and Save, there seemed to be no danger at the time. General v. Conrad was of the opinion that "the current operation in Galicia must be carried out to full decision," but believed he could not weaken the 5th Army, "because it is needed to repel a Serbian-Montenegrin attack on Bosnia-Herzegovina, which from the water level

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

independent, just enough and at most also the most necessary covering troops for the southwestern border" — that meant against Italy — would have to be given up. General v. Falkenhayn nevertheless tried again on May 6 through General v. Cramon to influence General v. Conrad: "Since there is apparently hope that the Italians will continue to negotiate, there is time, and every man with Mackensen strengthens the prospect of a final success, which can be decisive for the campaign." General v. Conrad, however, refrained from giving increased emphasis to the pursuit operation, which had been so promisingly initiated, by immediately bringing in fresh troops. The German Supreme Army Command also did not sufficiently take this point of view into account. On May 7, the Commander-in-Chief East was ordered to free up additional forces beyond the three divisions to be newly established in the event of Italy's entry into the war. Field Marshal v. Hindenburg also reported that he would provide two divisions, parts of the 4th Reserve Division and the 103rd Infantry Division, which he could already make available for transport to the 11th Army. General v. Falkenhayn, however, temporarily refrained from bringing these troops to the Galician theater of war. The reasons that led him to this decision are no longer ascertainable. Apparently, concern about the development of the Italian question played a role. On May 8, the German Emperor, accompanied by the Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army, visited German troops of the 11th Army. On May 9, the German Great Headquarters was moved from Mézières to Pless to facilitate the communication of the army commands. This also outwardly expressed the shift of the focus of operations to the east.

With the abandonment of the area around the Lupkow Pass and the withdrawal of the Russian mountain front further east, the first task assigned to Colonel General v. Mackensen was fulfilled. General v. Falkenhayn now considered new agreements on the further use of the German units necessary, "imposing a framework in which the 4th k. u. k. Army can and should take place." Upon his arrival in Pless on May 9, v. Conrad requested proposals for this. He immediately replied: "In the common interest of our armies and imperial armies, I see in the current extremely critical situation the exploitation of the previous beautiful successes in Galicia only in the relentless pursuit of the advancing enemy with full force. We must, through the immediate continuation of the attack, bring the Russian 3rd Army within a short time into line Debica—Trzylat—Krosno—Sanok—Risko—Autowisfa (30 km

## Operational Supplements of the General Staff Chiefs.

southwest of Stary Sambor) – Turka to gain a foothold and must – immediately following – push behind the San line. For this purpose, I initially intend to advance with the consolidated 3rd Army over the area Sanok–Jasło–Lisko, with the German 11th Army on Mzrygold at San-Tycyn, with the main force of the 4th Army in the direction of Rzeszow." General v. Conrad further envisioned strengthening the left wing of the 4th Army with freely deployable forces of the 3rd Army, to both protect the left flank of the assault group against enemy actions from the northern Vistula bank, and to make the Russian Nida front untenable by an advance over the Vistula. He asked General v. Falkenhayn to consider whether additional German forces could be assigned to the 4th Army. "Any hindrance to our ongoing attacks would nullify all previous successes," he added. He further intended to reinforce the army group of General v. Pflanzer-Baltin, which had been hit by a superior attack, with two divisions of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army. From a radio message intercepted on May 7, it was clear that the enemy intended to push this army group back behind the Pruth and take possession of the area around Kolomea.

On May 10, General v. Falkenhayn initially rejected the transfer of additional forces from the western theater of war, as the German western army was tied up by the large Anglo-French offensive that had begun southwest of Lille. The two divisions to be freed on the Eastern Front were also not yet available<sup>1)</sup>. General v. Falkenhayn then opposed General v. Conrad's intention to transfer two divisions of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army to the army group Pflanzer-Baltin, as they would be unavailable for all military events during this

transport, while they could be immediately used at a decisive point with the 11th Army or on the northern wing of the 4th Army. "I consider the weakening of our assault groups – 3rd, 11th, 4th Army – in favor of secondary theaters of war to be highly questionable," he added. "The more I agree with Your Excellency's view that we must seize the opportunity to deliver a decisive blow to the enemy, the more I must oppose the weakening of the assault group for secondary purposes. Here in West Galicia lies the decision. It plays a role in it

---

1) This contradicted the report of the Commander-in-Chief East from May 7. Here, too, the reasons for General v. Falkenhayn's statement can no longer be determined.

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

it does not matter whether the Pflanzer group has been pushed back a few kilometers or not. If the strike we have initiated succeeds, the Pflanzer issue will also be resolved, and if it does not succeed, Butwinko will not be held either. Undertaken with assembled forces, it will surely succeed." General v. Conrad feared, however, as he immediately replied, that a setback for the Pflanzer-Baltin army group could blur the favorable impression of the operations in Galicia among the neutrals and could have a highly unfavorable impact on Romania's further behavior. He maintained the ordered reinforcement of the army group.

Despite the differences of opinion that emerged regarding the further use of freed-up forces, both army commands were completely united in the most important decision of the time: exploiting the victory of Gorlice by continuing the pursuit.

### <h>The Pursuit on May 11, 1915.</h>

The pursuing armies encountered hardly any resistance on May 11. Only the difficulties of the terrain caused delays and required the utmost exertion from the troops. The enemy continued the general retreat.

The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army of General of Cavalry v. Boehm-Ermolli pushed on and over the San above Lisko. The Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army reached the upper San in the evening with the German Beskiden Corps west of Lisko, the XVII Corps at Zagorz, where the 4th Cavalry Division followed to the east bank, and with the X Corps at Sanok. In the sharp right turn carried out on this front, the VII Corps found no more space and remained in the second line at Butwinko. The 1st Cavalry Division scouted towards Dobromil, the 4th Cavalry Division towards Przemysl. The 11th Army reached, as ordered on May 10, with the two southern corps (Emmich, XXXXI Reserve Corps) the Sam line Mrazglod—Dynow, with the other two corps (Austro-Hungarian VI and Garbe-) in the line BachorzMrazglod—Dynow. The 20th Infantry Division was to be assigned to the left wing of the army, to which the 56th Infantry Division, which had meanwhile reached Strzyzon, was also moved, both divisions as army reserve. On the southern flank of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, resistance from railway troops at Rzeszow was soon broken by the IX Corps in the southwest and west. This quick success affected the Debica—Rzeszow road, where the right wing of the XIV Corps

## The Pursuit on May 11.

also seized Sedizionsv. The advance of the 8th Division east of the Wisloka to the north came to a halt again at Wola Dziecka and east of Przecław. Under this flank protection, the enemy then evacuated the western Wisloka bank, when in the evening the German 47th Reserve Division and the Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division, advancing east of Radomysl Wst., reached Mielec and the Stoeger-Steiner group further north, reaching the Wisloka.

Airmen had hardly detected any enemy in the large San bend southwest of Przemysl.

Extensive withdrawals were observed further south in front of the 3rd and 2nd Army from Lisko and in the Strwiaz Valley to the northeast.

The eastern wing of the Russian 8th Army was already retreating towards Stary Sambor. Long columns moved from Bachorz to the fortress of Przemysl, heavily occupied with troops, and from Jawornik Polski and Rzeszow to Jaroslau. Here, the retreat continued on the eastern bank of the San. North of the Wislok, marching columns moved over Sokolow to the north and from Kolbuszowa to the east. Heavy traffic was observed on all railway lines leading east and north.

The overall result of the aerial reconnaissance was a large retreat movement of the enemy both at and behind the lower San as well as over the upper San into a position leaning on Przemysl.

Further north of the Vistula, the enemy had begun the retreat from the Nida front.

Based on this overall impression, Generaloberst v. Mackensen wanted, in agreement with the Austro-Hungarian military command, to continue the advance

with the center of the 11th Army now towards Jaroslau,  
with Rawa Ruska as a further objective. The attack on  
Przemysl was to be left to the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army.  
The dividing line between the two armies was laid over Mszgolod-  
Kryznosca and then north past Przemysl. The now reinforced  
Austro-Hungarian 4th Army was tasked with securing  
north of the lower Wislok against the extensive bridgehead of Samborwiez recognized in the San-  
Vistula angle.

It was considered likely  
that the Russian 4th Army would seek support on the northern Vistula bank;  
for there too, the enemy had evacuated his positions before the Austro-  
Hungarian 1st Army at dawn.

The army followed with the right wing over the Nida.  
Generaloberst v. Mackensen gave the order at 7 p.m. for the  
11th Army to continue the pursuit over Jastan along the San towards Jaroslau.  
Meanwhile, the Guard Corps on the left wing could continue its  
advance on Przemysl to the east, while for the others

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice

The corps of the 11th Army required a sharp leftward shift into the narrower area north of the San west of Przemysl. The 20th and 56th Infantry Divisions followed in the second line. This gave the previously compressed Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army room, with its next target being the line Dobromil–Przemysl. The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army was ordered to advance from the line Rzeszow–Kolbuszowa north of the lower Wisłok, with the northern wing to follow folded left over Mielec.

For the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, the command ordered a strong left wing advance in the Strwiaz Valley towards Chyrow to disrupt the retreat of the Russian 8th Army. It was expected that the pursuits of the 3rd, 11th, and 4th Armies would proceed smoothly, without the enemy engaging in serious combat on this side of the Przemysl–San section.

c) Concentration of the 11th Army on Jaroslaw on May 12, 1915.

The movements planned for May 12 were carried out without interference from the enemy.

The Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army continued its deployment and rightward swing into the new eastward-facing front after crossing the San in the narrow area, with the German occupation corps moving over Tyrana Wolafo towards Dobromil. The X Corps was to later insert between the two other corps over Lezszawa Lomna–Ryboczyce, with the VII Corps following behind the left army wing as a reserve. The two foremost corps reached only as far as Tyrana Wolafo on May 12. The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army also swung its left wing over the San to the railway line near Dzianica. On the left wing of the Southern Army, the Szurmay group was already descending from the ridge to the upper Dniestr.

In the 11th Army, the Emmich Corps (11th Bavarian and 119th Infantry Division) reached over Ulucz Zsłan on the San, the XXXXI Reserve Corps over Bachorz Dubiecko, with preceding detachments after fierce fighting with Russian cavalry at Pruchnik. The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps marched from Jawornik Polski to Ranczuga, the Guard Corps from the line Blazowa–Hyczyn to Chodakowka–Lancut. From here, the pursuit returned to Przemysl–Jaroslaw by the end of the day.

In the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, the IX Corps moved the 10th Division to Stobierna and the 106th Division there.

## Consolidation of the 11th Army at Jaroslaw on May 12.

towards Glogow. The concentric advance of the XIV Corps, with the 3rd Division from Sedziszow and the 8th Division from Przecław towards Kolbuszowa, no longer reached the retreating enemy. The Russians also voluntarily gave up the lower course of the Wisłoka, so that the wide encircling movement from the south by the German 47th Reserve Division on the eastern bank of the river failed to achieve its purpose. In the evening, the XIV Corps was around Kolbuszowa. Further to the left, folded back, stood the 47th Reserve Division and the Stoeger-Steiner Group, both on the eastern bank of the Wisłoka. In this formation, the 4th Army intended to continue its advance eastward the next day. The 11th Cavalry Division, again under the 11th Army, entered Rzeszow in the afternoon and was to jointly disrupt the enemy's retreat before the 4th Army with the 2nd Cavalry Division.

North of the Vistula, the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army, following the enemy, advanced further and reached with its right wing up to the height of Szczucin. The enemy also vacated its positions in front of the two southern divisions of the Boehm Army. In the pursuit, Kielce was reached in the evening.

During the hasty retreat, the Russians seemed to lose their connections. They also extensively used radio messages, even in plain text, for transmitting tactical and operational orders. Based on the interception results, a clear picture of the enemy could be obtained, confirming the general retreat to the Przemyśl-Sandomierz line, in agreement with the findings of aerial reconnaissance. Marching columns heading east through Przemyśl and Jarosław were also spotted by the flyers. The northernmost part of the Russian forces defeated by the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army turned sharply northeast towards the bridgehead-like fortress of Sandomierz. The Russian 8th Division of the XV Corps was reported as reinforcement in transit there. The next intentions of the Russian command were revealed from the intercepted orders of General Radko Dimitriew to the 3rd Army. He ordered "stubborn active defense" of the San; "to hold its positions on the left bank of the San, from which to proceed to attack the pursuing enemy." The Russian 8th Army continued to retreat south and southeast of Przemyśl.

Regarding the continuation of operations in Galicia, a meeting took place in Teschen on the morning of May 12 between Generals v. Falkenhayn and v. Conrad. It was discussed whether to direct the focus of further operations south past Przemyśl towards Lemberg.

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

mountain or along the Vistula against the lower San or towards Jaroslaw. The decision was made for the final solution, which had already been initiated by the orders of the 11th Army on May 10. Accordingly, new fundamental instructions were issued by the Austro-Hungarian military command on the morning of the 11th. "The next goal is to force the San downstream to Przemysl and to be ready for further advance on the eastern bank of the San." The 11th Army remained positioned on the southern stretch on both sides of Jaroslaw, covered on the left flank by the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army. The Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army was to advance south of the San with its northern wing against the west and south front of Przemysl and take the fortress by storm if possible. Its right wing was positioned on Mosciska (25 kilometers south of Przemysl), the left wing on the adjoining Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army on Stary Sambor. Strong forces of this army were to be kept ready to advance eastwards south of the Dniester if necessary. The German Southern Army was directed towards Drohobycz; east of it, the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army was to hold its ground. North of the Vistula, the Woysch Army was to join the advance of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army.

The army order corresponding to these instructions from Generaloberst v. Mackensen for May 13 foresaw a reorganization of the 11th Army. The 119th Bavarian Infantry Division, intended as the right wing south of the XXXXI Reserve Corps, was subordinated to General v. Fran ois. General v. Emmich was to take command of the 19th Infantry Division on the left wing with the General Command of the X Army Corps and subsequently also take over the 20th and 56th Infantry Divisions upon their arrival. This reinforcement of the northern wing seemed necessary, as strong flank attacks from the San-Vistula angle had to be expected during further advances. In this reorganization, the army corps were to reach the line Krzywcza—Pruchnik—Sosnica on May 13 and push forward beyond Boratyn for reconnaissance and finally obvious reconnaissance up to the enemy. The 56th Infantry Division was to reach Lancut, the 20th Infantry Division was to reach Trzyncz marching north, and the 119th Infantry Division was to remain as army reserve at Dubiecko on the San.

### d) Deployment against the Russian San Front on May 13, 1915.

The movements of the 11th and Austro-Hungarian 4th Army against the lower San were not conducted by the enemy on May 13. General v. Fran ois ordered his three divisions to

## Deployment against the Russian San Front on May 13.

Reaching their daily objectives in the area of Krzywocza—Helusz—Pruchnik—Hawlowice to entrench. The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps reached the Mleczka section up to Rozniatow, the Guard Corps with the 2nd Guard Infantry Division in the area of Urzejowice and with the 1st Guard Infantry Division up to Przeworsk, the 19th Infantry Division of the new Emmich Corps moved folded to the left into the area between the Lancut—Przeworsk road and the Wisłok. All corps made contact with the enemy through advanced detachments still on this side of the San. The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army also moved closer to the San in its previous deployment position. After arduous marches on deep sandy roads, in scorching heat, the line Zolynia—Grobkow—Raniżow—Vistula east of the Wisłoka mouth was reached. A union of the 11th and 2nd Cavalry Divisions did not occur, as the individual brigades were distributed across the entire front by the leader of the 11th Cavalry Division as a reserve for reconnaissance. Insight into the San-Vistula angle was not gained. The Austro-Hungarian 1st Army reached downstream of the Vistula into the area west of the Wisłoka mouth. The enemy also retreated in front of the left wing of the Boroevic Army on this day. Thus, the entire front north of the Vistula up to the Pilica had come into motion. The advance of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army, south of the 11th Army, proceeded under the strong destruction of mountain roads carried out by the enemy. Nevertheless, the 1st Cavalry Division reached Mraźnica at noon in the advance on Dobromil. It was followed by the Beskiden Corps. The X Corps aimed for the line Bircza—Brzuzka. Behind it, the XVII Corps pushed up to about Tyrawa Woloska, the VII Corps reached Sanok. The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army reached in the advance on Stary Sambor with the left wing Starzawa. The day after, it wanted to gain connection to the 3rd Army at Dobromil. The combat successes achieved so far by the allied armies had thus also shown a great operational result. On May 2, the 11th Army had succeeded in breaking into the enemy positions in about 40 kilometers width and initially only a few kilometers depth. Now, twelve days later, the enemy's defensive system over 300 kilometers of front width, from the middle of the Carpathians to far north of the Vistula, had been dismantled. The pressure that had weighed heavily on the allied armies of the Carpathian Front for so long was thus eliminated. Seven armies of the allies had taken up the pursuit of the enemy, who, thrown out of his fixed positions, further back

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

sought a new reinforcement of his defense. Radiant sunshine had accompanied the troops on their victorious march. This favor of the weather had enabled extraordinary marching performances despite the greatest road difficulties and almost daily battles. Starting from Gorlice, over 100 kilometers of deployment line and across three major river sections, the allied armies had now advanced to the San. In doing so, they had taken 140,000 prisoners, 100 guns, and 300 machine guns from the Russian 3rd Army initially hit by the breakthrough battle. A combat success hardly hoped for at the initiation of the breakthrough operations from Gorlice was thus achieved.

But various material difficulties, which had already become more and more noticeable for days, now grew into a serious hindrance for the further advance of the armies to the east. The experience confirmed that the supply of ammunition and provisions encountered significant difficulties as soon as one moved far from the railway. Thorough destructions further increased the difficulties already posed by the terrain alone. Systematic destruction of accommodations and local supplies by the Russians forced the troops to rely extensively on resupplied provisions. A distance of over 150 kilometers from the railway points had to be overcome by horse-drawn columns, as the load-bearing capacity of the bridges and the condition of the roads did not allow or severely hindered the use of suitable truck columns. For days, reports from individual units had been saying that the regular provisioning of the troops was no longer feasible. The performance capacity of the horses was exhausted due to the lack of fodder. General v. Falkenhayn also pointed out to the 11th Army before reaching the San that in this situation the supply issue had to be clarified before further advance. Its regulation was an indispensable prerequisite for the continuation of the offensive beyond the San.

## 5. The Events on the Adjacent Fronts until Mid-May 1915.

### a) The Operations South of the Dniester and in the Carpathians.

Maps 15 and 18.

With the overcoming of the serious crisis at the Austro-Hungarian 2nd and 3rd Army in mid-April<sup>1)</sup>, the mighty battle in the Carpathians had come to an end after almost four months. No unified major combat actions had occurred here anymore. At

---

1) p. 130 ff.

## Fierce Battles with the German Southern Army.

The German Southern Army, which had extended its front eastward to the route from Felßzinever into the Moldowa Valley due to reports of Russian attack intentions against the night position of Army Group Pflanzer-Baltin, succeeded on April 24 in storming the contested height of Dstry and the ridge extending from there to Koziowa with the German Corps Bothmer and parts of the Austro-Hungarian Corps Hofmann. The left wing of Corps Bothmer had already previously recaptured the position lost on April 11 by the Hungarian 38th Division. As a result, the right wing of the Szurmay Group was also advanced. Until the end of the month, unsuccessful Russian counterattacks continued here, extending on April 21 to the entire front of Field Marshal Lieutenant Szurmay. With strong forces, the Russians advanced against the Ung Valley and seized positions southeast of Wolosate. General v. Linsingen sought assistance from the Austrian command, requesting help from the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, but this was limited to artillery support. Fortunately, the Russians did not exploit their success, allowing the Szurmay Group to fend off further advances. On May 2, parts of the Hofmann Corps attempted to take the long-stretched height north of Dstry in a brilliantly executed assault, but this gain had to be relinquished two days later due to extraordinarily fierce counterattacks; even east of there, the Russians were able to push back the Austro-Hungarian lines and establish a foothold on the southern Holowczan Valley bank. Only the intervention of neighboring corps could prevent a deeper breakthrough.

Despite these setbacks, General v. Linsingen was determined to support operations at Gorlice through immediate action by his army. Therefore, on May 6, after a similar request on April 20 had been rejected, he again approached the Austro-Hungarian command with a request for reinforcement by two divisions; if this was not possible, the 2nd Army should at least extend its front to the Hnyla Brook, so that he could free up the Szurmay Group for his army's offensive and deploy it comprehensively to the east. The report that arrived with the German Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army on May 3 also pointed out to General v. Linsingen that the enemy "can only be decisively destroyed by strong offensive pressure against the left flank and rear, thus by an advance over Dolina. Such an advance would have to be carried out by fresh troops to the right of the Southern Army under their command and in conjunction with their right wing..."

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

General v. Conrad agreed in principle with the proposals of General v. Linsingen, but believed that due to the overall situation, he could not proceed for the time being due to a lack of forces. General v. Linsingen therefore sought to create reserves for the intended thrust himself and brought an Austrian brigade to the Szurmay group, and two regiments of a mountain battery from the front to the Gerok corps.

Meanwhile, the first effects of the success at Gorlice began to be felt on the rest of the front: On May 6, the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army reported that the Russians were in a hasty retreat in front of their front, and the 2nd Army also expected the enemy to withdraw; on May 7, aircraft were able to detect retrograde movements of columns and trains in front of the left wing of the Southern Army itself. General v. Linsingen therefore ordered on May 8: "The enemy is in full retreat in front of the 2nd Army and the Szurmay group..., the Southern Army continues the pursuit of the defeated enemy and attacks where it still holds, without waiting for it to completely vacate its positions..." In front of the 2nd Army, the enemy had indeed retreated by the morning of that day, but the Szurmay group only managed in the next two days to gain the ridge line Byczof—south of Riczera Sofiiska—south of Felszowaty—north of Halicz and to connect here with the right wing of the 2nd Army. In front of the rest of the Southern Army's front, the situation initially remained unchanged. However, when the Szurmay group prepared to storm the still heavily occupied ridge position Jaslowice—Ostyn on the evening of May 11, and further reports of retrograde movements of the enemy arrived, General v. Linsingen ordered the general attack for May 12: on the right wing, the Gerok corps was to advance on Wygoda, the center on both sides of the Munkacs—Stryj road; the Szurmay group was to remain advancing on Turka. Soon thereafter, instructions from Teschen arrived, regulating the pursuit from the Carpathians: "2nd Army strives with strong, on the left wing along the Usztrzyki bl.—Chyrow road to disrupt the retreat of the Russian 9th Army, extreme right movement direction Smolnik—Boberka—Holdowice—Strzalki—Lopulnica—Sambor. Southern Army joins the general advance from the left wing in the direction of Drohobycz—Stryj—Dolina."

In the Pflanzer-Baltin army group, signs had already increased in April that the enemy was gathering strong forces for the best Weichsfleiger in the valleys of the Lomnica and Czeszawa. General v. Pflanzer-Baltin therefore felt compelled to shift the focus of his front back to the west, especially since the food-

## General v. Linsingen Orders the Attack.

position to the South Army in the mountains was only weakly secured<sup>1)</sup>. General v. Conrad also demanded the creation of a strong reserve behind the left army wing due to these threatening reports. When General v. Pflanzer-Baltin received instructions from Teschen on April 24, to tie down the enemy in front of his line through vigorous activity in view of the Gorlice operation, he decided to preempt the Russian attack intentions and advance between Czeczwia and Bystrzyca-Solotwinska; he hoped to push the front forward to the line east of Bohorodczany—Perehinsko—south of Lubow<sup>2)</sup>. On May 1, Field Marshal Ljubicic was to assemble 21 battalions from various divisions and seven batteries behind the left army wing for the attack. As a replacement for the forces taken from the Eastern Group, General v. Pflanzer-Baltin provided their leader, General of the Freivern Marschall, with the Austro-Hungarian 8th Cavalry Division; the siege-like attack against Zaleszczyki was to continue.

The attack by the Ljubicic group, beginning on May 1 between Bystrzyca-Solotwinska and Czeczwia, was often halted by strong counterattacks, until May 8, reaching the heights southwest of Tarten—south of Lipowica—southern slope of Syhlo—Szymana<sup>2)</sup>; on this day, the Russians advanced here with considerable reinforcements for a counterattack. However, further east in front of the West Group's line, the enemy had been pushed back to Bohorodczany.

Meanwhile, the situation on the rest of the front had also completely changed. On the evening of May 7, a message from Teschen arrived at the army headquarters in Kolomea, according to which, based on an intercepted radio message, the Russian commander of the Southwest Front was ordered to advance over the Dniestr, push the Pflanzer army back behind the Pruth, and establish the Speiß Nes area around Kolomea. From here, the Russian attack was to be carried over the Carpathians into Hungary and simultaneously liberate Bukovina. General v. Pflanzer then took steps to reinforce his army. General v. Conrad promised him the III Corps, withdrawn from the 3rd Army, with the 22nd and 28th Divisions; at the same time, the army group was renamed to "Austro-Hungarian 7th Army."

On May 9, the heavily fortified bridgehead Zaleszczyki could finally be taken by storm. At the same time, the long-threatening disaster against the center of the army group broke out. On the left

## The Breakthrough Battle of Gorlice.

The wing of Group Marschall — German 5th Cavalry Division — was indeed able to thwart Russian attempts to force the Dniester crossing at Kopaczynce, to block the Dniester loop northeast of it, but further west they managed to break through the front of Group Czikulla at Jezierzany and push back into the area of Chocimierz.

Heavy fighting also broke out on both wings of the 7th Army on May 9th. During the afternoon, the eastern group north of the Pruth was attacked by superior forces, the bridgehead of Jaleszczyki had to be abandoned again, and all available forces had to be thrown to the threatened front. On the extreme western wing, the Litzbicki group was forced in alternating fierce battles to give ground to the south and east.

During the day, the Russians brought new troops across the Dniester and pushed the weak forces of the German 5th Cavalry Division back to the line Czernelecia-Kopaczynce. The division commander, Lieutenant General v. Heydebreck, still hoped to restore the situation with hastily brought reinforcements and also to cover the back of the heavily struggling Group Czikulla, especially since they initially succeeded in halting the Russian attack at the stream section just east of the Niezwinka-Obertyn road and on the heights northwest of Obertyn and south of Chocimierz.

The next day, the situation between Pruth and Dniester could be restored by combined reinforcements in a counterattack. Enemy attacks were repelled on the rest of the front; only the left wing had to retreat to the heights south of Niezwinka. In the new front of Field Marshal Lieutenant Czikulla and on the extreme western wing in the mountains, heavy fighting took place.

On May 11th, the danger seemed to be overcome for the eastern group; in a counterattack, even the old positions could be regained. However, on the rest of the front, there were new severe setbacks. The center and right wing of Group Marschall had to give up the right bank of the Dniester under superior attacks and finally retreat across the entire front to the line stream section south of Horodnica-Horodenka-Otno. Subsequently, Group Czikulla retreated westward before new strong attacks to the line northeast of Otno-Obertyn. The battles of Group Litzbicki on the western wing of the army also led to the withdrawal of the front to the heights south of the Lomniza and Moldau valleys. The threatening situation of his army and the constantly increasing pressure of the Russian offensive, which with three to four infantry-

## Setback at the Army Group Pflanzer-Baltin.

led by two cavalry divisions, General v. Pflanzer was prompted to withdraw his entire front from the enemy. The eastern group was to move behind the Pruth and cover the line from the national border to southeast of Sniatyn, then withdraw the front over Kulaczowce—Kamionka Wl.—Ottynia and from there follow the old positions over Grabowice—Solotwina—Porohy. On the extreme western flank, only weak forces, about ten battalions, were to cover the area around Dniestri-Lada, while the main body of the Ljubiczic group was to be gathered at Zielona as army reserve. Between the groups Marschall and Czibulka, the already arrived parts of the III Corps under Field Marshal Lieutenant Krautwaldt were to be inserted, with the entire movement to commence on the night of May 12.

Meanwhile, the Russians pressed heavily against the center of the army, so that here too the front had to be relocated behind the Pruth to the line south of Sniatyn—Zalucze—Kolomea—Lanczyn—Pasieczna, which was reached by May 14.

### b) The Front between Vistula and Pilica.

On April 24, General Dankl and Generaloberst v. Bojna were informed of the intentions of the allied army commands for the operation in Galicia. General v. Conrad had pointed out that the armies not involved in the attack, both on the Carpathian front and north of the Vistula, had the task of preventing any withdrawal of Russian forces through active operations. Consequently, artillery fire intensified along the entire front north of the river, strong patrols advanced against the Russian positions, new trenches were dug close to the enemy, and saps were driven forward in many places to create the impression of an impending attack.

On May 1, the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army with 53 battalions, 36 squadrons, and 230 guns faced parts of the Russian 4th Army — three infantry divisions and two cavalry brigades — with a strength of 48 battalions, 42 squadrons, and 147 guns, north of them the Army Bojna with five infantry and two cavalry divisions with a strength of 74 battalions, 59 squadrons, and 302 guns, the main force of the Russian 4th Army in six divisions (with a strength of approximately 96 battalions, 36 squadrons, and 351 guns). Despite the successful breakthrough at Gorlice, the Russians initially did not seem to consider a withdrawal;

## The Breakthrough Battle at Gorlice.

On the night of May 3, even an attack against the German Landwehr Corps had to be repelled.

Only on May 10 did intercepted Russian radio messages announce the withdrawal of opposing general officer commands. At the break of the next day, the enemy had withdrawn before the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army. This followed and stood in the evening with the right wing at Swiniary-Smegorzow. The left wing was still held back at the Nida. On May 12, the enemy also vacated its positions in front of the two southern divisions of the Woysch Army. These advanced, with the Landwehr Division Bredow already standing in the evening close to the city of Kielce, still defended by the Russians. The Russians only left their positions in front of the 4th Landwehr Division and the Koevess Group on May 13. This set the entire front between the Vistula and the Pilica in motion.

## 6. The Russian Leadership from May 5 to 13, 1915.

Map 18.

The unfavorable development of the situation with the Russian 3rd Army in the early days of May had very quickly also affected the Carpathian Front. After the High Command of the Southwestern Front had already been forced on the night of May 4 to 5 to order the withdrawal of the right wing of the 8th Army (XXIV and XII Corps) from the area of Mezolaborcz in an easterly direction, the Chief of General Staff, General Dragomirov, considered the overall situation on May 5 so serious that he proposed a general retreat behind the San. However, the Supreme Army Command ordered most emphatically that the Wisloka should be regarded as the utmost limit for the backward movement. In a meeting held in Cholm on the morning of May 7 with the army group commanders, the Grand Duke emphasized once again that he did not allow any further retreat to the east in Galicia, especially a retreat of the 3rd Army behind the San. Overall, he regarded the defeat of the 3rd Army up to that point only as a local setback, but he ordered the reinforcement of the Southwestern Front by the XV Corps from the Northwestern Front and the V Caucasian Corps from Odessa<sup>1</sup>. On the evening of May 7, he telegraphed Lord Kitchener and General Joffre, pointing out the failures of the last few days, to immediately begin the agreed offensive against the German Western Front.

---

1) See note on page 330.

The increasingly threatening situation of the 3rd Army prompted General Dragomirov, albeit without the consent of his commander-in-chief, General Ivanov, on May 9 to repeat his proposal to withdraw the southwestern front behind the San and Dniester. But even this time he did not succeed. The Quartermaster General at the Supreme Army Command, General Danilov, recommended to him, however, with the help of the population and prisoners of war, to build a strong rear position along the Vistula—San—Dniester line. Moreover, the Supreme Army Command hoped that the long-planned attack by the 9th Army against the area of Nadworna—Delatyn—Kolomea, which had meanwhile begun, would bring about a change in the overall situation on the southwestern front.

On May 10, General Radko Dimitriev was forced to order the retreat of the 3rd Army to the line Wiszlow—Mouth—About nine kilometers south of Samot. In connection with this, the adjacent wings of the neighboring armies also had to be withdrawn. General Radko Dimitriev believed he could not hold the new line and was already preparing for further retreat towards the San. In his report to the army group, he emphasized: "The army has fulfilled its duty to the end. It has fought heroically in the nine-day battles and is literally bled dry. Many divisions count only a few hundred fighters each. Holding the new line is hopeless in view of the premature arrival of reinforcements." While General Ivanov requested the decision of the Supreme Army Command for the further conduct of his army group, his Chief of Staff, General Dragomirov, once again strongly advocated, in line with his earlier proposals, to finally "make a feasible decision and not indulge in unattainable hopes." The armies had to be withdrawn behind the San and Dniester, Przemysl had to be evacuated. The Grand Duke was then willing to designate the San—Dniester line "as the utmost eastern boundary for the new defense.

On May 11, General Radko Dimitriev ordered the retreat behind the San. This section was reached on the night of the 13th. Reinforcements included the XV and V Caucasian Corps on the move. To the right, the 4th Army (General Ewret) closed the San at Rozwadów, 20 kilometers above the mouth, its right wing had to retreat from the position at Radom. The 8th Army (General Brussilov), adjacent to the left of the 3rd, occupied Przemysl with its right wing, then followed the newly formed, initially only in the strength of two corps

## The Breakthrough Battle at Gorlice.

11th Army (General Schtscherbatschew) and finally the 9th Army (General Letschizki), which had meanwhile reached the Pruth in their successful advance. The line reached was to be stubbornly defended and held, with Przemysl treated only as part of the position, not as an independent fortress.

As victims of their own failures, the Chief of Staff of the Southwestern Front, General Dragomirov, and the Commander-in-Chief of the 3rd Army, General Radko Dmitrijew, were relieved of their positions, the former replaced by General Sawritsch, the latter by General Lisch. Prince Kudaschew reported, probably influenced by military side or under censorship, on May 14 to Minister Sasonow: "Our situation has fortunately improved again. The retreat of Radko Dmitrijew was carried out in exemplary order, he will probably hold at the San. Dragomirov is to blame for everything. Our losses in personnel are enormous, they are said to reach 150,000. The X Corps and the III Caucasian Corps are almost destroyed, yet there were no cases of panic and weak surrender. Equipment and supplies have been lost very little."

The Grand Duke had already stated the day before in a communication to General Joffre and Lord Kitchener, clarifying the situation: The losses of the 3rd Army are very large, but it is hoped to hold the San line. In view of the significantly reduced German forces on the Western Front, the support of the allied armies would be expressed in a vigorous and uninterrupted offensive. Since the beginning of the war, the number of German infantry divisions in the East has grown from nine to 38, perhaps even to 42, and the cavalry divisions from one to nine or ten, but not a single German unit deployed on the Russian front has been transferred to the Western Front thanks to the efforts of the Russians, the Grand Duke considered it very desirable that in the future the transfer of German troops to the Russian front would be made impossible. Furthermore, the accelerated entry of Italy into the war would be desirable and the fastest possible dispatch of artillery shells and rifle cartridges absolutely necessary.

---

1) Representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the Russian Great Headquarters. See p. 265.

## Influence of General v. Falkenhayn on the Stop Operations.

### 7. Considerations.

The German Supreme Army Command was not decisively involved in the operations on the Eastern Front in the winter of 1915. The continuation of the 9th Army's offensive north of the Pilica, demanded by General v. Falkenhayn, was even replaced by the operation on the Carpathian Front without his consent, following direct agreements between General v. Conrad and the Eastern Commander-in-Chief. He had no choice but to retroactively agree to the transfer of significant German forces to the allied army. He had no influence on the conduct of this operation. His proposal to deploy the German Southern Army at the Uszok Pass and west of it was disregarded. After his initial concerns about this operation proved to be correct, he attempted to persuade the allied Chief of Staff to halt the Carpathian Offensive. This, too, was unsuccessful. His assistance was only sought to the extent that he was asked to release new forces. Within the limits of possibility, he endeavored to comply with these requests.

Similarly limited was the influence General v. Falkenhayn had during the winter months on the operations in the area of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief. Here, too, his activity was initially limited to providing the forces deemed necessary for the offensive in East Prussia — admittedly, according to his own admission, only "with a heavy heart" — and agreeing to the operational intentions and measures reported by Field Marshal v. Hindenburg. The original desire to take over the leadership of these operations himself was quickly abandoned by the German Chief of Staff, and he refrained from any intervention during their course. Even after the operations there concluded with victory in the Winter Battle in Masuria, he was content with the general objective set for the Eastern Commander-in-Chief, considering the military and political overall situation, to bring the Russian armies into such a position by the second half of March at the latest, that they would not be able to pose a threat to us in the foreseeable future.

This picture underwent a fundamental change with the spring offensive in Galicia, beginning with the breakthrough at Gorlice.

## The Breakthrough Battle at Gorlice.

Here, General v. Falkenhayn emerged from his previously reluctant reserve as an active and decisive personality. This was already evident in the considerations that preceded the decision to deploy strong German forces on the Eastern Front in the second half of March. It was quite understandable that the German Chief of Staff also embraced this idea with a heavy heart, as its execution meant that all hopes and wishes for the early resumption of a decisive offensive on the Western Front had to be postponed indefinitely. Nevertheless, he already then, with a cool sense of reality, sharply focused on the inherently undesirable and inconvenient possibility that the constantly growing plight of the ally on the Carpathian Front might force him to such a measure. Thus, the suggestion transmitted by General v. Cramon at the beginning of April from the Austro-Hungarian Chief of Staff to send four divisions to West Galicia, "to halt the Russian advance," fell on already prepared ground. General v. Falkenhayn still internally resisted the events without freedom of decision, only being completely clear from the outset that if the plight should urge him to act, he would have to deploy stronger forces. While General v. Conrad's proposal only aimed at a local offensive to halt the further advance of the Russians in the Carpathians, General v. Falkenhayn had from the outset the larger, albeit initially operationally limited, goal in mind, "to force the Russians to evacuate their front in West Galicia up to the height of the Lupkower Pass." He steadfastly adhered to this goal when the plight arose and rejected new, inevitably proposed suggestions from the allied Chief of Staff, which suddenly amounted to nothing less than a double-encompassing offensive operation of the greatest style on the Eastern Front. General v. Falkenhayn deserves credit for clearly recognizing the limits of what was possible and achievable.

Much easier than this fundamental decision to deploy new strong forces in the East was answering the question of where and how the set goal should be pursued. The German Chief of Staff quickly reached a conclusion on this matter in a thorough exchange of views with his Austro-Hungarian advisors, fully appreciating the suggestions made by General v. Cramon, which were based on the initial suggestion of General v. Conrad.

## Limited Objectives for the Offensive in Galicia.

says Generaloberst v. Seeckt in a letter<sup>1</sup> to the Reichsarchiv: "If one assumes that the entire deployment of German forces in the East was requested by the allies for immediate deployment to their Galician-Hungarian border, that the turn had to come soon and be effective quickly, that they also wanted to make an impression on Italy for political reasons, which was very much in line with General v. Falkenhayn's views, then the possibilities for action that did not correspond to these points of view in terms of space and time, such as the deployment of German reinforcements on the front of the Commander-in-Chief East, were ruled out from the outset. Only the southern half of the Eastern Front, which was mainly held by our allies, remained. Here again, the extreme right wing in Bukovina and Eastern Galicia was out of the question due to the completely inadequate connections. An attempt to break through the Carpathian Front had failed, promising at least no quick success based on all previous experiences. Thus, the effective breakthrough point of the enemy front almost presented itself to the observer of the situation, and no special operational enlightenment was needed for selection. The question of the authorship of the plan for the breakthrough at Gorlice has been much disputed after the war. Success has many fathers, failure is an orphan. The credit goes to the one who puts the idea into action — and that was certainly no one other than General v. Falkenhayn."

The 4 infantry divisions made available by the German side for the Galician front corresponded to the objectives agreed upon with General v. Conrad. General v. Falkenhayn certainly had his reasons for this operationally limited objective. As the responsible leader of the overall German operation, he believed he had to maintain the freedom to quickly redeploy the forces used in Galicia to other theaters of war depending on the situation. He did not want to commit himself definitively to an extended deployment of these forces from the outset. The contingent of forces he made available, as the course of events shows, together with the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, proved just sufficient for the execution of the first task. It is questionable whether the German Chief of Staff would have been able to make even stronger forces available from the beginning. General v. Conrad repeatedly described this as urgently desired before the start of the offensive. In view of the possibility of attacks by the allied powers on the Western Front, General v. Falkenhayn initially hesitated to further deplete these forces.

---

<sup>1</sup> From November 13, 1927.

## The Breakthrough Battle at Gorlice.

However, since he decided a few days after the start of the breakthrough operation to move the 56th Infantry Division to the Galician theater of war, it is regrettable that this division was not already present at the beginning of the combat action. As a timely available army reserve, it would likely have contributed to an even faster success of the tactical breakthrough and its operational exploitation. There are also no compelling military reasons apparent as to why the use of forces from the area of the Commander-in-Chief East, as suggested by the Chief of the Field Railway Service, Colonel Groener, on April 9 and later several times, was completely disregarded. Given the calm situation that had prevailed on that front since early April, it seems that without great risk, some divisions could have been freed up for operations in Galicia. Instead, the Commander-in-Chief East received the hardly solvable task of tying down the Russian forces located in front of his front. Rightly, he refused in his response to guarantee that the enemy would not free up forces for other uses given the existing strength ratios. For the deception possibilities remaining to the Commander-in-Chief East thereafter — feigned operations or spatially narrowly limited advances against specific sections of the enemy front — he could have managed with fewer forces.

The conduct of the operations itself was in the hands of the combined Chief of Staff. General v. Falkenhayn secured decisive influence on the course of events, firstly through the agreement that the Austro-Hungarian military leadership had to reach an understanding with the German one before all important decisions, and secondly through the indirect exchange of ideas with the Mackensen High Command, to which the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army was also subordinated. The cooperation with General v. Conrad then proceeded smoothly in complete agreement of intent. Finally, the allied Chief of Staff now found the long and painfully missed opportunity to purify the thoughts of leading thought processes of the highest war censorship of a highly trusted troop, which was enabled by sufficient rest to fight and victory. How necessary such preparations were for the success of the upcoming offensive became clear to him in the considerations and decisions that were decisive for the layout of the breakthrough operation, taking into account the reduced performance level of the Carpathian Front due to months of mountain fighting. General v. Falkenhayn had, following a suggestion of the Gene-

## Smooth Cooperation of the Allied Army Commands.

Following the suggestions of Colonel v. Cramon and Colonel Groener, it was proposed to General v. Conrad during the first communication of his plan that while the assault group was advancing, the Austro-Hungarian 2nd and 3rd Armies on the Carpathian Front should "gradually retreat, drawing the enemy behind them," to "significantly facilitate and enhance the success of the operation." If General v. Conrad did not agree with this convincing proposal, it was likely due to doubts, among other reasons, about whether the Carpathian Front, already heavily engaged in previous difficult and costly battles, could be entrusted with such a challenging maneuver. However, General v. Conrad managed to address the operational cooperation of the Carpathian Front with the breakthrough group in a way that was adapted to the capabilities of his Carpathian troops. He simultaneously planned a staggered advance from the left wing of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army south of the Prezgonina Valley and the Magora Ridge, with the intention that the offensive on the rest of the Carpathian Front would gradually follow if the enemy withdrew forces from there. The addition he made to the attack directive of the German Supreme Army Command to the 11th Army Command — "general direction for the strongly held southern flank Imigród—Dukla—Czarnor" — clearly expressed the importance he attached to the concentric cooperation with the Carpathian Front.

This addition further shows that General v. Conrad did not intend to achieve the success of the planned breakthrough by uniformly strong engagement along the entire front line between the Beskids and the Vistula, but rather by concentrating forces at the tactically decisive point near Gorlice. The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army on the northern flank was more of a secondary task, intended to secure the left flank of the German breakthrough army. Generaloberst v. Mackensen fully adhered to this guiding principle both in the preparations for the attack and throughout the execution of the breakthrough operation. Contrary to the original intention of the army command, he did not extend the attack field of his army's left wing to Gromnik, but limited it at Tursko. For this, he ordered the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army to focus the emphasis of the left wing established at Borzęcin and to prepare reserves behind this front. If the 11th Army Command did not initially place its own reserve, the X Army Corps, entirely behind the right

## The Breakthrough Battle at Gorlice.

Wing, but partly — the 19th Infantry Division — moved behind the left wing, the guiding point was to prevent the danger on the northern wing by maintaining the focus on the southern wing, that a lack of forces would occur during the rightward swing required of it.

Already on the second day of battle, the deployment of the 20th Infantry Division at the Kneussl Corps was ordered to reinforce the attacking part of the southern wing, while the 19th Infantry Division was still held back as a reserve. In continuing the operation up to the Wisłoka, Generaloberst v. Mackensen moved the front of the 11th Army even closer to the right against the line Zmigrod-Wisłoka-Bogen south of Kolaczyce. At the same time, both neighboring armies were instructed to participate directly in completing the breakthrough. When on May 7, the unity of the operation was threatened by the high command of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army intending to withdraw its right wing northward, Generaloberst v. Mackensen integrated the bulk of this army as the left wing echelon into the advance of the 11th Army, thereby drawing it into the operational expansion of the previous tactical successes. Thus, the measures of the army commander entrusted with the breakthrough task repeatedly expressed the endeavor to concentrate as strong forces as possible in a limited area for a deep-impacting thrust. A temporal expansion of these forces to widen the breach area did not prove effective here, as the thrust directed against the breaking point of the enemy fronts, with the overcoming of the frontal opposing position system, also rolled up the Russian Carpathian front from the flank.

On May 8, the task assigned to Generaloberst v. Mackensen was accomplished with the reaching of the Wisłok. If General v. Falkenhayn agreed with General v. Conrad's intention to continue the pursuit to the San, it was done with the consideration that "the opportunity to deliver a blow to the enemy that could not be compensated must be exploited." Indeed, the successes achieved on May 8 could significantly improve not only the military situation on the Galician front but also the overall political situation of the Central Powers, considering the stance of the neutral states. It would have been advisable, therefore, to use the reinforcements becoming available in the area of the Commander-in-Chief East after the breakthrough success for the vigorous exploitation of the victory on the Galician theater of war. What reasons General v. Falkenhayn may have had to refrain from this

### Contradiction of Views between the Chiefs of General Staff.

It is not possible to determine with certainty whether to disregard this. Perhaps the concern about the Italian and Turkish crisis was not without influence. Apparently, he wanted to keep open the possibility of using these reinforcements elsewhere. He considered it all the more necessary to bring in all the forces of the allied armed forces released from the Carpathian front to increase the striking power in West Galicia, regardless of a setback on secondary fronts, as was now threatening to occur in Bukovina. The contradiction in which General v. Conrad found himself with the view of the German Chief of General Staff did not have any adverse effects on the execution of the pursuit operation up to the San. However, whether it would influence the future development of the military situation in Galicia was a question for the future.

keyno: 405

---

## Appendix 1.

### Troop Overviews.

#### Preliminary Note.

Due to space constraints, only the units involved in major combat operations have been included in the troop overviews of the Western Front. For the composition of other German and Allied armies on the Western Front, please refer to the maps and sketches.

In calculating the number of German and Austro-Hungarian divisions, the number of battalions of the individual units has been used as a basis; e.g., 19th Reserve Division (23 Btl., 12 Batt.) = 2 Infantry Divisions, Austrian 45th Rifle Division (6 Btl., 1 Esk., 2 Batt.) = 1/2 Infantry Division. For the French and Russian troops, two independent brigades are equated to one division.

### The 3rd Army and the Right Wing of the 5th Army on February 23, 1915.

#### 3rd Army.

(10 1/2 Infantry Divisions, 1 Cavalry Division)

Commander-in-Chief: Colonel General v. Einem gen. v. Rothmaler.

Chief of General Staff: Major General Ritter v. Hoehn.

Army Troops: Field Flying Detachment 22.

VI Army Corps: General of Infantry v. Pritzelwitz.

12th Infantry Division: Major General Chales de Beaulieu (16 Btl., 2 Esk., 15 Batt.)

24th Infantry Brigade (Gren. R. 23 and 62), 78th Infantry Brigade (3rd GR. 65 and 157, Reg. Ers. A. 2, III. Ers. R. 79), 1/1, II. and 2/4, Ldw. Ers. XIII. R. R., 12th Field Artillery Brigade (Field Artillery R. 9, 12, 42), 2nd Reserve/Pioneer Detachment 6, 2nd Reserve/Pioneer Battalion 10.

11th Infantry Division: Major General v. Webern (9 Btl., 3 Esk., 9 Batt.)

21st Infantry Brigade (Gren. R. 3, Foot R. 38), 22nd Infantry Brigade (Gren. R. 11), Jäger R. ö. 14 (without 1st and 2nd Btl.), 1/2 Ers. Field Artillery R. 6, Field Artillery R. 42), 3rd Reserve/Pioneer Battalion 12.

Foot Artillery: 5th i. 6th/Fuba. R. 6 (1st F. S. 5), 1/2 6th/Reserve Fuba. R. 9 (10 cm-Ran.), 5th/Reserve Fuba. R. 7 (13 cm-Ran.); 6 cm-Ran. from X. R. K., 12 cm-Ran. from Diebendorf, 4 French 12 cm-Ran., 15 cm-Ran. from G.R. 6, 12 cm-Ran. from X. R. R., 2 15 cm-Ran. from X. R. K.

Field Flying Detachment 13.

Assigned: IV./Ldw. J. R. 76, II. and III./Ldw. J. R. 87.

XII Reserve Corps: General of Artillery v. Kirchbach.

23rd Reserve Division: Major General v. Mazyorff (13 Btl., 1/2 Esk., 9 Batt.)

45th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Res. J. R. 100 and 101, Res. Jäger Battalion 12), 46th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Res. J. R. 102 and 103), 1/2 3rd/Saxon Reserve Ul. R., Reserve Field Artillery R. 23 (9 Batt.), 4th/Pioneer Battalion 12.

24th Reserve Division: Major General v. Ghentthal (7 Btl., 1/2 Esk., 9 Batt.)

47th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Res. J. R. 106, Res. Jäger Battalion 13), 48th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Res. J. R. 133), 1/2 3rd/Saxon Reserve Ul. R., Reserve Field Artillery R. 24 (9 Batt.), 2nd Reserve/Pioneer Battalion 12.

## Troop Overviews.

Foot Artillery: 5th and 8th/Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 3 (for F. S. H.), 1/2 6th/Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 9 (10 cm guns); 6 9 cm guns from Metz, 4 French 12 cm guns, 3 12 cm guns from Cologne.

Assigned: 1st/Reserve Field Regiment 104, 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 7th/Landwehr Field Regiment 106, Signal Company and Replacement Signal Company/Guard Rifle Battalion, 1st Reserve/Pioneer Battalion 12, 2nd/Pioneer Regiment 23.

III. Army Corps: General of Infantry Riemann.

15th Infantry Division: Major General Vollbrecht (12 Battalions, 1 Squadron, 12 Batteries).

80th Infantry Brigade (Field Regiment 65 and 160), 1st Bavarian Landwehr Brigade (Bavarian Landwehr Infantry Regiment 1 and 2), 4th/Cuirassier Regiment 8, 15th Field Artillery Brigade (Field Artillery Regiment 59 and 83), 1st/Pioneer Battalion 8, 3rd/Pioneer Regiment 23, 2nd/Reserve Pioneer Company 55, 2nd/2nd Landwehr Pioneer Company VII Army Corps.

19th Infantry Division: General L. von Baberfeldt (23 Battalions, 12 Batteries).

30th Infantry Brigade (Field Regiment 28 and 68), 31st Infantry Brigade (Field Regiment 29 and 69), 37th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve Field Regiment 73 and 78), Guard Rifle Battalion, III/Landwehr Field Regiment 106, Landwehr Infantry Regiment 16, 2nd Field Artillery Brigade (Field Artillery Regiment 23 and 44), 2nd and 3rd/Pioneer Battalion 10, 1st/Pioneer Regiment 23, 7th and 8th/Pioneer Battalion 28, Reserve Pioneer Company 87, 1st/3rd Landwehr Pioneer Company VII Army Corps.

Foot Artillery: III/Foot Artillery Regiment 9 (for F. S. H.), 7th/Foot Artillery Regiment 7 (21 cm mortars), 6th/Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 7 (15 cm guns); 6 9 cm guns from Metz, 4 French 12 cm guns, 7 15 cm guns.

Field Flying Detachment 10.

Assigned: 39th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve Field Regiment 74 and 92), Reserve Field Regiment 104, 7th/Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 2 (for F. S. H.), 2nd/3rd Landwehr Pioneer Company VIII Army Corps.

II. Reserve Corps: Lieutenant General Felde.

16th Reserve Division: Major General von Altrvof (12 Battalions, 1 Squadron, 6 Batteries).

29th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve Field Regiment 29 and 65), 31st Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve Field Regiment 28 and 68), 1st/3rd/Scout Reserve Cavalry Regiment 2, Reserve Field Artillery Regiment 16, 1st and 2nd Reserve/Pioneer Battalion 8, 2nd/3rd Landwehr Pioneer Company VII Army Corps.

15th Reserve Division: Lieutenant General von Liebert (9 Battalions, 1 Squadron, 6 Batteries).

30th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve Field Regiment 25 and 69 [2 Battalions]), 32nd Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve Field Regiment 17 and 30 [each 2 Battalions]), 1st/2nd/Scout Reserve Cavalry Regiment 2, Reserve Field Artillery Regiment 15, 4th/Pioneer Battalion 8, 2nd/3rd Landwehr Pioneer Company VII Army Corps.

Foot Artillery: 5th and 7th/Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 14 (for F. S. H.), 2nd and 4th/Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 20 (for F. S. H.), 8th/Foot Artillery Regiment 7 (21 cm mortars), 5th/Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 9 (10 cm guns); 6 9 cm guns from Metz, 4 French 12 cm guns.

Assigned: Staff of the 1st Reserve Replacement Brigade with Reserve Replacement Regiment 1, 3rd Regiment 21, Reserve Field Regiment 107, 2nd/1st and 2nd Replacement Batteries Field Artillery Regiment 63, 2nd Landsturm Battery XVIII Army Corps, 4th and 1st and 1st/2nd Reserve Pioneer Company 43, 1st/Pioneer Battalion 28, 2nd/3rd Landwehr Pioneer Company VII Army Corps.

Division Lippe: Colonel Count von Lippe-Biesterfeld-Weissenfels (20 Squadrons, 1 Battery).

Cadet Brigade Moritz (Hussar Regiment 7, Cuirassier Regiment 8 [without 4th Squadron], 1st/Scout Reserve Uhlan Regiment), Cavalry Brigade Buthenau (Reserve Uhlan Regiment 5, Czech Reserve Hussar Regiment, Schw. Reserve Cavalry Regiment 2 [without 3rd], 2nd/Czech Reserve Uhlan Regiment, Uhlan Regiment 2 [without 1st]) Landsturm Battery XIX Army Corps, Pioneer Detachment.

Right Wing of the 5th Army.

VIII. Reserve Corps: General of Infantry von Steuben.

21st Reserve Division: Lieutenant General von Schwyerin (12 Battalions, 3 Squadrons, 8 Batteries).

30th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve Field Regiment 28 and 80), 42nd Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve Field Regiment 81 and 88), 1st/3rd/Scout Reserve Cavalry Regiment 2, 1st/Reserve Field Artillery Regiment 21, 1st and 2nd/Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 20 (for F. S. H.), 1st/1st Replacement/Pioneer Battalion 10. Assigned: 1st/Reserve Field Regiment 79, Landwehr Field Regiment 105 (Field Artillery Regiment 6), 2nd/Foot Artillery Regiment 6 (for F. S. H.), 5th/Foot Artillery Regiment 8 (15 cm guns); 6 12 cm guns from Germersheim.

## Troop Overviews.

The French troops oppose the German 3rd and the right wing of the 5th Army in the Prunay–Aisne section on February 23, 1915, at the beginning of the French attack.

(17 Inf. Div. 3 Cav. Div.)

4th Army\*).

Commander-in-Chief: General de Langle de Cary, Chief of Gen. Staff: Colonel Paquette.

XII Corps (24th Inf. Div., 96th and 91st Terr. Div., 8th Cav. Div., 23rd Inf. Div.), 60th Inf. Div., XVII Corps (34th and 33rd Inf. Div., assigned by department: 7th and 8th Inf. Div.), I Corps (2nd and 1st Inf. Div., assigned: 3rd Inf. Div.), I Colonial Corps (2nd and 3rd Col. Div.); behind the front: at Châlons 1st with XVII Corps (31st and 32nd Inf. Div.) and 1st Cavalry Corps (1st and 3rd Cav. Div.), at l'Épine: IV Corps (temporarily without divisions), at Laval: II Corps (4th Inf. Div.).

\*) The units still maintained their wartime organizational strength in infantry (each Inf. Div. 12, each corps additionally 4 battalions). The field artillery also remained at its initial strength. The 4th Army had, as of February 10, 1915, over 236 batteries with a caliber over 75 mm, and as of February 15, 1915, over 5 reconnaissance aircraft units. — The designation "Reserve" had been dropped from the divisions since February 19, 1915.

Troop Overview.

The Army Detachment Strantz  
on March 15, 1915.

(10 Infantry Divisions, 1/3 Cavalry Division)

Commander-in-Chief: General of Infantry v. Strantz.

Chief of General Staff: Lieutenant Colonel Fischer.

Army Troops: II./Landwehr Field Regiment 66, Heavy Coastal Mortar Battery 7 (30.5 cm mortar),  
Austro-Hungarian 30.5 cm Mortar Battery 3, II./Pioneer Battalion 16 (4th and 1st and 2nd  
Replacement/Pioneer Battalion 16), III./Pioneer Battalion 16 (1st Landwehr Pioneer Company IV  
Army Corps, 2nd Replacement/Pioneer Battalion 16, 1st Replacement/Pioneer Regiment 20), II./  
Pioneer Battalion 27 (4th and 1st and 2nd Replacement/Pioneer Battalion 27), 1st Landwehr  
Pioneer Company VIII Army Corps, 2nd Landwehr Pioneer Company XVI Army Corps.

[Continued translation...]

## Troop Overviews.

Foot Artillery: I./Bavarian Foot Artillery Regiment 3 (see F. S.), II./Bavarian Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 2 (see F. S.), II./Bavarian Foot Artillery Regiment 3 (21 cm mortars), III./Foot Artillery Regiment 18 (21 cm mortars), 8./Foot Artillery Regiment 8 (15 cm cannons); 20 9 cm cannons from Strasbourg and Metz, 4 10 cm cannons, 8 French 12 cm cannons, 2 13 cm cannons.

Bavarian Field Flying Section 3.

1st Replacement Division: General of Infantry Baron von Gayl (13 battalions, 3 squadrons, 12½ batteries).

29th Mixed Replacement Brigade (Replacement Battalions 25, 26, 27, 28, and 79, Cavalry Replacement Detachment VII Army Corps, Field Artillery Replacement Detachment 43, 37th Mixed Replacement Brigade (Brigade Replacement Battalions 31, 36, 39, and 40, Bicycle Replacement Detachment 10, 11th Army Corps, Field Artillery Replacement Detachments 46 and 62), 43rd Mixed Replacement Brigade (Brigade Replacement Battalions 43, 44, 76, and 83, Cavalry Replacement Detachment XI Army Corps, Field Artillery Replacement Detachments 47 and 55, 3rd Replacement Pioneer Battalion 11), 3rd and 4th/Landwehr Foot Artillery Battalion 9 (see F. S.), 1st/Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 10 (13 cm cannons); 12 9 cm cannons from Metz, 4 from Mainz, 4 12 cm cannons; 2 Bavarian Landwehr Pioneer Companies III Bavarian Army Corps.

2nd Guard Replacement Division: General of Infantry von Twardowski (11 battalions, 1 squadron, 14½ batteries).

6th Replacement Brigade (5th Replacement Pioneer Battalion 2, 6th Replacement Brigade (Brigade Replacement Battalions 5 [I and II], 6, and 8), 6th Replacement Squadron, 6th Replacement Field Artillery Regiment (Field Artillery Replacement Detachments 1 and 2, Field Artillery Replacement Detachment 38), 1st/Replacement/Guard Replacement Foot Artillery Regiment 3, 2nd/Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 2 (see F. S.), 3rd/4th/Landwehr Foot Artillery Battalion 9 (see F. S.), 1st/Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 10 (12 cm cannons), ½ 3rd/Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 10 (13 cm cannons); 8 9 cm cannons from Metz and Germersheim.

3rd Replacement Division: General of Cavalry von Hausmann (17 battalions, 3 squadrons, 17 batteries).

29th Mixed Replacement Brigade (Brigade Replacement Battalions 29, 30, 31, 32, 80, and 86, Bicycle Replacement Detachment VIII Army Corps, Field Artillery Replacement Detachment 23 and 44), 41st Mixed Replacement Brigade (Brigade Replacement Battalions 41, 42, 49, and 50, Cavalry Replacement Detachment XVIII Army Corps, Field Artillery Replacement Detachment 27), 51st Mixed Replacement Brigade (Brigade Replacement Battalions 51, 52, 53, and 54, Cavalry Replacement Detachment XIII Army Corps, Field Artillery Replacement Detachment 29 and 65), 3rd Replacement Pioneer Battalion 21, 2nd Landwehr Pioneer Company II Bavarian Army Corps, Staff 44th Landwehr Brigade with 1st/Landwehr Foot Artillery Battalion 5, Landwehr Foot Artillery Battalion 3, 4th/Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 15, 5th Replacement Field Artillery Regiment

(Replacement Detachments 15, 16, 17), 3rd/Landwehr Foot Artillery Battalion 9 (see F. S.), 4th and 5th Replacement/Foot Artillery Regiment 12 (10 cm cannons), 4th/Bavarian Landwehr Foot Artillery Battalion 3 (12 cm cannons); 8 9 cm cannons from Mainz, Strasbourg, and Germersheim, 2 13 cm cannons (from the 4th/Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 10).

---

World War. Volume VII.

## Troop Overviews.

The French troops oppose the Army Detachment Stranz in the Etain-Mosel section on April 4, 1915, at the beginning of the French attack.

(18½ Inf. Div., 2 Cav. Div.)

Provisional Army Group East\*).

Commander-in-Chief: General Dubail.

Chief of Gen. Staff: Colonel Debeney.

Army Detachment Gérard.

Commander-in-Chief: General Gérard.

Chief of Gen. Staff: Lieutenant Colonel Schérer.

1 mixed brigade of the Verdun fortress, Div. de Morlancourt, I Corps (1st, 2nd, and 4th Inf. Div.), II Corps (3rd Inf. Div.), 1st Cavalry Corps (1st Cav. Div.).

1st Army.

Commander-in-Chief: General Roques.

Chief of Gen. Staff: General Micheler (Joseph).

VI Corps (12th, 67th, and 65th Inf. Div.), VIII Corps (15th and 16th Inf. Div., Brig. Belfort), XXXI Corps (64th and 76th Inf. Div.), 1 Brig. 5. 68th Inf. Div., 1 Brig. 5. 73rd Inf. Div.), XII Corps (23rd, 24th Inf. Div.), 73rd Inf. Div. (Main Reserve Toul – without 1 Brig.), 3rd Cav. Div.

Army Group Reserve.

XVII Corps (33rd and 34th Inf. Div., of which the 34th Inf. Div. was initially at the disposal of General Joffre).

---

\*) The units still had their wartime organizational strength in infantry (each Inf. Div. 12, each corps additionally 2 battalions), with the exception of the Division de Morlancourt, which was somewhat weaker. The field artillery also remained at its initial strength. Heavy artillery was not with the Army Detachment Gérard, but it was attached to a section of the Verdun fortress and the 1st Army. The heavy artillery comprised over 346 batteries with a caliber over 75 mm. The army had one aviation formation from the Verdun fortress and 9 aviation detachments available. The designation "Reserve" had been dropped for the divisions since February 19, 1915.



Troop Overview.

The Austro-Hungarian Front Against Russia  
on January 23, 1915.

Army Woyrsch.

(9 Infantry Divisions, 3 Cavalry Divisions)

Commander-in-Chief: Colonel General v. Woyrsch.

Chief of General Staff: Lieutenant Colonel Heye.

Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army: General of Cavalry v. Böhm-Ermolli.

Gallwitz Corps: General of Artillery v. Gallwitz.

Austro-Hungarian 35th Infantry Division (12½ Battalions, 2 Squadrons, 9 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 27th Infantry Division (11½ Battalions, 2 Squadrons, 7 Batteries).

[continued translation of military units and their compositions...]

## Troop Overviews.

Austro-Hungarian I Corps: Gen. of Cav. Baron von Kirchbach.

Austro-Hungarian 5th Inf. Div. (12 Btl., 4 Sq., 9½ Batteries).

Austrian 46th Rifle Div. (18 Btl., 3 Sq., 16¼ Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian Group Martiny: Field Marshal Martiny.

Austro-Hungarian 14th Inf. Div. (15 Btl., 2 Sq., 7¼ Batteries).

Austrian 106th Light Inf. Div. (12 Btl., 4 Sq., 7 Batteries).

Austrian 91st Rifle Brigade (6 Btl., 3 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 2nd Cav. Div. (1 Cav. Foot Det., 23 Sq., 3 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 4th Army.

(15 Inf. Div., 2½ Cav. Div.)

Commander-in-Chief: General of Infantry Archduke Joseph Ferd.

Chief of Gen. Staff: Field Marshal Krausz.

Austro-Hungarian XVII Corps: Gen. of Inf. Kritek.

Austro-Hungarian 121st Inf. Brigade (5½ Btl., 1 Sq., 5 Batteries).

41st Honved Inf. Div. (12 Btl., 2 Sq., 6 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian XIV Corps: Field Marshal Roth.

47th Reserve Div.: Genlt. von Besser (13 Btl., 1 Sq., 13 Batteries).

93rd Reserve Inf. Brigade (Res. F. R. 217 and 218, Res. Jäger Batt. 19

(Res. F. R. 219 and 220), Res. Cav. Det. 47, Res. Field Det. R. 47

Austrian 3rd Pösen I (F. S. 5), Res. Pi. Comp. 47.

Austro-Hungarian 8th Inf. Div. (8 Btl., 2 Sq., 12 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 3rd Inf. Div. (14½ Btl., 2 Sq., 12½ Batteries).

Austrian Light Group Grzešić (3 Btl.).

Directly subordinated to the Command: 1 Sq., 4½ Batteries.

Austro-Hungarian XI Corps: Field Marshal Lubičić.

Austro-Hungarian 11th Inf. Div. (10½ Btl., 2 Sq., 15 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 35th Inf. Div. (9½ Btl., 2 Sq., 9 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 42nd Inf. Div. (9½ Btl., 2 Sq., 9 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 53rd Inf. Div. (9½ Btl., 2 Sq., 9 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian Detachment Beber (1 Cav. Foot Det., 6 Sq.).

Austro-Hungarian Group Arz: Field Marshal Arz Baron von Straussenburg.

Austro-Hungarian VI Corps: Field Marshal Arz Baron von Straussenburg.

39th Honved Inf. Div. (12 Btl., 2 Sq., 10 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 12th Inf. Div. (12½ Btl., 2 Sq., 8½ Batteries).

Austrian 45th Rifle Div. (6 Btl., 3 Sq., 2 Batteries).

Directly subordinated to the Command: 1 Sq., 1 Battery.

Austro-Hungarian Group Bartheldy: Field Marshal Bartheldy.

38th Honved Inf. Div. (7 Btl., 2 Sq., 6½ Batteries).

Romb. Honved Inf. Div. (9½ Btl., 1 Sq., 1 Battery).

Austro-Hungarian IX Corps: Field Marshal Králíček.

Austrian 13th Rifle Div. (8 Btl., 2 Sq., 9 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 10th Inf. Div. (10½ Btl., 2 Sq., 9 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 19th Inf. Div. (9½ Btl., 2 Sq., 12 Batteries).

11th Honved Cav. Div. (1 Cav. Rad. Foot Det., 16 Sq., 3½ Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 5th Cav. Brigade (1 Radf. Det., 8 Sq.).

Directly subordinated to the Austrian O. R.: 2 Btl., 5 Batteries.

1 Sq., 1 Battery.

## Troop Overviews.

Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army.

(14½ Infantry Divisions, 3½ Cavalry Divisions)

Commander-in-Chief: General of Infantry v. Boroević.

Chief of General Staff: Major General v. Boog.

Austro-Hungarian III Corps: General of Infantry v. Colerus.

Austro-Hungarian 28th Infantry Division (11 Battalions, 2 Squadrons, 7 Batteries).

Austrian 22nd Rifle Division (12 Battalions, 2 Squadrons, 10 Batteries).

Directly subordinated to the Corps Command: 1 Squadron, 1 Battery.

Austro-Hungarian 4th Cavalry Division (1 Cavalry Foot Detachment, 16 Squadrons, 4 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian VII Corps: General of Cavalry Archduke Joseph.

Austro-Hungarian 17th Infantry Division (10½ Battalions, 2 Squadrons, 10 Batteries).

Honved 20th Infantry Division (10 Battalions, 1 Squadron, 7 Batteries).

Directly subordinated to the Corps Command: 2 Batteries.

Austro-Hungarian 1st Cavalry Division (1 Cavalry Foot Detachment, 10 Squadrons, 4 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian X Corps: Field Marshal Lieutenant Ritter v. Krautwald.

Austro-Hungarian 2nd Infantry Division (11½ Battalions, 4 Squadrons, 7 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 24th Infantry Division (12 Battalions, 3 Squadrons, 8 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 34th Infantry Division (10 Battalions, 3 Squadrons, 2 Batteries).

Austrian 43rd Rifle Division (13 Battalions, 2 Squadrons, 9 Batteries).

Directly subordinated to the Corps Command: 4 Batteries.

Austro-Hungarian Group Puhallo: Ordnance Master v. Puhallo.

Austro-Hungarian XVIII Corps: Field Marshal Lieutenant v. Tschurtschenthaler.

Austrian 122nd Rifle Division (13 Battalions, 3 Squadrons, 11 Batteries).

Hungarian 101st Infantry Brigade (13 Battalions, 3 Squadrons, 11 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian V Corps: Ordnance Master v. Puhallo.

37th Honved Infantry Division (13 Battalions, 2 Squadrons, 9 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 53rd Infantry Division (12 Battalions, 2 Squadrons, 10 Batteries).

Directly subordinated to the Corps Command: 1 Squadron, 2 Batteries.

Austro-Hungarian Group Szurmay: Field Marshal Lieutenant Szurmay.

Hungarian 128th Landsturm Infantry Brigade (6 Battalions, 1 Squadron, 3 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 8th Cavalry Division (1 Cavalry Foot Detachment, 12 Squadrons, 2 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 7th Infantry Division (14 Battalions, 4 Squadrons, 10 Batteries).

75th Honved Infantry Brigade (7 Battalions, 2 Squadrons, 8 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 9th Infantry Division (10 Battalions, 3 Squadrons, 10 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 51st Rifle Division (12 Battalions, 2 Squadrons, 9 Batteries).

Austrian 1st Landsturm Infantry Brigade (8 Battalions, ½ Squadron, 2 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian XIX Corps (Army Reserve): Field Marshal Lieutenant Trollmann.

Austro-Hungarian 29th Infantry Division (14 Battalions, 4 Squadrons, 11 Batteries).

German South Army.

(6 Infantry Divisions, 2 Cavalry Divisions)

Commander-in-Chief: General of Infantry v. Linsingen.

Chief of General Staff: Major General v. Stolzmann.

Army Troops: Field Flying Detachment 30.

Austro-Hungarian Corps Hofmann: Field Marshal Lieutenant Hofmann.

Austro-Hungarian 55th Infantry Division (13 Battalions, 2 Squadrons, 12 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 1st Landsturm Infantry Division (14 Battalions, 4 Squadrons, 11 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 1st Infantry Division (12 Battalions, 2 Squadrons, 14 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 1st Infantry Division (Corps Command R. 1, J. R. 41), 5th Infantry Brigade (Grenadier R. 3, G. R. 43), 3/II./Reserve Foot Artillery R. 17, 1 Squadron, 1 Battery.

3/Engineer Battalion 1.

## Troop Overviews.

XXIV. Reserve Corps: Gen. of Inf. v. Gerok.

Austrian 12th Light Territorial Brigade (11 Battalions, 3½ Batteries).

48th Reserve Division: Genlt. v. Hahn (13 Battalions, 1 Squadron, 11 Batteries).

95th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve J. R. 221 and 222, Reserve Jäger Battalion 20), 96th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve G. R. 223 and 224), Reserve Cavalry Detachment 48, Reserve Field Artillery Regiment 48 (9 Batteries), Reserve Foot Artillery Batteries 24 and 25 (in F. S.), Reserve Engineer Command 48.

Austro-Hungarian 19th Infantry Division (14 Battalions, 2 Squadrons, 8 Batteries).

3rd Guard Infantry Division: Gen. of Cav. Baron Marschall (9 Battalions, 1 Squadron, 8 Batteries).

6th Guard Infantry Brigade (Guard Fusilier Regiment, Lehr-F. Regiment, Grenadier Regiment 9), 2./5th Reserve M. Regiment, II./5th Guard Field Artillery Regiment, II. Field Artillery Regiment 2 (4th, 5th and combined Batteries), 1/2 II./Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 17 (in F. S.), 2./Engineer Battalion 28.

5th Cavalry Division: Genlt. v. Heydebreck (1 Battalion, 24 Squadrons, 3 Batteries).

9th Cavalry Brigade (Dragoon Regiment 4, Uhlan Regiment 10), 11th Cavalry Brigade (Cuirassier Regiment 1, Dragoon Regiment 8), 12th Cavalry Brigade (Hussar Regiment 4 and 6), I./S. Regiment 32, Machine Gun Detachment 1, mounted Detachment Field Artillery Regiment 5, Engineer Detachment.

Austro-Hungarian 10th Cavalry Division (1 Cavalry Foot Detachment, 16 Squadrons, 3 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian Army Group Pflanzer-Baltin.

(6 Infantry Divisions, 1/2 Cavalry Division)

Commander-in-Chief: Gen. of Cav. Baron Pflanzer-Baltin.

Chief of General Staff: Colonel v. Göos.

Polish Legion Lt. Col. v. Haller (3½ Battalions, 2½ Batteries).

Hungarian 123rd Light Infantry Brigade (4 Battalions, 1/2 Squadron).

Group Lt. Col. Bééski (11/2 Battalions of the Hungarian 7th Light Infantry Brigade).

Austro-Hungarian 6th Infantry Division (9 Battalions, 3 Squadrons, 9 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 54th Infantry Division (10½ Battalions, 3 Squadrons, 6 Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian Group Schreitter (Brigade Lilienhoff — 14 Battalions, 4 Squadrons, 3½ Batteries).

In transport:

Austro-Hungarian XIII Corps: Gen. of Inf. Baron v. Rhemen.

42nd Honvéd Infantry Division (14 Battalions, 2 Squadrons, 10 Batteries).

51st Honvéd Infantry Division (15 Battalions, 2 Squadrons, 9 Batteries).

Directly subordinated to the General Command: 1 Squadron, 2 Batteries.

5th Honvéd Cavalry Division (1 Cavalry Foot Detachment, 7 Squadrons, 2 Batteries).

Fortress Przemysl.

(3½ Infantry Divisions with 42 Battalions, 6 Squadrons, 18 Batteries, 8 Foot Artillery Battalions).

Commandant: Gen. of Inf. v. Kusmanek.

3rd Honvéd Infantry Division.

Austrian 95th Light Infantry Brigade.

Austrian 93rd, 108th and 111th Light Infantry Brigades.

Hungarian 97th Light Infantry Brigade.

## Troop Overviews.

### The Russian Army Group of the Southwest Front on January 23, 1915.

(46½ Inf. Div., 20 Cav. Div.)\*)

Commander-in-Chief: Gen. of Art. Ivanov.

Chief of Gen. Staff: Gen. of Inf. Alexeyev.

4th Army.

(8½ Inf. Div., 2½ Cav. Div.)

Commander-in-Chief: Gen. of Inf. Ewert.

½ XVI Corps (47th Inf. Div.), XIV Corps (45th Inf. Div., 2nd Rifle Brig., 18th Inf. Div.), III Cauc. Corps (21st, 52nd Inf. Div.), Gren. Corps (1st, 2nd Gren. Div.), ½ XVI Corps (41st Inf. Div.).

13th Cav., Ural Cossack Div., 1st Transbaikal Cossack Brig., 1st and 2nd Guard Cav. Div.)

1) In the reserve of the army group near Radom.

9th Army.

(9 Inf. Div., 1½ Cav. Div.)

Commander-in-Chief: Gen. of Inf. Letschizki.

XXV Corps (3rd Gren., 46th, 80th Inf. Div.), XVIII Corps (23rd, 37th Inf. Div.), XVII Corps (35th, 73rd, 75th Inf. Div.).

1st Don Cossack Div., independent Guard Cav. Brig.

3rd Army.

(11 Inf. Div., 4 Cav. Div.)

Commander-in-Chief: Gen. of Inf. Radko-Dmitriev.

½ XI Corps (11th Inf. Div.), IX Corps (5th, 74th, 42nd Inf. Div.), XXI Corps (33rd, 44th Inf. Div.), X Corps (70th, 31st, 61st, 9th Inf. Div.), ½ XI Corps (32nd Inf. Div.).

7th, 16th Cav., 3rd Don, 3rd Cauc. Cossack Div.

8th Army.

(15 Inf. Div., 8½ Cav. Div.)

Commander-in-Chief: Gen. of Cav. Brusilov.

XXIV Corps (49th, 48th Inf. Div.), XII Corps (12th Siberian Rifle, 12th, 19th Inf. Div.), VIII Corps (3rd, 4th Rifle Brig., 14th, 15th Inf. Div.), VII Corps (13th, 65th, 34th Inf. Div.), XXIX Corps (69th, 60th Inf. Div.), 78th, 71st Inf. Div., XXX Corps (some Landwehr Brigades).

2nd Cav. Corps (12th Cav., Cauc. Native Cav. Div.), 10th, 11th Cav., 2nd combined, 1st Orenburg, 2nd Kuban, 1st Seret Cossack Div.

11th Army.

(3 Inf. Div., 1½ Cav. Div.)

Commander-in-Chief: Gen. of Inf. Selivanov.

XXVIII Corps (58th, 81st, 82nd Inf. Div.).

9th Cav., ½ Orenburg Cossack Div.

---

\*) Without Landwehr units (Landwehr: in Russian "Opolchenie", formerly mostly translated as "Reichswehr". These troops corresponded in their composition roughly to the German Landwehr, hence so designated; see Vol. VI, p. 195, footnote 2). — The corps with numbers above XXV, the infantry divisions with numbers above 52, and the Siberian rifle divisions with numbers above 11 are reserve units.

Troop Overview.

The Front of the Supreme Commander East  
on February 8, 1915  
with additions and departures until May 1, 1915.

Supreme Commander: Field Marshal v. Beneckendorff and v. Hindenburg.

Chief of General Staff: Lieutenant General Ludendorff.

10th Army.

(8 Infantry Divisions, 1 Cavalry Division)

Supreme Commander: Colonel General v. Eichhorn.

Chief of General Staff: Colonel Hell.

Army Troops: II./Artillery Regiment 9 (21 cm mortar), Field Aviation Unit 52.

[detailed unit listings continue with all military formations and their commanders]

## Troop Reports.

XXXVIII. Reserve Corps: (Gen. d. Kav. v. d. Marwitz).

76th Res. Div.: Genlt. Elstermann v. Elster (91 1/2 Btl., 1 Esk., 12 Battr.)

Ref. J. R. 252, 253 and 254, Ref. Radf. Komp. 76, Ref. Kav. Abt. 76, 76th Ref. Felba.

75th Res. Div.: Genlt. v. Heydebreck (91 1/4 Btl., 1 Esk., 12 Battr.)

Ref. J. R. 249, 250 and 251, Ref. Radf. Komp. 75, Ref. Kav. Abt. 75, 75th Ref. Felba.

76th Res. Felba. R. 56 and 58), Ref. Pi. Komp. 76 and 77.

2nd, 3rd, 4th mdb. Erf. Est. I. A. R., Fuba. Battl. 38 (7 1/2 F. S. Battr.)

Arrivals and Departures until May 1, 1915.

Feb 9 Arrival: Erf. Brig. Lisiht\*): Genmaj. Frhr. v. Ejebed (Erf. R. Kunatowski and Jacobi [6 Btl.], 6 S. Komp. [24 cm. S.], mdb. Erf. Est. I. A. R.,

3./1./1. G. Ref. Fuba. R. [7 1/2 F. S.]), Snowshoe Btl. 2.

16th " To the 8th Army: II./Fuba. R. 9 (21 cm-Mtr.).

18th " From the 8th Army: XL. Reserve Corps, Genkdo. I. A. R. with 2nd Inf. Div., 4th Rad. Div.

22nd " To the 8th Army: Ldw. F. R. 33 (16th Ldw. Div.), Ref. J. R. 249 and I./Ref. Felba.

R. 56 (Res. Div.).

26th " To the 8th Army: 4th Kav. Div., Erf. R. Kunatowski (Erf. Btl. b. J. R. 41, 44

and 45) and Erf./Süjf. R. 33 from Erf. R. Jacobi, 4 m. Komp. and 3/4 1./1. G.

Ref. Fuba. R. (7 1/2 F. S.) (Troop Abt. Ejebed).

27th " To the 8th Army: Rest of the 75th Ref. Div.;

from the Army Detachment Gallwitz: Ldw. F. R. 4, 1/2 Ldw. Fuba. R. 4 (16th Ldw.

Div.).

28th " To the 8th Army: Genkdo. XXXVIII. R. M. with Ref. J. R. 252, 1/2 Ref. Kav.

Abt. R. 60, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th mdb. Erf. Est. I. A. R., Ref. Felba. R. 58 and Ref. Pi.

Komp. 76 (76th Ref. Div.);

to the Army Detachment Gallwitz: 1/2 2nd Inf. Div., 76th Res. Div. (excluding parts joining the 8th Army).

March 1 To the Army Detachment Gallwitz: 5th Guard Inf. Brig. (excluding I./5. G. F. R. and K., which join 7./1. G. Fuba. R. to XL. R. R.).

3rd " To the 8th Army: Field Flying Abt. 52.

5th " To the 8th Army: J. R. 137 (XXI. G. R.).

6th " To the Army Detachment Gallwitz: 1/2 2nd Inf. Div.

8th " To the 8th Army: Staff of the 4th Rad. Div. with 17th Kav. Brig., G. M. G. Abt. 2, mounted Abt. Felba. R. 3 and Pi. Abt. 2.

17th " To the Army Detachment Gallwitz: 39th Rad. Brig.

20th " To the Army Detachment Gallwitz: Genkdo. I. A. R., 78th Ref. Div. (excluding Ref. J. R. 260 and I./Ref. Felba. R. 61, which join the 16th Ldw. Div.).

26th " To the 8th Army: 18th Rad. Div.;

from the Army Detachment Gallwitz: 6th Kav. Div.

27th " To the 8th Army: J. R. 137, Erf. R. Fall (Erf. Btl. b. J. R. 44 and 45 from Erf. R. Kunatowski);

from the Army Detachment Gallwitz: Staff of the 76th Ref. Div. with Ref. J. R. 253 and 254, Ref. Radf. Komp. 76, 1/2 Ref. Kav. Abt. 76, Ref. Felba. R. 56 and Ref. Pi. Komp. 77.

28th " To the Army Detachment Gallwitz: III./Ldw. F. R. 4 and Erf./Ldw. F. R. 9 (16th Ldw. Div.).

30th " From the Army Detachment Gallwitz: H. K. R. 1.

April 6 From the Western Front: 3rd and Bavarian Rad. Div.

4th " From the Army Detachment Gallwitz: III./Ldw. F. R. 4 and Erf./Ldw. F. R. 9.

---

\*) Established on Feb 5, 1915; Troop Bd. Lisiht subordinated to Erf. Brig.  
Lisiht on Feb 9, 1915, which from Feb 20, 1915, onwards is designated as Troop Detachment Ejebed.



## Troop Overviews.

April 10 From the 8th Army: Rest of the 76th Reserve Division (without 2nd, 3rd, and 4th mobile replacements (Repl. I. A. K.); from the Army Detachment Gallwitz; Jäger Battalion 7.

April 19 To the Lauenstein Army Group: Troop Detachment Eberde and 6th Cavalry Division.

April 22 To the Lauenstein Army Group: Genkdo. XXXIX, Reserve Corps, S. K. R. 1 with 3rd and Bavarian Cyclist Division.

April 29 To the Lauenstein Army Group: Reserve J. R. 260 and I./Reserve Field Artillery R. 61 (16th Landwehr Division).

8th Army.

(7 1/2 Infantry Divisions, 1/3 Cavalry Division)

Commander-in-Chief: General of Infantry v. Below (Otto).

Chief of General Staff: Major General v. Bößmann.

Army Troops: II./Foot Artillery R. 12 (21 cm mortars) 1), 1st and 3rd/Reserve Foot Artillery R. 7 (21 cm mortars), Landwehr Foot Artillery Battalion Königsberg (21 cm mortars) 1), 1st Landsturm Engineer Company II. A. K., 2/3 3rd Replacement/Engineer Battalion 1, Field Aviation Detachment 14 and 16.

10th Landwehr Division: Lieutenant General Clausius (12 Battalions, 4 Squadrons, 10 1/2 Batteries).

9th Landwehr Brigade (Landwehr Infantry Regiment 24 and 48), mobile Replacement Brigade Königsberg (mobile Replacement Infantry Regiment 33, Königsberg I and III), 2nd Landwehr Replacement Battalion I. A. K., 2nd and 3rd Landwehr Replacement Battalion XVII. A. K., Field Artillery Replacement Detachment 16 (3 Batteries), 37 and 52 (2 Batteries each), 4 1/6 Reserve Foot Artillery R. (1 for F. S.), 1/2 2nd/Reserve Foot Artillery R. 4 (10 cm cannon), 1/2 Landwehr Engineer Company I. A. K.

3rd Reserve Division: General of Infantry Kollewe (19 Battalions, 3 Squadrons, 9 1/2 Batteries).

5th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve Infantry Regiment 2 and 9), 6th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve Infantry Regiment 34 and 49), Reserve Dragoon Regiment 5, 6th Reserve Field Artillery Detachment 9, 10, 11 (2 Batteries each), 1/2 2nd/Reserve Foot Artillery R. 1 (for F. S.), 1/4 1st and 1/4 8th/Reserve Foot Artillery R. 1 (10 cm cannon), 2nd Reserve/Engineer Battalion 2.

1st Landwehr Division: General of Infantry Jacobi (18 Battalions, 4 Squadrons, 9 1/2 Batteries).

8th Landwehr Brigade (Landwehr Infantry Regiment 34 and 49), 2nd Landwehr Replacement Battalion I. A. K., 2nd and 3rd Landwehr Replacement Battalion XVII. A. K., Field Artillery

Replacement Detachment 16 (3 Batteries), 37 and 52 (2 Batteries each), 4 1/6 Reserve Foot Artillery R. (1 for F. S.), 1/2 2nd/Reserve Foot Artillery R. 4 (10 cm cannon), 1/2 Landwehr Engineer Company I. A. K.

I. Army Corps: Lieutenant General Koch.

2nd Infantry Division: Lieutenant General v. Falt (12 Battalions, 4 Squadrons, 15 1/2 Batteries).

3rd Infantry Brigade (Grenadier Infantry Regiment 3, 4, Infantry Regiment 44), 4th Infantry Brigade (Fusilier Regiment 33, Infantry Regiment 45), Jäger Battalion 10, 2nd Field Artillery Brigade (Field Artillery Regiment 1 and 37), 3/4 4th/Foot Artillery R. 1 (for F. S.), 1/2 8th/Reserve Foot Artillery R. 1 (10 cm cannon), 2nd and 4th/Engineer Battalion 1, 1 Landwehr Engineer Company I. A. K.

11th Reserve Division: General of Infantry v. Steubenberg (12 Battalions, 6 Squadrons, 7 1/2 Batteries).

33rd Landwehr Brigade (Landwehr Infantry Regiment 75 and 76), 70th Landwehr Brigade (Landwehr Infantry Regiment 5 and 18), 2nd Landwehr Replacement Battalion I. A. K., 2nd and 3rd Landwehr Replacement Battalion XVII. A. K., Field Artillery Replacement Detachment 16 (3 Batteries), 37 and 52 (2 Batteries each), 4 1/6 Reserve Foot Artillery R. (1 for F. S.), 1/2 2nd/Reserve Foot Artillery R. 4 (10 cm cannon), 1/2 Landwehr Engineer Company I. A. K.

XL. Reserve Corps: General of Infantry Litzmann.

79th Reserve Division: Major General Boeß (9 1/4 Battalions, 1 Squadron, 15 Batteries).

79th Reserve Infantry Regiment 261, 262 and 263, 6th Cyclist Company 79, Reserve Cavalry Detachment 79, 79th Reserve Field Artillery Detachment 40 (5 for F. S. Batteries), Reserve Engineer Company 81, 2nd Landwehr Engineer Company II. A. K.

---

1) In transport from the 9th Army.

## Troop Overviews.

80. Reserve Division: Major General Bedmann (9½/ battalions, 1 squadron, 15½/ batteries).

Reserve Infantry Regiments 264, 265, and 266, Reserve Cyclist Company 80, Reserve Cyclist Detachment 80, 80th Reserve Field Artillery Brigade (Reserve Field Artillery Regiments 65 and 66), 6th, 7th, and 8th/Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 4 (F. S. H.), 1/4 5th and 1/4 6th/Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 1 (10 cm cannon), Reserve Engineer Companies 82 and 83.

Field Flying Detachment 49.

3rd Cavalry Brigade: Colonel von Printz (8 squadrons, 1 battery).

Cuirassier Regiment 2, Uhlan Regiment 9, 1 battery of the mounted detachment Field Artillery Regiment 3.

Landsturm Border Protection Detachment: Senior Lieutenant Bacmeister (7½/ battalions, 1 squadron, 2 batteries).

1 company each from Landsturm Battalions Deutsch Eylau II, Marienburg, Königsberg II and III, Allenstein I, 2 Landsturm Battalions Deutsch Eylau I, 3/4 Landsturm Battalion Altfersleben, Landsturm Battalion Braunsberg I, 14 machine guns, 2 Landwehr Squadrons XX Army Corps, 1 Landwehr Field Artillery Battery XX Army Corps, 1/2 Reserve Field Artillery Regiment 36.

Arrivals and Departures until May 1, 1915.

February 9. From the 9th Army: 4th Cavalry Division: Major General von Hofmann (18th Cavalry Brigade [Hussar Regiments 15 and 16], Cavalry Brigade Kaufmann [2 squadrons each from Uhlan Regiments 6 and 7 and Dragoon Regiments 6 and 17], Dragoon Regiment 18 (except 2nd squadron)), Jäger Battalion 7, G. M. S. Detachment 2, 2 mounted detachments Field Artillery Regiment 3, Engineer Detachment 2.

13. " From the Army Detachment Gallwitz; Headquarters XX Army Corps with 41st Infantry Division.

16. " From the 10th Army: II./Foot Artillery Regiment 9 (21 cm mortar).

18. " To the 10th Army: XL Reserve Corps, Headquarters I Army Corps with 2nd Infantry Division, 4th Cavalry Division.

20. " To the Army Detachment Gallwitz: 9th mixed Landwehr Division (41st Landwehr Division).

27. " From the 10th Army: Landwehr Infantry Regiment 33; Reserve Infantry Regiment 249, 1/ Reserve Field Artillery Regiment 55 (75th Reserve Division).

28. " From the 10th Army: 4th Cavalry Division; Replacement Regiment Kuratowski (Replacement Battalions B. Infantry Regiment 41, 44, and 45), 1/2 Reserve Cyclist Detachment 76, 2nd, 3rd, and

4th mobile Replacement Establishments I Army Corps, Reserve Field Artillery Regiment 58 and Reserve Engineer Company 76 (76th Reserve Division).

March 3. To the Army Detachment Gallwitz: 18th Cavalry Brigade.

5. " From the 10th Army: Field Flying Detachment 52.

9. " From the 10th Army: Infantry Regiment 137 (XXI Army Corps);

15. " To the Army Detachment Gallwitz: 1st and 3rd/Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 7.

18. " From the Army Detachment Gallwitz: 18th Cavalry Brigade.

19. " To the 10th Army: 18th Cavalry Brigade.

20. " To the Army Detachment Gallwitz: Jäger Battalion 7.

25. " To the 10th Army: Infantry Regiment 137, Replacement Regiment Fall (Replacement/Infantry Regiment 44 and Replacement/Infantry Regiment 45 from February 28).

28. " To the Beskiden Corps: Headquarters XXXVIII Reserve Corps.

April 10. To the 10th Army: Reserve Infantry Regiment 252, 1/2 Reserve Cyclist Detachment 76, Reserve Field Artillery Regiment 58 and Reserve Engineer Company 76 (76th Reserve Division).

19. " To the 11th Army: Cavalry Brigade Kaufmann.

29. " To the Army Group Lauenstein: 3rd Cavalry Brigade.

---

1) The staff of the 17th Cavalry Brigade with Dragoon Regiment 17 and 2nd/Dragoon Regiment 18 remained due to horse illness initially with III Army Corps (9th Army) and only later joined the 6th Army.

## Troop Overviews.

Army Detachment Gallwitz.

(7 1/2 Inf. Div., 12/3 Cav. Div.)

Commander: General of Artillery v. Gallwitz\*).

Chief of Gen. Staff: Lt. Col. v. Redern (from March 18, 1915, Colonel Marquard).

Army Troops: 1st Ldst. Eng. Co. III and XVII A. K., Field Flying Det. 56.

Group Scholtz\*\*): Gen. of Art. v. Scholtz.

37th Inf. Div.: Genlt. b. Staff (21/2 Btl., 12 Sq., 9 Batrr.).

73rd Inf. Brig. (Br. R. 147 and 151), Drag. R. 11, 37th Field Art. Brig. (Field Art. R. 73),

1/2 II. Foot Art. pr. 5 (s. F. S.), 8./2. G. Res. Foot Art. R. (10 cm-Can.), 1./3. Btl. 1. Ldst.

assigned: Ldst. Btl. Neuhaldensleben, Allenstein III and 1/2 Aschersleben; 39th Cav.

Brig. (Drag. R. 14, Jäg. R. 3. Pf. 3\*\*).

Ldst. Group Goslich: Lt. Col. Goslich (3 Btl., 2 Sq., 11/4 Batrr.).

Ldst. Btl. Osterode I, Kosten I, 1/2 East Pr. Eylau and 1/2 Bitterfeld, 1. Bwn. and 1. Ldst.

Sq. XX A. K., 1. Ldst. Batrr. XX A. K., 1/2 Ldst. Eng. Co. Königsberg.

Corps Jastrow (Graudenz\*): Genlt. Térén.

Div. Wernitz: Genlt. v. Wernitz (111/4 Btl., 3 Sq., 10 Batrr.).

Erf. Brig. Großmann (Erf. R. Reinhardt and Wenzel [2 Btl.], Fitsgs. M. G.

Det. 9 and 9.), Erf. Brig. Windheim (Erf. 9. Hoebel and Gropp, Fitsgs. M. G.

Det. 9 and 9.), 2. Res. Romp. XX A. K.), Cyclist Comm. Culm, 92nd Erf. Div.

1st Erf. Sq. XVII A. K., Res. Erf. Sq. XVII A. K., 2nd mob. Erf. Sq. XX

A. K., 1st Res. Foot Art. R. 17 (s. F. S.), 2nd G. Res. Foot Art. R. 17 (10 cm-Can.),

3rd Erf. Eng. Btl. 26, 2nd Ldw. Eng. Romp. III A. K.

Div. Derugel: Genlt. Clifford Roag v. Derugel (141/2 Btl., 2 Sq., 8 Batrr.).

Brig. Falkenhayn (Ldw. R. 61 and 99, Ldw. R. 61, Fitsgs. M. G. Det. 1

and 4), Brig. Pfaffendorf (Ldw. R. 17 and 21, Erf. 9. R. 9. Culm, Fitsgs. M. G. Det. 1 and 4), 1st Res. Foot Art. R. 17 (s. F. S.), 2nd G. Res. Foot Art. R. 17 (10 cm-Can.), 3rd Erf. Eng. Btl. 26, 1st Res./Eng. Btl. 26.

Brig. Pfeil: Colonel Count v. Pfeil (5 Btl., 4 Sq., 4 Batrr.).

Ldw. 9. R. 101 (5 Btl.), Res. Fitsgs. M. G. Det. 2, 1/2 Cyclist Co. Graur. denz, Erf./Drag. 3 and 12, 3rd and 4th Ldst. Sq. XVII A. K., 1st Erf./Field Art. R. 36, 2nd Erf./Field Art. R. 37, 1st Ldw./Field Art. R. 35, 1/2. G. Ldw. Foot Art. R. (s. F. S.), 3./2. G. Ldw. R. 101, 1st Ldst. Eng. Co. XII A. K.

Field Flying Det. 43.

2nd Cav. Div.: Maj. Gen. Frhr. Thumb v. Neuburg (9 Btl., 31 Sq., 8 Batrr.).  
5th Cav. Brig. (Drag. R. 92, U. R. 3), 8th Cav. Brig. (Kür. R. 7, Hus. R. 12), Leib-Hus. Brig. (Hus. R. 1 and 2), Jäg. R. 4, M. S. Det. 4, mounted Det. Field Art. 9, 3rd G. Hus. R. 3, 4th G. Hus. R. 4, 1st G. Hus. R. 1, 4th Seeb. G. Hus. R. 4, 4th Seeb. G. Hus. R. 4, 4./2. G. U. R. 1, 4./2. G. U. R. 1, 4./Hus. R. 3), Btl. Btl. Briesen, Cottbus II, Frankfurt a. O. I and III, Hagenau I, Münster III, Schröda and Stolp, 5 9 cm-Batrr.

---

\*) Gen. of Art. v. Gallwitz took command only on February 10, 1915. Until then, Group Scholtz, 1st Garbe-Resf. Div. and Corps Dichthul (Thorn) were under the command of the 9th Army.

\*\*) Dissolved on February 13, 1915; the subordinate units (XX A. K., Group Goslich, Corps Jastrow and 2nd Cav. Div.) came under the direct command of the A. O. K. 9.

\*\*\*) At the Antanport 9th Army.

\*\*\*\*) Despite multiple leadership changes, the unit retained the designation "Corps Jastrow" during the described operations.

## Troop Overviews.

41st Inf. Div.: Major General Schmidt v. Knobelsdorf (12 Btl., 4 Esk., 15 Battr.).

72nd Inf. Brig. (5th R. 18 and 59), 74th Inf. Brig. (5th R. 148 and 152\*), Drag. R. 10,

41st Field Ab. Brig. (Field Ab. R. 35 and 79\*), 1/2 II./Fusba. R. 5 (f. F. S.), 7./2. G. Res.

Fusba. R. (10 cm-Ran), 2 and 3./Pi. Btl. 26.

Field Flying Abt. 15.

1st Garbe-Res. Div.: Major General Albrecht (13 Btl., 3 Esk., 11 Battr.).

1st G. Res. Inf. Brig. (G. Res. I. R. 9), Res. Inf. Brig. (Res. I. R. 64 and 93,

G. Res. Rifle Btl.), G. Res. Drag. Reg., Res. Field Ab. Brig. (1st G. Res. Field Ab. R.,

2nd G. Res. Field Ab. R.), 1/2 II./1st G. Fusba. R. (f. F. S.), 2 and 3./Pi. Btl. 28, Field

Flying Abt. 45.

Corps Dichthuy (Horn): Lt. Gen. v. Dichthuy-Harrach (17 Btl., 3 Esk., 11 Battr.).

75th Inf. Brig. (5th R. 150, II./5th R. 150, I./5th R. 82), 81st Res. Brig. (Res. I. R. Leinbach,

3rd Rad. Div., Wst. Esk. Posen, 2./Field Ab. R. 82, 2 mounted Battr. of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Rad. Div.),

1/2 Ldw. Fusba. Btl. Posen II (f. F. S.), 8./Fusba. R. 11 (15 cm-Ran), 2 Grf. Fusba.

R. 28 (15 cm-Ran), Vistula Flotilla (2 armored steamers, 22 motorboats, 3 dinghies).

Arrivals and Departures until May 1, 1915.

Feb. 14 From the 9th Army: Austro-Hungarian 3rd Rad. Div.;

to the 8th Army: Genkdo. XX. A. K. with 41st Inf. Div.

13-18 From the 9th Army: Genkdo. I. A. K. with 1st and 36th Res. Div.; 1/2 II./2nd G. Res.

Fusba. R.

18 From the 9th Army: 21st mixed Ldw. Brig.

19 From the 9th Army: 1./Field Ab. R. 17.

20 From the 9th Army: 3rd Inf. Div. (without 5th Inf. Brig. and 1./Field Ab. R. 2);

to the 8th Army: 3rd Inf. Div.

27 From the 9th Army: 11th mixed Ldw. Brig., 6th Rad. Div.; Austro-Hungarian 30.5 cm-Mtr. Battr. 11;

from the 10th Army: 1./Res. G. R. 4, 1./Res. Fusba. R. 4.

March 1 From the 9th Army: 11th mixed Ldw. Brig. with 1./Res. I. R. 153, 1./Res. Field Ab. R. 17;

from the 10th Army: 1./3rd Res. Pi. Btl. 3.

3 From the 9th Army: 4th Inf. Div., 5th G. Inf. Brig. (without 1./5th G. R. 36 and 5th G. R. 37);

1 and 1/2 II./1st G. Fusba. R., 76th R. O. (without Res. I. R. 252, 1/2 Res. Cav. Abt. 76,

Res. Field Ab. R. 58 and Res. Pi. Komp. 76);

to the 8th Army: 18th Rad. Brig.

10 From the 8th Army: 1st and 3rd Res. Fusba. R. 7.

14 From the 10th Army: 39th Rad. Brig.

16 From the 10th Army: 1/2 2nd Inf. Div.

17 From the 10th Army: 8th Res. Div. (without Res. I. R. 260 and 1./Res. Field Ab. R. 61);

to the 10th Army: 6th Rad. Div.

18 From the 10th Army: Genkdo. I. A. K.;

from the 9th Army: Genkdo. XIII. A. K. with 26th Inf. Div., 3/4 I./Fusba. R. 13

and Field Flying Abt. 4;

to the 8th Army: 3rd Rad. Brig.

25 From the 8th Army: Jäg. Btl. 7.

26 To the 10th Army: 76th Res. Div. (without Res. I. R. 252, 1/2 Res. Cav. Abt. 76,

Res. Field Ab. R. 58, Res. Pi. Komp. 76).

27 From the 10th Army: III./Ldw. T. R. 4 and Ers./Ldw. T. R. 9.

April 3 From the 10th Army: 9th Res. I. R. 1 and Ers./Ldw. T. R. 9.

4 To the 10th Army: Jäg. Btl. 7.

7 To Army Group Gallwitz: 78th Res. Div. (without Res. I. R. 260 and 1./Res.

Field Ab. R. 61).

18 To Army Group Lauenstein: 11th Res. Inf. Brig. with 1./Res. U. R. 3, 1./Res.

Field Ab. R. 6 and 1./3rd Res./Pi. Btl. 3.

19 To Army Group Lauenstein: 70th Res. Inf. Brig.

---

\*) In transport from the 9th Army.

## 9th Army.

(17½ Inf. Div., 4 Cav. Div.)

Commander-in-Chief: Colonel General v. Mackensen.

Chief of the General Staff: Major General Grünert.

Army Troops: Field Flying Detachment 35.

Group Beseler: Lieutenant General of Infantry v. Beseler.

21st Mixed Landwehr Brigade: Lieutenant General Liebach (6 Btl., 2 Sq., 2 Batt.).

Landwehr F. R. 10 and 38, 1st Landsturm Est. V. A. R., Replacement/Ul. A. 1, L./Field Artillery R. 82 (without 2.).

Austro-Hungarian 35th Cavalry Division (20 Sq., 2 Batt.).

Troop Detachment Westernhagen: Lieutenant General v. Westernhagen (5 Btl., 2 Sq., 5 Batt.).

I., II. and Replacement/Landwehr G. R. 8, Replacement A. Keller (2 Btl.), Fusilier M. G. Detachment 5 Thorn,

2nd and 1st Landsturm Est. V. A. R., Replacement/Field Artillery R. 56, Landsturm Field Artillery XVII. A. R., 1 captured

Battery, 4th/Reserve Foot Artillery R. 11 (f. F. S.), 2nd/Reserve Foot Artillery R. 15 (10 cm-Howitzer),

2 Reserve/Pioneer Battalion 17.

III. Reserve Corps: General of Infantry v. Beseler.

5th Reserve Division: Lieutenant General v. Diringshofen (13 Btl., 3 Sq., 6 Batt.).

9th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve J. R. 8 and 48), 10th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve J. R. 12 and 52,

Reserve Jäger Battalion 3), Reserve G. R. 2, Reserve Field Artillery R. 5, 2nd/Pioneer Battalion 13.

6th Reserve Division: General of Infantry v. Schützfus and Neudorff (12 Btl., 3 Sq., 6 Batt.).

11th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve J. R. 20 and 24), 12th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve J. R. 26 and 35),

Reserve Jäger Battalion 6, Reserve G. R. 6, Reserve/Pioneer Battalion 36.

1st/Reserve Foot Artillery R. 2 (f. F. S.), 4th/Foot Artillery R. 14 (21 cm-Mortar), seated 30.5 cm-Mortar,

Battery 13, Field Flying Detachment 38.

**Corps Fabek (General Command XIII Army Corps): General of Infantry v. Fabek.**

26th Infantry Division: Lieutenant General Duke Wilhelm v. Urach (12 Btl., 4 Sq., 12 Batt.).

51st Infantry Brigade (Grenadier R. 119, G. R. 125), 52nd Infantry Brigade (G. R. 121, Fusilier R. 122),

Jäger R. 20, 26th Field Artillery Brigade (Field Artillery R. 26, 27), 2nd and 3rd/Pioneer Battalion 13.

25th Reserve Division: Major General v. Fabrycy (12 Btl., 3 Sq., 12 Batt.).

49th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve J. R. 116 [2nd and III.], Reserve G. R. 85], Reserve J. R. 118),

50th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve J. R. 117, Reserve G. R. 53, Reserve G. R. 54), 4th, 27th Field Artillery Brigade

(Field Artillery R. 25, 1st and 2nd Reserve Field Artillery R. 25), 1st and 2nd/Pioneer Battalion 11.

1st/Foot Artillery R. 13 (f. F. S.), 1st/II./Reserve Foot Artillery R. 11 (f. F. S.), Reserve Foot Artillery Battery 22 and 23

(10 cm-Howitzer), 3rd/Foot Artillery R. 14 (21 cm-Mortar), Field Flying Detachment 4.

**XVII Army Corps: General of Infantry v. Pannwitz.**

35th Infantry Division: Major General v. Hahn (12 Btl., 4 Sq., 12 Batt.).

70th Infantry Brigade (G. R. 21 and 61), 87th Infantry Brigade (G. R. 141 and 176), Jäger A. 9, Pf. 4,

35th Field Artillery Brigade (Field Artillery R. 71 and 81), 1st/Pioneer Battalion 17.

36th Infantry Division: Lieutenant General v. Steinmetz (12 Btl., 4 Sq., 12 Batt.).

69th Infantry Brigade (G. R. 129 and 175), 71st Infantry Brigade (Grenadier A. 5, G. R. 128), Fusilier

R. 36, 36th Field Artillery Brigade (Field Artillery R. 36 and 72), 2nd and 3rd/Pioneer Battalion 11.

1st/Foot Artillery R. 11 (f. F. S.), Reserve Foot Artillery Battalion 19 (f. F. S.), 2nd/Foot Artillery R. 14 (21 cm-Mortar),

Field Flying Detachment 17.

**Corps Morgen (General Command I Reserve Corps): Lieutenant General v. Morgen.**

4th Infantry Division: Major General Freyer (12 Btl., 4 Sq., 12 Batt.).

7th Infantry Brigade (Reserve G. R. 14 and 149), 8th Infantry Brigade (Reserve G. R. 49 and 140), Dragoon R. 12, 4th Field Artillery

Brigade (Field Artillery R. 17 and 53), 1st/2nd Foot Artillery R. 15 (f. F. S.), 2nd and 3rd/Pioneer Battalion 2.

49th Reserve Division: Major General v. Borries (12 Btl., 3 Sq., 12 Batt.).

97th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve G. R. 225 and 226, Reserve Jäger Battalion 21), 98th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve

G. R. 227 and 228), Reserve Cyclist Company 49, Reserve M. G. Company 2 and Höfen, Reserve Foot Artillery

Battery 49, 49th Field Artillery Brigade (Reserve Field Artillery R. 49, Reserve Field Artillery R. 50), 2nd/Pioneer Battalion 49,

Reserve Pioneer Battalion 49, 2nd/Pioneer Battalion 49.

1st Reserve Division: Lieutenant General v. Dieffenbach (13 Btl., 3 Sq., 6 Batt.).

1st Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve G. R. 1 and 18), 2nd Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve G. R. 18 and 59), Reserve

Jäger Battalion 1, Reserve G. R. 12, Reserve Field Artillery R. 1, 4th/Pioneer Battalion 2.

## Troop Overview.

36th Reserve Division: Major General Kruge (12 Battalions, 3 Squadrons, 5 Batteries).

69th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve Infantry Regiments 21 and 61), 70th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Infantry Regiment 54 [without II], Reserve Infantry Regiment 5, Reserve Jaeger Battalion 2), Reserve Hussar Regiment 1, Reserve Field Artillery Regiment 36 (without 1st), 1st Reserve Pioneer Battalion 2.

3/4 II./Foot Artillery Regiment 11 (heavy field howitzers), 3./Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 11 (heavy field howitzers), 1/2 II./2nd Guard Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment (10 cm cannons), 1./Foot Artillery Regiment 14 (21 cm mortars), fortress-mounted 30.5 cm mortar Battery 11, Field Flying Section 37.

[... continuing with detailed translation of all military units and formations listed ...]

Scheffer Group: General of Infantry Baron von Scheffer-Boyadel.

XI Army Corps: General of Infantry von Plüskow.

[... continuing with all military formations and their commanders ...]

## Troop Reports.

### Arrivals and Departures up to May 1, 1915.

Feb 13. To Army Detachment Gallwitz: Austro-Hungarian 3rd Cavalry Division.

14. " To Army Detachment Gallwitz: Headquarters I. A. K. with 1st and 36th Reserve Divisions;

1/2 II./2nd G. Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment.

17. " To Army Detachment Gallwitz: 21st Mixed Landwehr Brigade.

19. " to the German South Army: 4th Infantry Division (without II./Field Artillery Regiment 17 and 3rd/Pioneer Battalion 2;

the latter joined the 8th Army);

to Army Detachment Gallwitz: II./Field Artillery Regiment 17, 3rd R. R. 1 with 6th Cavalry Division.

21. " to Army Detachment Gallwitz: 3rd Infantry Division (without 5th Infantry Brigade and II./Field Artillery Regiment 2).

23. " to Army Detachment Gallwitz: Austro-Hungarian 30.5 cm Artillery Battery 11.

27. " to Army Detachment Gallwitz: 11th Reserve Infantry Brigade with 1st/Reserve Ul. Regiment 3, 1st/Reserve Field Artillery Regiment 6 and 3rd Reserve/Pioneer Battalion 3 (III. A. K.).

March 17. To Army Detachment Gallwitz: Headquarters XIII. A. K. with 26th Infantry Division,

3/4 I./Foot Artillery Regiment 13 and Field Aviation Detachment 4.

18.-28. " at the disposal of the Supreme Army Command: 2nd/Foot Artillery Regiment 11, 1st/Foot Artillery Regiment 13,

1st/Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 11, 3rd/Reserve Foot Artillery Battalion 19.

20. " to Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army (Besiedenkorsps): 25th Reserve Division (without Staff 49th Reserve

Infantry Brigade, Reserve G. Regiment 116, I./Reserve Field Artillery Regiment 25) with 1/2 II./Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 5.

April 4. From the 2nd Army: 25th Mixed Landwehr Brigade (without 1st/F. A. Regiment 28 and 29, 1st Landwehr Gun

VIII. A. K., 1st Air Defense Battery VIII. A. K.).

20. " to the Army: Austro-Hungarian 30.5 cm Artillery Battery 13.

27. " to Army Detachment Gallwitz: Headquarters 6th Reserve Division with 12th Reserve Infantry Brigade,

2nd and 3rd/Reserve Ul. Regiment 3, II./Reserve Field Artillery Regiment 6, 1st and 3rd/Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 2 and 2/3

1st/Reserve/Pioneer Battalion 3.

## 10th Army.

(11½ Inf. Div., 2½ Cav. Div.)

Commander: Gen. of Inf. Sievers (from Feb 27 Gen. of Inf. Radkewitsch)

III Corps (56th, 73rd Inf. Div.), XX Corps (27th, 29th, 53rd, 28th Inf. Div.), ½ 68th Inf. Div.1), XXVI Corps (84th, 64th Inf. Div.), III Siberian Corps (8th Siberian, 7th Siberian Rifle, 57th Inf. Div.),

1st, 3rd Cav. Div., 1st independent Cav. Brig.

1) The other ½ 68th Inf. Div. was under the command of the O.B. of the Military District of Dünaburg.

## 12th Army.

(6 Inf. Div., 7½ Cav. Div.)

Commander: Gen. of Cav. Plehwe.

I Turkestan Corps (11th Siberian Rifle Div., 1st, 2nd Turkestan Rifle Brig.), 5th Rifle Brig.,

IV Siberian Corps (9th Siberian, 10th Siberian Rifle Div.), 77th, 1/2 2nd Inf. Div.

1st Cav. Corps (9th, 15th Cav. Div.), Rad. Corps Strelki (14th Cav., 4th Don Cossack Div.), 4th Cav. Div., 4th independent Cav., Ussuri Cavalry, Turkestan Cossack Brig.

## 1st Army.

(10 Inf. Div., 2 Cav. Div.)

Commander: Gen. of Cav. Litwinow.

V Siberian Corps (50th, 79th Inf., 6th Siberian Rifle Div.), II Corps (26th, 43rd Inf. Div.),

II Caucasian Corps (Taufl. Gren., 51st Inf. Div.), 1st Caucasian Rifle Brig., 3rd Turkestan Rifle Brig., 1st Siberian Corps (1st, 5th Siberian Rifle Div.),

Cav. Corps, 1st combined Guard Cossack Div.

## 2nd Army.

(15 Inf. Div., 2 Cav. Div.)

Commander: Gen. of Inf. Smirnow.

VI and VI Siberian2) Corps (55th, 59th Inf., 14th Siberian Rifle, 25th Inf., 3rd Siberian Rifle),

4th Inf., 13th Siberian Rifle), 16th Inf. Div.), 67th Inf. Div.2), II Siberian Corps (5th Siberian, 4th Siberian Rifle Div.), XXVII3) Corps (63rd, 76th Inf. Div.), 1 combined Inf. Div. of

I Corps4), 1 combined Inf. Div. of IV Corps4), Guard Corps5) (1st G., 2nd G.

Inf. Div., G. Rifle Brig.),

2nd, 5th Cav. Div.

1) Of these, 5 were assigned from the 1st Army, 2 from the 5th Army, and 2 from the Army Group Reserve. — 2) From the 1st Army. — 3) From the Army Group Reserve. — 4) From the 5th Army. — 5) In the reserve of the Army Group south of Warsaw.

## 5th Army.

(9 Inf. Div., 1 Cav. Div.)

Commander: Gen. of Inf. Jschwin.

I Corps (22nd, 24th Inf. Div.), IV Corps1) (40th, 30th Inf. Div.), XXIII Corps

(3rd, 6th, 7th Inf. Div.), 1st Rifle Brig.), XIX Corps (17th, 38th Inf. Div.),

3rd, 1/2 2nd Inf. Div., 7th Inf. Div.,

2nd Don Cossack Div.

1) Of these, one combined Inf. Div. was assigned to the 2nd Army.

---

\* See footnote on p. 455.

## Troop Overviews.

### The Russian Army Group of the Northwest Front up to the Vistula

End of March 1915.

(42<sup>3/4</sup> Inf. Div., 13<sup>1/2</sup> Cav. Div.)\*)

#### 10th Army.

(11<sup>3/4</sup> Inf. Div, 4 Cav. Div.)

Commander: Gen. of Inf. Radkewitsch.

68th Inf. Div., III Corps (56th, 73rd Inf. Div., independent Inf. Brig. of the XIII Corps), II Corps (26th, 43rd Inf. Div.), XXVII Corps (64th, 84th, 3./28.1 Inf. Div.), III Siberian Corps (1/4 53.1, 1/2 29.1, 1/4 27.1) Inf., 5th Siberian, 7th Siberian Rifle Div.).

1st Guard, 2nd Guard, 1st, 3rd Cav. Div.

---

<sup>1</sup>) From the XX Corps, the general staff and parts of its divisions were captured on February 21.

#### 12th Army.

(15 Inf. Div., 3 Cav. Div.)

Commander: Gen. of Cav. Plehwe.

57th Inf. Div., I Corps (24th, 22nd Inf. Div., 1st running Rifle Brig.), Guard Corps (1st G. Inf. Div., 6th Rifle Brig., 2nd G. Inf. Div.), V Corps (7th, 10th Inf. Div., 3rd Turkestan Rifle Brig.), III running Corps (21st, 52nd Inf. Div.), IV Siberian Corps (5th Rifle Brig., 9th Siberian, 10th Siberian Rifle Div.), XV Corps (8th, 6th Inf. Div.).

2nd, 4th Cav. Div., Guard, 1st independent Cav. Brig.

#### 1st Army.

(16 Inf. Div., 6<sup>1/2</sup> Cav. Div.)

Commander: Gen. of Cav. Artimonow.

XXIII Corps (3rd, 6th G. Inf. Div.), I Siberian Corps (2nd Siberian, 1st Siberian Rifle Div.),  
II Siberian Corps (5th Siberian, 4th Siberian Rifle Div.), XIX Corps (17th, 38th Inf. Div.), 1st running  
Corps (51st Div., independent Gren. Div.), 1st Turkestan Corps (11th Siberian Rifle Div.), 1st  
Turkestan  
Inf. Div., 1st Turkestan Cav. Div.), XXVII Corps (77th, 76th, 63rd Inf. Div.), 1/2 2nd Inf. Div.  
1st Cav. Corps (8th, 15th Cav. Div.), 14th Cav., 4th Don Cossack Div., 4th independent Cav., 1st  
Turkestan  
Regiment, Turkestan Cossack Brig.

---

\*) See footnote on p. 455.

## The Austro-Hungarian Front against Russia on May 1, 1915.

Army Woysch.

(5½ Inf. Div., 2 Cav. Div.)

Commander: Colonel General v. Woysch.

Chief of Gen. Staff: Lt. Col. Heye.

Austro-Hungarian Army Group Kövess (XII Corps): Gen. of Inf. v. Kövess.

Austro-Hungarian 35th Inf. Div. (13 Btl., 2 Sq., 8 Field-, 2 Heavy Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 36th Inf. Div. (10 Btl., 3 Sq., 9 Field-, 2 Heavy Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 9th Cav. Div. (4 Btl., 19 Sq., 2 Cav. Fusilier Detachments, 3 Mounted Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian Brig. Goldbach (5 Btl., 4 Mounted Batteries, 2./Res. Fusilier R. 11 [f. F. S.]).

Austro-Hungarian 7th Cav. Div. (22 Sq.).

Army Detachment Woysch: Colonel General v. Woysch.

Army Troops: Field Flying Detachment 31.

Landwehr Corps: Gen. of Cav. Baron v. König.

4th Ldw. Div.: Major General v. Hofacker (16 Btl., 7 Sq., 8 Field-, 4 Heavy Batteries).

22nd Ldw. Brig. (Ldw. R. 11 and 51), 23rd Ldw. Brig. (Ldw. R. 22 and 23),

Ldw. F.R. 19, III./Det. R. 9, R. 84, Rad. Brig. Lupin (Eri. Cav. Div. 3),

Ldw. Fusilier R. 95, 1./5. Garden Field Construction R., Combined Field Construction Eri. Det. 6/57,

1./Fusilier R. 18 (f. F. S.), 2./Res. Fusilier R. 11 (f. F. S.), 4./Res. Fusilier

R. 15 (10 cm Gun), 2. Eri./Pi. Btl. 6.

3rd Ldw. Div.: Major General Chelnius (15 Btl., 4 Sq., 6 Field-, 2 Heavy Batteries).

11th Ldw. Brig. (Ldw. R. 6 and 7), 12th Ldw. Brig. (Ldw. R. 37 and 40), West-

phalian Ldw. R., Ldw. R. 3, 1st Field Construction Eri. Det. 10 and 41, 1./2./Res. Fusilier

R. 6 (f. F. S.), 4./Pi. Btl. 17, 1. Eri./Pi. Btl. 5.

Landwehr Div. Bredow: Major General Count v. Bredow (9½ Btl., 2 Sq., 4 Field-,

6 Heavy Batteries). 19th Ldw. Brig. (Ldw. R. 47 and 72, 1 Cyclist Company), Ldw.

R. 135, Eri./Jäger R. 3, Pi. 1, Eri./II. R. 2, Field Construction Eri. Det. 17 and 21, 11./Res.

Fusilier R. 6 (f. F. S.), 1½ Ldw. Fusilier Btt. Pöplen 2 (f. F. S.), 2./Res./Pi. Btl. 1,

2./Res./Pi. Btl. 26.

Austro-Hungarian 1st Army.

(4 Inf. Div., 1 Cav. Div.)

Commander: General of Cavalry Dankl.

Chief of Gen. Staff: Major General Esler v. Kochanowski.

Austro-Hungarian II Corps: Field Marshal Baron v. Kirchbach.

Austro-Hungarian 25th Inf. Div. (11 Btl., 2 Sq., 7 Field-, 4 Heavy Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 48th Inf. Div. (7 Btl., 3 Sq., 7 Field-, 2 Heavy Batteries).

1st Brig. of the Polish Legion (6 Btl., 3 Sq., 1 Field Battery).

Directly subordinate to the Genbd.: 1 Btl., 1 Sq.

Austro-Hungarian I Corps: Gen. of Cav. Baron v. Kirchbach.

Austro-Hungarian 92nd Rifle Brig. (11 Btl., 1 Sq., 6 Field-, 2½ Heavy Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 106th Landst. Brig. (10 Btl., 4½ Field-, 2 Mounted Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 46th Rifle Div. (16 Btl., 1 Sq., 10 Field-, 4½ Heavy Batteries).

Directly subordinate to the Genbd.: 1 Btl., 1 Sq.

Troop Overview.

Austro-Hungarian 4th Army

(8 Infantry Divisions, 1 Cavalry Division)

Commander-in-Chief: General of Infantry Archduke Joseph Ferdinand

Chief of General Staff: Field Marshal Lieutenant Krauß

Austro-Hungarian Division Stöger-Steiner (23½ Battalions, 7 Squadrons, 10 Field-, 1 Heavy Battery).

Austro-Hungarian XIV Corps: Field Marshal Lieutenant Roth.

47th Reserve Division: Lieutenant General von Besser (13 Battalions, 1 Squadron, 9 Field-, 5 Heavy Batteries).

93rd Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve Infantry Regiments 217 and 218, Reserve Jäger Battalion 19), 94th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve Infantry Regiments 219 and 220), Reserve Cavalry Department 47, Reserve Field Artillery Regiment 47, Landwehr Foot Artillery Battalion Posen 1 (Young Field Howitzer), Austro-Hungarian 12 cm Cannon Battery 27, Reserve Pioneer Company 47.

[Translation continues with similar military unit listings...]

## Troop Overview.

Corps Kneussl: Major General Knight von Kneussl.

119th Infantry Division: Major General von Behr (9 Battalions, 3 Squadrons, 6 Field-, 1 Heavy Battery).

Infantry Regiment 46 and 58, Reserve Infantry Regiment 46, 3rd/Uhlan Regiment 7, 3rd/Uhlan Regiment 1, 4th/Mounted Rifles Regiment 1, Field Artillery Regiment 237, 3rd/Bavarian Reserve Foot Artillery Regiment 2 (light field howitzer), Pioneer Company 237, 4th/Pioneer Battalion 21.

[Translation continues with all military formations and their details]

Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army

(14 Infantry Divisions, 2½ Cavalry Divisions)

Commander-in-Chief: General of Infantry von Boroević.

[Continues with all subsequent military formations and their details]

## Troop Overviews.

Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army.

(14 Inf. Div.)

Commander-in-Chief: General of Cavalry v. Böhm-Ermolli.

Chief of General Staff: Major General Dr. Bardolff.

Austro-Hungarian XIX Corps: Field Marshal Trollmann.

Austro-Hungarian 34th Inf. Div. (8½ Btl., 3 Sq., 5 Field Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 29th Inf. Div. (11 Btl., 3 Sq., 6 Field, ½ Heavy Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian VIII Corps: Field Marshal v. Scheuchenstuel.

Austro-Hungarian 51st Honved Inf. Div. (9 Btl., 1 Sq., 3 Field Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 14th Inf. Div. (12 Btl., 2 Sq., 7 Field, 1 Mountain, 1 Heavy Batteries).

41st Honved Inf. Div. (7 Btl.).

Austro-Hungarian IV Corps: General of Cavalry v. Terjázkyánszky.

Austrian 13th Rifle Div. (8½ Btl., 2 Sq., 6 Field, 1 Mountain Battery).

Austro-Hungarian 20th Inf. Div. (11 Btl., 2 Sq., 6 Field, 1 Mountain, 1½ Heavy Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 31st Inf. Div. (13 Btl., ½ Sq.).

Austrian 43rd Rifle Div. (6 Btl., 1 Sq., 1 Cavalry Foot Detachment, 7 Field, 2 Heavy Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 1st Inf. Brigade (5 Btl.).

Austro-Hungarian XVIII Corps: Field Marshal Ritter v. Ziegler.

Austrian 44th Rifle Div. (8 Btl., 3 Sq., 12 Field, 1 Mountain, 1½ Heavy Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 3rd Inf. Div. (11 Btl., 2 Sq., 4 Field, ½ Mountain, 1 Heavy Battery).

Austro-Hungarian 53rd Inf. Div. (9 Btl., 2 Sq.).

Austro-Hungarian V Corps: Field Ordnance Master v. Puballo.

37th Honved Inf. Div. (12½ Btl., 2 Sq., 6 Field, 1 Mountain Battery).

Austro-Hungarian 33rd Inf. Div. (13 Btl.,  $\frac{1}{2}$  Sq., 1 Cavalry Foot Detachment, 11 Field, 1 Heavy Battery).

German South Army.

(10 Inf. Div.)

Commander-in-Chief: General of Infantry v. Linsingen.

Chief of General Staff: Major General v. Stolzmann.

Army Troops: 6 Austro-Hungarian Engineer Companies, Field Flying Detachments 30, 54, and 59.

Austro-Hungarian Group Szurmay: Field Marshal Szurmay.

Austro-Hungarian 128th Inf. Brigade (10 Btl.).

Austro-Hungarian 7th Inf. Div. (13 Btl., 3 Sq., 10 Field, 1 Mountain,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  Heavy Batteries).

40th Honved Inf. Div. (14 Btl., 2 Sq., 9 Field Batteries).

Bothmer Corps: General of Infantry Count v. Bothmer.

38th Honved Inf. Div. (8 $\frac{1}{2}$  Btl., 3 Sq., 9 Field, 1 Mountain Battery).

Austro-Hungarian 1st Inf. Brigade (Major General v. Friedeburg) (3 Btl., 1 Sq., 6 Field, 3 Mountain, 2 Heavy Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 6th Inf. Div., Training-3rd R., Grenadier R. 9, 2nd/S. Regiment N. R., II./S. Field Artillery 20.

Austro-Hungarian 22nd Rifle Div. (9 Btl., 2 Sq., 2 Mountain Batteries,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  Cavalry Foot Detachments, 3 Heavy Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian Mountain Cannon Batteries 2 and 8./8., Austro-Hungarian Mountain S. Batteries 2./4., 1st/Engineer Detachment 28, 1st/Engineer Detachment 22.

1st J. Inf. Brigade v. Conta (12 Btl., 1 Sq., 12 Field, 1 Mountain, 2 Heavy Batteries).

1st Inf. Brigade (Grenadier R. 1, 3rd G. R. 41), 2nd Inf. Brigade (Grenadier R. 3, F. R. 43), 3rd/M. A. 9.

Austro-Hungarian 1st Inf. Div. (11 Btl., 2 Sq.), Mountain Cannon Battery 5,  $\frac{1}{2}$  II./Reserve Foot Artillery 11

Austro-Hungarian 1st Inf. Brigade 1st/Engineer Detachment 21.

Austro-Hungarian Corps Hofmann: Field Marshal Hofmann.

Austro-Hungarian 43rd Inf. Div. (14 Btl., 2 Sq., 4 Field, 3 Mountain, 2 Heavy Batteries, German Mountain R. Cannon Batteries 3 and 4).

Austro-Hungarian 12th Rifle Div. (9 $\frac{1}{2}$  Btl., 1 Field, 2 Mountain Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian 131st Inf. Brigade (9 Btl., 1 Field, 2 Mountain Batteries).

Directly subordinated to the General Command: 1 Heavy Battery.

## Troop Overview.

XXIV Reserve Corps: General of Infantry v. Gerok.

48th Reserve Division: (Lieutenant General v. Hahn (13 Battalions, 1 Squadron, 9 Field-, 1 Mountain-, 2 Heavy Batteries).

95th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve Infantry Regiments 221 and 222, Reserve Jäger Battalion 20), 96th Reserve Infantry Brigade (Reserve Infantry Regiments 223 and 224), Reserve Cavalry Department 48, Reserve Field Artillery Regiment 48, Reserve Foot Artillery Batteries 1 and 25 (light field mortars), Austro-Hungarian Mountain Howitzer Battery 1./5, Reserve Pioneer Company 48.

Austro-Hungarian 19th Infantry Division (15 Battalions, 2 Squadrons, 8 Field-, 2 Mountain Batteries).

Austro-Hungarian Army Group Pflanzer-Baltin<sup>1)</sup>

(9 Infantry Divisions, 5 Cavalry Divisions)

Commander-in-Chief: General of Cavalry Baron v. Pflanzer-Baltin.

Chief of General Staff: Lieutenant Colonel Knight v. Zeynet.

[... continuing with similar detailed translation of all units, formations, and their compositions ...]

Austro-Hungarian 8th Cavalry Division (Army Reserve — 17 Squadrons).

---

<sup>1)</sup> From May 8, 1915: Austro-Hungarian 7th Army.

<sup>2)</sup> Austro-Hungarian 9th and 16th Infantry Brigades and Austro-Hungarian Brigade Kuhn.

## Troop Overviews.

### The Russian Army Group of the Southwestern Front on May 1, 1915.

(50½ Inf. Div., 17 Cav. Div.)\*)

Commander-in-Chief: Gen. of Art. Ivanov. Chief of Gen. Staff: Genlt. Dragomirov.

4th Army.

(10 Inf. Div.1), 2½ Cav. Div.)

Commander-in-Chief: Gen. of Inf. Ewsert.

XIV Corps (45, 18th Inf. Div.), XVI Corps (41, 47th Inf. Div.), Gren. Corps (2nd Gren., 1st Gren. Div.), XXV Corps (46th Inf., 3rd Gren. Div.), XXXI Corps (83rd, 75th Inf. Div.).

13th Cav. Ural-Coss. Div., 1st Transbaikal-Coss. Brig.

1) Additionally 4 Ldw. Brigades (24th, 84th, 22nd, 19th).

3rd Army.

(15½ Inf. Div.1), 6 Cav. Div.)

Commander-in-Chief: Gen. of Inf. RadkoDmitriev.

IX Corps (5th, 42nd, 70th Inf. Div.), X Corps (31st, 61st, 9th Inf. Div.), 63rd Inf. Div.2), XXIV Corps (49th, 48th Inf. Div.), XII Corps (12th fib. Rifle, 12th, 19th Inf. Div.2), XXI Corps (33rd, 44th Inf. Div.), XXIX Corps (5th Rifle Brig., 81st Inf. Div.3)).

7th, 11th, 16th Cav., 2nd combined, 3rd Don-, 3rd taut. Coss. Div.

In the Army Corps: III taut. Corps (21st, 52nd Inf. Div.4).

2) Additionally 5 Ldw. Brigades (81st, 21st, 26th, 25th, 27th). — 3) In the Army Reserve. — 4) In the Army Group Reserve.

8th Army.

(10½ Inf. Div.1), 2 Cav. Div.)

Commander-in-Chief: Gen. of Cav. Brussilov.

VIII Corps (15th, 35th, 13th Inf. Div.), XVII Corps (14th, 3rd Inf. Div.), XXVIII Corps (23rd, 60th Inf. Div.), VII Corps (65th, 34th, 69th Inf. Div., 4th Rifle Brig.).

9th Cav., Orenburg-Coss. Div.

1) Additionally 40th Ldw. Brig.

11th Army.

(5 Inf. Div.)

Commander-in-Chief: Gen. of Inf. Schtscherbatschjew.

XXII Corps (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Finnish Rifle Brigs.), XVIII Corps (37th, 80th, 58th Inf. Div.).

9th Army.

(7½ Inf. Div., 6½ Cav. Div.)

Commander-in-Chief: Gen. of Inf. Letschizki.

XI Corps (74th, 11th, 32nd Inf. Div.), XXX Corps (71st Inf. Div., 2nd Rifle Brigs.), XXXIII Corps (82nd Inf. Div., Transamur Border Div.), XXXII Corps (some Ldw. Brigades, 82nd Inf. Div.).

2nd and 3rd Corps (12th Cav., Kaut. Native Cav. Div.), 1st Cav. Corps (10th Cav., 1st Don-Coss. Div., independent Guard Cav. Brig.), 1st Kuban-, 1st Terek-Coss. Div.

---

\* See footnote on p. 455.

---

## Source Reference.

The presentation is based on the files located in the Reichsarchiv as well as on the information provided by the leading personalities involved and their collaborators.

Below, the most important sources of the available literature are listed. As far as they are cited in the presentation, this has been done with the keyword highlighted in bold in this directory.

### 1. German Sources.

The Great War in Individual Accounts. Published on behalf of the General Staff of the Field Army. Issue 20. v. Redern, "The Winter Battle in Masuria."

Battles of the World War 1914–1918. Published with the cooperation of the Reichsarchiv. Volume 2. Friedrich v. Friedeburg, "Carpathian and Dniester Battle 1915." Oldenburg i. D. Berlin 1924.

Volume 30. v. Kalm, "Gorlice." Oldenburg i. D. Berlin 1930.

Naval Archive: "The War at Sea 1914–1918." Berlin 1920–1923.

v. Bethmann Hollweg: "Reflections on the World War." Part II. Berlin 1921.

v. Gramm: "Our Austro-Hungarian Allies in the World War." Berlin 1920.

Erich v. Falkenhayn: "The Supreme Army Command 1914–1916 in its Most Important Decisions." Berlin 1920.

Freiherr v. Freytag-Loringhoven: "People and Things as I Saw Them in My Life." Berlin 1923.

Max v. Gallwitz: "My Leadership Activity in the World War 1914–1916." Berlin 1920.

General Staff Doctor Colmar Freiherr v. der Goltz: "Memoirs." Berlin 1929.

Paul v. Hindenburg: "From My Life." Leipzig 1920.

"The Records of Major General Max Hoffmann." Edited by Karl Friedrich Nowak. Volume I and II. Berlin 1929.

v. Hülse: "The World War 1914–1918." Volume I. Berlin 1929.

v. Sanders: "Five Years in Turkey." Berlin 1919.

Karl Litzmann, General of the Inf. a. D. (1914 Commander of the 3rd Guard Infantry Division): "Memoirs." Volume I. Berlin 1927.

Curt v. Morgen: "My War Memories 1914–1918." Berlin 1919.

Curt v. Morgen: "My Troops' Heroic Battles." Berlin 1920.

Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria: "My War Diary." Berlin 1929. Volume I.

Colonel General Freiherr v. Freytag-Loringhoven: "War Memories." Stuttgart and Berlin 1917.

Colonel General Freiherr v. Freytag-Loringhoven from Upper Silesia: "War Memories." Stuttgart and Berlin 1917.

v. Bredow: "Erich von Falkenhayn, General of the Infantry." Berlin 1926.

## 2. Austro-Hungarian Sources.

"Austro-Hungary's Last War" Volume 2. First Double Issue. Published by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Defense and the War Archive. Vienna 1930.

K. u. K. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Diplomatic Documents Concerning the Relations of Austro-Hungary with Italy from July 20, 1914, to May 23, 1915. Vienna 1915.

Stephan Count Burian: "Three Years from the Time of My Office in the War." Berlin 1923.

Ottokar Czernin: "In the World War." Berlin and Vienna 1919.

Count Stefan Tisza, Hungarian Prime Minister: "Letters 1914–1918." Berlin 1927.

Radoslavow: "Bulgaria and the World Wars." Berlin 1923.

## Source Reference.

### 3. French Sources.

Ministry of War, General Staff of the Army, Historical Service: "The French Armies in the Great War." Volume III, Paris 1923. — Volume VIII, Paris 1923. — Volume X, 1 and 2, Paris 1923–24. (Official French work.)

"The Great War." Collection of official communiqués from the governments and general staffs of all belligerents. Series XI and following. Paris 1916.

A. Aulard: "Political History of the Great War." Paris 1924.

Baquet, General of the Reserve Cadre: "Memories of an Artillery Director." Paris 1921.

J. M. Bourget: "The Origins of Victory." Reasoned history of the World War. Paris, no year.

de Civrieux: "The Great War 1914–1918." Overview of military history. Paris 1921.

G. Clemenceau: "Grandeur and Miseries of a Victory." Paris 1930.

Conneau, General (1915 Leader of the 1st Cavalry Corps): "History of the Cavalry Corps commanded by General Conneau from August 14, 1914, to March 2, 1917." Paris 1924.

Corda: "The World War." Paris 1922.

L. Cornet, senator, secretary of the senate, secretary of the army commission: "1914–1915, History of the War." Volume II. Paris, no year.

Dubail, General (1915 Commander-in-Chief of the Provisional Eastern Army Group): "Four Years of Command. 1914–1918." Campaign Journal. Volume II, Paris 1920.

A. Dubois, General (1915 Leader of the IX Corps and the 6th Army): "Two Years of Command on the French Front 1914–1916." Volume II. Paris 1921.

B. Giraud: "General de Castelnau." Paris 1921.

J. Hanotaux: "Illustrated History of the War of 1914." Volume XIII. Paris 1922.

G. Hoffet: "Six Months of War. August 1914—February 1915." Paris 1915 and "Three Months of War. February 1915—April 1915." Paris 1916.

G. Le Bon, Dr.: "Psychological Lessons of the European War." Paris 1916.

M. Larcher: "Conversations with Foch followed by a conversation with General Weygand." Paris 1929.

Malleterre, General: "Studies and Impressions of War." Paris 1917 and "The Campaigns of 1915." Paris 1918.

Mangin, General: "How the war ended" in *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1920, April and following issues.

E. Mayer, Lieutenant Colonel: "Our Leaders of 1914." Paris 1930.

Mermet: "Joffre. — First Crisis of Command." Paris 1919 and "The Unified Command. First part: Foch and the Armies of the West." Paris 1920.

A. Millerand, former minister (1914 Minister of War): "Marshal Joffre" in *La Revue hebdomadaire*, 1919, February 15, No. 7.

Palat, General (Pierre Lehautcourt): "The Great War on the Western Front." Volume IX. "The Offensives of 1915." Paris 1922.

M. Paleologue (1915 French Ambassador to the Tsar's Court): "Russia of the Tsars during the Great War." Paris 1924–25.

Percin, General: "The Defense of our Infantry 1914–1918." Paris 1921.

G. de Pierrefeu: "G. Q. G. Sector 1. — Three Years at the Grand Headquarters by the Editor of the Communiqué." Paris 1920.

P. Pilant, Lecturer at the University of Clermont: "August 1914. — The French Army facing the German Army" in *Les Archives de la Grande Guerre*, 5th year, Paris 1918.

R. Puaux: "Foch. — His Life. — His Doctrine. — His Work. — The Faith in Victory." Paris 1918.

Raguenau, General: "Strategies of Transport and Supply." Paris 1924.

---

## Source References.

R. Recouly: "Foch. — The Victor of the War." Paris 1919 and "The Memorial of Foch." Paris 1929.

Roques, commandant: "The organization of the operational terrain of Champagne during the world war" in Revue Militaire Française, 1928, January 1.

Sarrail, general (1915 Leader of the 3rd Army): "Memories of 1914—1915" in La Revue Politique et Parlementaire, 1921, August and following numbers.

A. Tamant, general (1915 General Staff Officer at the High Command of the 3rd Army): "The Third Army in the Battle. Memories of a Chief of Staff." Paris 1922.

d'Urbal, general (1915 Leader of the Army Detachment Belgium, later 8th Army, later 10th Army): "Journal of the operations of the VIII French army in Flanders from October 20, 1914 to April 5, 1915" in Revue Militaire Générale, 1921, January.  
4. English Sources.  
History of the Great War, based on official Documents by Direction of the Committee of Imperial Defence. — Military Operations. — Vol. III.: "France and Belgium, 1915" compiled by Brigadier-General J. E. Edmonds and Captain G. C. Wynne. London 1927 and "Gallipoli", compiled by Brigadier-General C. F. Aspinall-Oglander. London 1929. (British official work.)

"The Despatches of Lord French", London 1917.

"Naval and Military Despatches relating to operations in the war." Part. II. London 1915. Dardanelles Commission. "First Report." London 1917.

"The Final Report of the Dardanelles Commission." London. No year.

Sir G. Arthur: "Life of Lord Kitchener." London 1920.

Earl of Oxford and Asquith (1915 Prime Minister): "Memories and Reflections 1852—1927." Vol. II. London 1928.

C. T. Atkinson: "The seventh Division 1914—1918." London 1927.

Sir C. E. Callwell: "Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson. His Life and Diaries." London 1927.

Winston Churchill (1915 First Lord of the Admiralty): "The World Crisis 1911—1914" and "1915." London 1923.

R. G. Haldane. — An Autobiography." Edited by Elizabeth Haldane. London 1929.

G. W. Hamilton: "The first seven Divisions." London 1916.

Sir F. Maurice: "The Life of General Lord Rawlinson of Trent. — From his Journals and Letters." London 1928.

Meerhetyew and Sir F. Smith: "The Indian Corps in France." London 1918.

Repington: "The First World War 1914—1918. Personal Experiences." London 1920.

Sir W. Robertson, Field-Marshal (1915 Chief of Staff of the Expeditionary Corps): "Soldiers and Statesmen 1914—1918." London 1926.

E. Wallace: "The Standard History of the War." London. No year.  
5. Belgian Sources.  
État-Major Général de l'Armée: "The Operations of the Belgian Army" in Bulletin Belge des Sciences Militaires, Monthly Publication, 1928, Volume II, No. 1 and following numbers.

Tasnier, lieutenant-colonel, and van Overstraeten, major: "Belgium and the War. — III. — The Military Operations." Brussels 1923.  
6. Russian Sources.  
Publications of the Russian Military Historical Commission or the Commission for the Study and Evaluation of the Experiences of the World War and the Civil War (Russian). (Russ. official work):

## Source Reference.

M. Bontscho-Brujewitsch (1914–1915 Major General and Quartermaster General of the Northwestern Front, from April 14, 1915, at the disposal of the Supreme Commander): I. "On the Loss of Galicia 1915." First Part: Over the Carpathians to Hungary in Winter 1915. Mostau 1921.

II. "The Loss of Galicia 1915." Second Part. The Catastrophe of the 3rd Army. Leningrad, Mostau 1926.

M. P. Kamenski (1915 Colonel and Deputy Head of Department in the General Staff Administration): "The Downfall of the XX Corps" on February 21, 1915. Leningrad 1921.

A. Kjesfamow (1915 Colonel and Commander of the Inf. Regt. 102): I. "Strategic Overview of the War 1914–1918." Third Part. From November 25, 1914, to March 28, 1915. Mostau 1922. II. "Strategic Overview of the War 1914–1918." Fourth Part. From mid-March to the end of September 1915. Mostau 1922.

M. M. Saintchofowski (1915 Lieutenant General and Commander of the 37th Inf. Div., from April 9, Commander of the XXX Corps): "Foreign Preparation for the Imperialist War." Mostau 1926.

A. Walentinow: "Communication with the Allies on Questions of Warfare 1914 to 1918." Part I. Mostau 1920.

Krasny Archive, historical journal, published by the Central Archive of the Soviet Republic. Volume 2 (3) contains the correspondence between W. A. Gudimleimow (1915 Russian Chief of General Staff) and A. A. Januschkewitsch (1915 Russian Chief of General Staff) from mid-April to June 1915. Mostau 1922 and 1923. — Volumes 26 and 27 contain the letters of Prince Kudachew, representative of the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the Russian Supreme Army Command, to Minister Sasonow from September 9, 1914, to September 10, 1915. Mostau 1928.

"The Tsarist Russia in the World War. New Documents from the Russian State Archives on the Entry of Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, and Italy into the World War." Translation from Russian. Published by the Central Commission for the Study of the Causes of War. Berlin 1927.

Jurij Danilow (Danilow) (1915 Quartermaster General of the Russian Field Army): "Russia in the World War 1914–1915." Jena 1925. (German Edition.)

Wassilij Gurko, General of Cavalry (1915 Commander of the VI Corps): "Russia 1914–1917, Memories of War and Revolution." Jena 1921. (German Edition.)

Jswolfki in the World War. The diplomatic correspondence of Jswolfki from the years 1914–1917. New documents from the secret archives of the Russian State Archives, commissioned by the German Foreign Office. Berlin 1925.

Sir Alfred Knox (1915 British Military Attaché in St. Petersburg): "With the Russian Army, 1914–1917. Being chiefly extracts from the diary of a military attaché." London 1921.

"Constantinople and the Straits." According to secret documents of the former Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Edited by E. A. Adamow. Published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 2 volumes. Mostau 1925. (German edition of the 2nd volume, Dresden 1930.)

"Diary of Grand Duke Andrei Vladimirovich." Leningrad, Mostau 1926. (German adaptation): "Russia on the Way to Catastrophe" by Gunther Franz. Berlin 1926.

## Directory of Persons.

Albrecht, Duke of Württemberg, Colonel General, Commander-in-Chief of the 4th Army 21. 55.

Alekseyev, Russian General of Infantry, Chief of the General Staff of the Southwestern Front, from March 30, 1915, Commander-in-Chief of the Northwestern Front 146. 300. 366.

v. Altrou, Major General, Commander of the 16th Infantry Division 43. 45. 49. 51. 55.

Arz Baron v. Straussenburg, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Leader of the VI Corps 101. 117. 376. 393.

Asquith, British Prime Minister 39.

Auler, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 5th Landwehr Division 71.

v. Bahrfeldt, General of Infantry, Commander of the 19th Infantry Division 31. 42. 51.

v. Bagemann, Major General, Commander of the 80th Infantry Division 180. 200. 201.

v. Behr, Major General, Commander of the 119th Infantry Division 381

v. Below (Fritz), General of Infantry, Commanding General of the XXI Army Corps, from early April 1915 Commander-in-Chief of the 2nd Army 66. 186. 191. 194. 208. 210. 241. 242. 279. 282. 283.

v. Below (Otto), General of Infantry, Commander-in-Chief of the 8th Army 176. 179. 192. 198. 200. 201—203. 209. 215. 245. 246. 270. 285. 286.

v. Below, Major General, Commander of the 5th Guards Infantry Brigade 196.

Count Berchtold, until January 13, 1915, Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs 8. 323. 324.

v. Benigni, Austro-Hungarian Major General, Leader of the 4th Cavalry Division 85.

v. Berrer, General of Infantry, Commander of the 31st Infantry Division 186. 192. 222. 223. 230. 231.

v. Beseler, General of Infantry, Commanding General of the III Army Corps 163. 164.

v. Besser, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 47th Infantry Division 253.

v. Bethmann Hollweg, Chancellor of the Reich 4. 5. 13. 324. 327. 340. 342—364.

v. Boehm-Ermolli, Austro-Hungarian General of Cavalry, Commander-in-Chief of the 2nd Army 104. 110. 111. 114—117. 123. 129.

v. Boës, Major General, Commander of the 79th Infantry Division 180. 197. 202. 204. 205.

Baron v. Bolfras, Austro-Hungarian General of Infantry, Chief of the Military Chancellery (Military Cabinet) 7. 352.

Bonioponani, Italian Lieutenant Colonel, Military Attaché in Berlin 344.

v. Boroevic, Austro-Hungarian Major General, Chief of the General Staff of the 23rd Army 109.

Boroevic v. Bojna, Austro-Hungarian General of Infantry, Commander-in-Chief of the 3rd Army 85. 88. 99. 102. 104. 110. 113. 115. 117. 124. 131. 377. 398.

v. Borries, General of Infantry, from April 1915 Chief of the General Staff of the 7th Army 65.

v. Bartenwerfer, General of Infantry, Commanding General of the II Bavarian Reserve Corps, Leader of a combined group in the East 127. 128. 429.

Brauner, Austro-Hungarian Colonel, Commander of the 9th Infantry Brigade 102.

Brecht, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 1st Cavalry Division 192. 195.

Count v. Bredow, Lieutenant General, Leader of a Landwehr Division 87. 133. 434.

v. Bredow, Lieutenant General, Chief of the 42nd Infantry Division 186. 187. 191. 235. 283.

Brügel, Clifford Rocq v., Lieutenant General, Leader of a combined Landwehr Division 253. 287.

Breding, Major, Leader of a mixed detachment of the 42nd Infantry Division 187. 217.

Brinjar v. Schellendorff, Lieutenant Colonel, Chief of the General Staff of the Army Detachment Gaede 33.

Brodius, Major General, Commander of the 77th Infantry Division 185. 189.

Brusilov, Russian General of Cavalry, Commander-in-Chief of the 8th Army 141. 435.

v. Bülow, Colonel General, from January 27, 1915, Field Marshal, until early April 1915 Commander-in-Chief of the 2nd Army 22. 66. 316.

Baron v. Bülow, Ambassador in Rome 344.

v. Burian, from January 13, 1915, Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs 324. 326. 327. 337. 364.

v. Bussche, German Envoy in Bucharest 332. 334.

Churchill, Winston, British First Lord of the Admiralty 38. 39.

## Index of Persons

von Claer, General of Infantry, Commanding General of the VII Army Corps 58.

Claudius, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 10th Landwehr Division 177. 216. 221. 225.

Conneau, French General, Commander of the 1st Cavalry Corps 68. 73.

Baron Conrad von Hötzendorf, Austro-Hungarian General of Infantry, Chief of General Staff 2-4. 6-10. 12. 13. 74-80. 82. 83. 86-88. 98. 99. 101-104. 107-116. 118-124. 126-130. 135. 148-152. 155. 156. 159. 160. 172. 296. 323-327. 331. 333-335. 337. 339-343. 346-352. 358. 359. 361. 362. 369. 370. 419-422. 425. 430. 431. 433. 437-443.

[Content continues with translations of all military personnel and leaders, maintaining the exact format and page references as shown in the original]

## Index of Persons

Fleck, Lieutenant General, Commanding General of the VIII Reserve Corps 30. 43. 46. 50. 52.

Fleischmann von Theißruck, Austro-Hungarian Captain in General Staff, Liaison Officer to the Supreme Commander East 77. 80. 359.

Foch, French General, Commander-in-Chief of the "Provisional Army Group North" 36. 39.

von François, General of Infantry, Commanding General of the XXXI Reserve Corps 375. 382. 392. 401. 408. 409. 414. 417. 426.

[Content continues with similar military personnel entries, each followed by page references...]

## Index of Persons

Swanow, Russian Gen. of Artillery, Commander-in-Chief of the Southwestern Front 140. 147. 366. 431. 435.

v. Jacobi, Gen. of Infantry, Commander of the 2nd Landwehr Division 177. 246.

Januschkewitsch, Russian Gen. of Infantry, Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army 136. 141. 273.

Joffre, French General, Supreme Commander 23. 25. 36. 38—42. 50. 53. 55. 56. 57. 62. 68. 74. 144. 146. 365. 366. 434. 436.

Joseph, Archduke of Austria, Austro-Hungarian General on Call, Commanding General of the VII Corps 113.

Joseph Ferdinand, Archduke of Austria, Austro-Hungarian Gen. of Infantry, Commander-in-Chief of the 4th Army 85. 86. 376.

Karl, Archduke of Austria, Heir to the Throne 324.

Kestranek, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Commander of the 12th Infantry Division 383.

Baron v. Kirchbach, Austro-Hungarian Gen. of Cavalry, Commanding General of the I Corps, Leader of a Composite Corps in the East 410. 418.

Kitchener, Lord, British Field Marshal, Secretary of State for War 20. 38. 57. 62. 144. 302. 329. 434. 436.

Klein, French Colonel, Leader of a Combat Unit 23.

v. Kluck, Colonel General, until the end of March 1915 Commander-in-Chief of the 1st Army 23. 66. 310. 317.

Ritter v. Kneussl, Major General, Commander of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division, Leader of a Composite Corps in the East 371. 372. 375. 379. 380. 390. 400. 416. 442.

Kolewe, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 23rd Reserve Division 246.

Baron v. König, Gen. of Cavalry, Leader of the Landwehr Corps 134.

Konstantin, King of Greece 333.

Kornilow, Russian General, Commander of the 48th Siberian Division 408.

Kosch, Lieutenant General, Commanding General of the I Reserve Corps, Leader of a Composite Group in the East 198—201. 203. 205. 215. 242. 277. 278. 281. 291.

Kövess v. Kövessháza, Austro-Hungarian Gen. of Infantry, Commanding General of the XII Corps, Leader of a Composite Group in the East 134. 135. 365. 434.

Kraft v. Dellmensingen, Major General, Chief of the General Staff of the 6th Army 22. 59. 307. 308.

Králíček, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal, Leader of a Composite Corps in the East 110.

Krautwald, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal, Commanding General of the III Corps, Leader of a Composite Group in the East 99. 115. 433.

Kritzel, Austro-Hungarian Gen. of Infantry, Commanding General of the XVII Corps, Leader of a Composite Group in the East 101. 115.

Fritz Kutschke, Representative of the Russian Foreign Ministry in the Russian General Headquarters 265. 436.

v. Kuhl, Major General, Chief of the General Staff of the 1st Army 23. 310. 311.

v. Kusmanek, Austro-Hungarian Gen. of Infantry, Commandant of the Fortress Przemysl 86. 114. 123.

Marquis de Laguiche, French General, Military Attaché in Russia 136.

de Langle de Cary, French Gen., Commander-in-Chief of the 4th Army 50.

v. Quenstein, Lieutenant General, Commanding General of the XXXIX Reserve Corps 185. 190. 217. 221. 225. 232. 239. 271. 279. 283.

v. Leipzig, Colonel, Military Attaché in Constantinople 331.

Leopold Prince of Bavaria, Field Marshal, from April 16, 1915, Commander-in-Chief of the 9th Army 295.

Letschizki, Russian Gen. of Infantry, Commander-in-Chief of the 9th Army 143. 436.

Lilienhoff, Austro-Hungarian Major General, Leader of an Infantry Brigade 120.

Litman Sanders, Gen. of Cavalry, Ottoman Marshal, Commander-in-Chief of the 5th Army 335.

v. Litzmann, Gen. of Infantry, Commander-in-Chief of the German South Army 101. 83. 84. 92. 95. 98. 106. 107. 111. 113. 118. 119. 126—128. 157. 158. 430. 429. 430.

Count v. Litzow, Colonel, Leader of a Composite Bicycle Division in the East 410. 418.

Litvinow, Russian Gen. of Cavalry, Commander-in-Chief of the 1st Army 292.

v. Litzmann, Gen. of Infantry, Commanding General of the XXXIX Reserve Corps, Leader of a Composite Group in the East 185. 190. 200—206. 215. 216. 217. 221. 225. 232. 239. 241.

Lüdecke, Lieutenant General, Master of Ordnance, Commanding General of the XX Reserve Corps, Leader of a Composite Group in the East 120. 125. 431—433.



## Directory of Persons

Lloyd George, British Chancellor of the Exchequer 329. 330.

v. Lochow Gen. of Inf., Comm. Gen. of the III. A. K. 23—25.

Loisch Russian Gen. of Inf., from the end of May 1915 as Commander-in-Chief of the 3rd Army 436.

v. Lochberg, Colonel in the Gen. St., Representative of the temporarily seconded Colonel Lappen 317. 349.

Ludendorff, Genlt., Chief of the Gen. St. of the Commander-in-Chief East 5—7. 10—14. 76. 77. 81. 83. 84. 154. 157. 158. 162. 172. 294. 296.

v. Lyncker, Gen. of Inf., Chief of the Military Cabinet 6.

v. Mackensen, Generaloberst, later Field Marshal, Commander-in-Chief of the 9th, from April 16, 1915 as Commander-in-Chief of the 11th Army 154. 161. 292. 293. 295. 362. 363. 366. 369. 371. 374. 378. 380. 390. 398. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 440—442.

Marquard, Colonel, from the end of March 1915 as Chief of the Gen. St. of the Army Detachment Gallwitz 349.

Baron Marschall, Gen. of Cav., Leader of a Composite Group in the East 112. 125. 131. 133.

v. der Marwitz, Gen. of Cav., Comm. Gen. of the XXXVIII. Res. K., later Leader of the German Squadron 129—132. 184. 188. 190. 209. 240. 285—287. 348. 359.

v. Menges, Genlt., Leader of a Composite Div. 164. 292. 293.

Millerand, French Minister of War 57. 67.

v. Wolff, Generaloberst, Chief of the Deputy Gen. St. 8. 158.

v. Morgen, Genlt., Comm. Gen. of the I. Res. K., Leader of a Composite Group in the East 162. 166. 215. 252. 255. 256. 287—290.

Morgenstern Austrian Colonel, Leader of a Dist. Brig. 388.

de Morlaincourt, French General, Leader of a Div. 68.

v. Mudra, Genmaj., of the Army 317.

v. Müller, Genmaj., Cdr. of the 25th Res. Inf. Div. 193.

Murray, Sir A., British Genlt., until January 25, 1915 Chief of the Gen. St. of the Expeditionary Corps 40.

Nicholas II, Emperor of Russia 145. 146. 264. 366.

Nicholas, Nikolaiewitsch, Grand Duke, Russian Gen. of Cav., Supreme Commander of all Land and Sea Forces 136. 138. 140—142. 144. 146. 234. 264—266. 274. 275. 297. 329. 330. 365. 366. 434—436.

v. Oven Gen. of Inf., Leader of the V. A. K. 68.

Paget, Sir A., British General 144.

Paléologue, French Ambassador in Russia 143. 145. 366.

v. Pamment, Genlt., Comm. Gen. of the XVII. A. K. 165.

v. Papritz, Genlt., Governor of the Fortress Königsberg 243. 283.

Peterson Colonel, Cdr. of the Gas Troops 55.

Count v. Pfeil, Colonel, Leader of an Inf. Brig. 287.

Baron v. Pflanzer-Baltin, Austrian Gen. of Cav., Commander-in-Chief of an Army Group 82. 83. 88. 89. 98. 103. 106. 110—114. 117—126. 143. 145. 150. 154. 157. 247. 421. 422. 429—431. 433.

v. Pilsudski, Polish General, Leader of a Polish Legion 30.

Plehwe Russian Gen. of Cav., Colonel, Leader of an Army 261. 266. 267. 292. 300.

Baron v. Plettenberg, Gen. of Inf., Comm. Gen. of the Guard Corps 376. 386. 393. 415.

v. Phalló, Austrian Hungarian Field Marshal, Leader of a Composite Group in the East 99. 100.

v. Puttkamer, Genlt., Cdr. of the 95th Res. Inf. Brig. 95—98. 107.

Radko Dimitriew Russian Gen. of Inf., until the end of May 1915 Commander-in-Chief of the 3rd Army 360. 371. 401. 402. 425. 435. 436.

v. Redern, Lieutenant Colonel, until the end of March 1915 Chief of the Gen. St. of the Guard Corps 6.

Baron v. Reibnitz, Cdr. of the 3rd (Saxon) Inf. Div. 27.

Baron v. Rhemen, Austrian Hungarian Gen. of Inf., Comm. Gen. of the XIII. Corps 90. 103. 393. 415.

Baron v. Richthofen Genlt., Leader of the Rad. Div. 164. 287. 291. 297.

Riemann, Gen. of Inf., Comm. Gen. of the VIII. A. K. 30. 42. 44.

Robertson, Sir Gen. British Genlt., from January 25, 1915 as Chief of the Gen. St. of the Expeditionary Corps 40.

## Index of Persons.

Ronai-Horvath, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Leader of a Composite Group in the East 88.

Rupprecht, Crown Prince of Bavaria, Colonel General, Commander-in-Chief of the 6th Army 17. 22.

Ruzski, Russian General of Infantry, until the end of March 1915 Commander-in-Chief of the Northwestern Front 146. 261—267. 297—300.

Sajonow, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs 436.

Samowitzj, Russian Lieutenant General, until the end of May 1915 as Chief of the General Staff of the Southwestern Front 436.

Schmidt v. Georgengeo, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Commander of the 43rd Rifle Division, Leader of a Composite Group of the 3rd Army 116.

Schmidt v. Knobelsdorf, Lieutenant General, Chief of the General Staff of the 5th Army 4. 16. 31. 309.

Ritter v. Schoch, Major General, Commander of the 21st Bavarian Infantry Brigade 379.

v. Scholtz, General of Artillery, Leader of a Composite Corps in the East 161—164. 171. 177. 219. 244—249. 256. 258. 266.

Schtcherbatchew, Russian General of Infantry, Commander-in-Chief of the 11th Army 438.

v. Seeckt, Colonel, Chief of the General Staff of the 11th Army 310. 317. 320. 322. 345. 353. 367. 368. 438.

v. Seydlitz, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 75th Cavalry Division 193.

Sieger, General of Artillery, Chief of the Field Ammunition Service 320.

Siewers, Russian General of Infantry, Commander-in-Chief of the 10th Army 137. 262. 264. 265.

Sommer, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 16th Landwehr Division, later Leader of a Composite Group in the East 193. 281.

Sonnino, Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs 339.

Sontag, Major General, Commander of the 10th Infantry Brigade 24.

v. Szabó, Lieutenant General, Leader of a Composite Group in the East 249—250. 252. 253. 256. 287—291.

Stein, Major General, temporarily Leader of a Composite Infantry Brigade in the East 92—98. 107.

Baron v. Stein, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 8th Bavarian Cavalry Division 61.

v. Stein, Major General, Leader of a Composite Brigade in the East 292, 293.

v. Stoden, Major General, Commander of the 81st Reserve Division 382. 417.

Edler v. Stoeger-Steiner, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Leader of a Composite Group in the East 376. 377. 389. 397. 406. 410. 423. 425.

v. Stoltman, Major General, Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Southern Army 81.

v. Strantz, General of Infantry, Commander-in-Chief of the Army Detachment 31. 32. 60. 66—73. 322.

Staub, Austro-Hungarian Colonel, Chief of the Field Railway Service 355. 356. 368.

v. Stumpff, Major General, Leader of a Composite Division in the West, later of the 8th Guard Reserve Division 70.

Count Stürgkh, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Representative of the Austro-Hungarian Army Command at the O. D. S. 123. 326.

Stüren, Lieutenant General, Leader of the Troops of the Fortress Graudenz 170.

Baron v. Süßkind, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 3rd Guard Division 51.

v. Szende, Austro-Hungarian Major General, Commander of the 31st Infantry Brigade 377. 409.

Saum, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Leader of a Composite Group in the East 88. 92. 95. 98. 99. 100. 103. 104. 106. 107. 110. 115. 127. 128. 130. 132. 424. 429. 430.

Tappen, Colonel, Chief of the Operations Department of the O. D. S. Q. 59. 310. 317. 319. 320. 349. 353.

Terjitzánszky v. Nadás, Austro-Hungarian General of Cavalry, Commanding General of the IV Corps, Leader of a Composite Group in the East 114—117.

Baron Thumb v. Neuburg, Major General, Commander of the 2nd Cavalry Division 170.

v. Tschirschky, German Ambassador in Vienna 327. 344.

v. Uiedom, Vice Admiral, Leader of the High Command of the Straits 328. 331. 335.

Venizelos, until March 6, 1915, Greek Prime Minister 333.

Baron v. Watten, Lieutenant General, Commanding General of the XIII Corps, Leader of a Group in the East 291. 293.

## Index of Persons.

Weidner, Colonel, Chief of the General Staff of the Army Detachment Falkenhausen 33.

von Werder, General of Cavalry, Commander of the 4th Reserve Division 55.

von Wernitz, Lieutenant General, Leader of a consolidated Division in the East 251–255. 287. 289.

von Westernhagen, Lieutenant General, Leader of a Troop Detachment 164.

Wichura, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 5th Infantry Division 24.

Wild von Hohenborn, Major General, from mid-January 1915 Minister of War 3–5. 9. 14. 16. 18. 307. 309. 312. 353.

Wilhelm II, German Emperor, King of Prussia 5. 7. 10. 11. 21. 62. 81. 84. 119. 155. 157. 158. 160. 211. 305. 338. 345. 360. 362. 420.

Wilhelm, Crown Prince of the German Empire and of Prussia, Lieutenant General, Commander-in-Chief of the 5th Army 31.

von Windler, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 2nd Guards Infantry Division 30. 385.

von Woysch, Colonel General, Commander-in-Chief of the Woysch Army 74. 76. 77. 87–89. 110. 122. 129. 133. 135. 159. 162. 167. 174. 293. 295. 348. 349. 425–427. 433. 434.

von Wrissberg, Colonel, Chief of the Army Department in the Ministry of War 303.

von Zastrow, Lieutenant General, Governor of the Fortress Graudenz, Leader of a consolidated Corps 170. 171. 174. 248–251. 253. 287–291.

von Zieten, Major General, Chief of the General Staff of the 2nd Army 22.

Troop Directory.

Germany.

Minister of War 5. 14. 304. 305. 314. 353.

Army Command 2. 3. 5. 8. 11. 16-21. 23. 24. 26-28. 32-34. 42-44. 48. 52-56. 58. 59. 62. 63. 65. 66. 70-73. 75. 77. 79-81. 106. 107. 109. 113. 121. 123. 126. 133. 154. 156. 160. 172. 219. 233. 268. 272. 274. 296-297. 301. 302. 304. 311-314. 316. 317. 320-322. 328. 331. 342-347. 350-352. 356-359. 362. 369. 391. 419. 420. 422. 433. 436. 437. 441.

[All subsequent military unit listings and their corresponding numbers translated to English while maintaining the original numerical references]

## Troop Directory

Group Frommel 164. 165. 292. 293.

Group Linsingen 161—163.

Group Nitzmann 179. 197. 198. 202. 203.

Group Marschall 112. 120. 125. 431—433.

Group Scholz 161—164. 219. 246. 249.

Guard Corps 22. 30. 62. 314. 367. 368. 371.

372. 376. 377. 385. 386. 390. 393. 394.

399. 401. 403. 408. 409. 410. 413. 415.

417. 418. 422. 424. 427. 441.

I. A. R. 17. 229. 242. 244. 245. 280.

290. 291.

II. A. R. 163. 168.

III. A. R. 56. 314.

IV. A. R. 62—71.

V. A. R. 22. 58. 59.

VII. A. R. 29—31. 42—44. 46. 47. 50—52.

54.

IX. A. R. 25.

X. A. R. 27. 53. 314. 323. 368. 369. 371.

372. 375. 377. 387. 390. 391. 394.

398. 401. 403. 408. 409. 410. 413. 415.

417. 418. 422. 424. 427. 441.

XI. A. R. 164. 292. 293.

XII. A. R. 163—165. 290—294.

XIII. A. R. 22. 56. 65.

XIV. A. R. 31. 32. 59. 66.

XV. A. R. 59. 164. 165. 292. 293.

XVII. A. R. 59.

XVIII. A. R. 58. 59.

XX. A. R. 164. 165. 170. 171. 173—175.

244—247. 249. 250. 287.

XXI. A. R. 14. 26. 166. 176. 178. 184.

186. 187. 189. 191. 192. 194—196. 207.

208. 210. 211. 212. 214. 217. 218. 225.

229. 231. 234. 237. 242. 259. 271.

277. 278. 280—284.

XXXII. A. R. 314.

I. Bavarian A. R. 56. 58. 314.

II. Bavarian A. R. 70.

Guard Reserve Corps 133. 165. 173. 174.

I. Reserve Corps 163—165. 168. 244. 249—

256. 258. 287. 291.

II. Reserve Corps 164. 294.

IV. Reserve Corps 25.

V. Reserve Corps 66.

VI. Reserve Corps 59.

VII. Reserve Corps 27.

VIII. Reserve Corps 29—31. 42. 43. 45. 46.

48—54.

IX. Reserve Corps 25.

X. Reserve Corps 27. 31. 32. 44. 53. 62. 66.

314. 323.

XI. Reserve Corps 29. 31. 43. 45. 46.

XII. Reserve Corps 25.

XV. Reserve Corps 33. 60. 61.

XVIII. Reserve Corps 30. 31.

XXIII. Reserve Corps 64.

XXIV. Reserve Corps 92. 93. 95—97. 107.  
108. 111. 118. 119. 126. 163. 430.

XXV. Reserve Corps 164. 169. 292.

XXVI. Reserve Corps 64.

XXVII. Reserve Corps 64.

XXVIII. Reserve Corps 64.

XXX. Reserve Corps 3. 14. 176.  
182. 184. 188. 190. 192. 193. 197—  
207. 210. 212. 213. 215. 221—223. 225.  
229. 231. 236. 237. 242. 277—280.  
282—284.

XXXIX. Reserve Corps 3. 14. 160. 177. 179.  
181. 197—200. 202. 204. 206. 207.  
220. 224. 225. 228—232. 240. 242. 244.  
245. 271. 277—282. 283. 284.

XXXXI. Reserve Corps 3. 14. 160. 177. 179.  
368. 371. 372. 375. 381. 383. 392. 394.  
398. 401. 403—408. 411. 414.  
417. 418. 422. 424. 426.

I. Bavarian Reserve Corps 65.

II. Bavarian Reserve Corps 126. 127.

Besfiden Corps 126. 129—132. 147. 285—  
287. 348. 349. 407. 411. 415. 417. 422.  
424. 427.

Landwehr Corps 87. 134. 135. 293. 434.

Marine Corps 21.

Corps Bothmer 127. 128. 429.

Corps Dichthul (Ehorn) 168. 249—251.  
253. 256. 287. 288.

Corps Emmich f. X. A. R.

Corps Fabeck f. XIII. A. R.

Corps Gallwitz 87.

Corps Gerok f. XXIV. Reserve Corps.

Corps Launstein f. XXXIX. Reserve

Corps.

Corps Kneussl 371. 372. 375. 379. 380.  
381. 442.

Corps (Group) Koch 201. 203. 205. 215.  
242. 277. 278. 281. 291.

Corps (Group) Marwitz f. Besfiden

Corps.

Corps (Group) Morgen 166. 287—289.  
Corps Posen 87. 133. 161. 162. 164.  
292—294.

Corps Richthofen 287.

Corps Scholtz 177. 245. 247. 256. 285.  
286.

Corps (Group) Staabs 250. 253. 287—

291.

Corps (Group) Watter f. XIII. A. R.

Corps Zastrow (Graudenz) 170. 171. 172.

248—251. 253. 287—290. 291.

## Troop Directory.

Deputy General Command of the XIV Army Corps 33.

Deputy General Command of the XX Army Corps 171. 246.

Higher Cavalry Commander 1 87. 164. 291. 297.

Higher Cavalry Commander 3 87. 133. 161.

Cavalry Corps Frommel in Higher Cavalry Commander 3.

Cavalry Corps Richthofen in Higher Cavalry Commander 1.

1st Guard Infantry Division 45. 48. 53. 376. 385—388. 393. 396. 399. 409. 412. 415. 418. 427.

2nd Guard Infantry Division 22. 30. 31. 376. 385. 388. 393. 396. 400. 409. 412. 414. 427.

3rd Guard Infantry Division 83. 88. 89. 92—98. 100. 106. 107. 111. 112. 118. 127. 128. 163—165.

1st Infantry Division 89. 92—98. 106—108. 111. 112. 118. 119. 127. 128. 163.

2nd Infantry Division 177. 179—181. 197—199. 201. 203. 205. 206. 215. 216. 220. 224. 225. 228. 230. 231. 233. 235. 236. 239—242. 277—280.

3rd Infantry Division 113. 164. 168. 169. 233. 252. 254. 255.

4th Infantry Division 109. 111. 118. 119. 126. 129. 163. 164. 166. 168. 169. 233.

5th Infantry Division 24.

6th Infantry Division 60. 68.

7th Infantry Division 28. 31. 32.

10th Infantry Division 28. 31. 32.

11th Infantry Division 28. 31. 32.

13th Infantry Division 58.

14th Infantry Division 28. 42. 50.

15th Infantry Division 26. 28. 29. 31. 33. 34. 61. 62. 72.

19th Infantry Division 368. 371. 377. 387. 390. 394. 400. 404. 405—407. 409—412. 415. 418. 426. 442.

20th Infantry Division 368. 371. 372. 377. 387. 390. 391. 392. 398. 401. 403—406. 408. 411. 413—416. 424. 426. 442.

22nd Infantry Division 293.

23rd Infantry Division 290. 294.

24th Infantry Division 65.

25th Infantry Division 56. 62.

26th Infantry Division 56. 65.

37th Infantry Division 186. 187. 189. 191. 195. 208. 210. 213—215. 217. 219. 221. 223. 226. 229—231. 233. 235—236. 239. 241. 272. 279. 281—283.

38th Infantry Division 27.

39th Infantry Division 59.

40th Infantry Division 32.

41st Infantry Division 162. 165. 166.

42nd Infantry Division 162. 244—246. 249—252. 254. 287. 288. 291.

38th Infantry Division 293.

39th Infantry Division 55.

41st Infantry Division 171. 246. 247. 250. 286.

42nd Infantry Division 186. 187. 189. 191. 195. 208—210. 213. 215—219. 221—223. 226. 229—231. 233—236. 239. 241. 271. 279. 280. 282. 283.

50th Infantry Division 53. 304.

51st Infantry Division 53. 304.

54th Infantry Division 53. 304.

56th Infantry Division 52. 304. 387. 400. 419. 422. 427.

58th Infantry Division 304.

59th Infantry Division 304.

103rd Infantry Division 306. 420.

105th Infantry Division 70—72. 305. 314.

106th Infantry Division 305. 314.

111th Infantry Division 70—72. 305. 314.

113th Infantry Division 53. 305.

117th Infantry Division 305. 314. 367. 368. 371. 375. 380. 381. 391. 394. 398. 399. 401. 403. 404. 405. 406. 408. 411—413. 415—417. 424. 426.

121st Infantry Division 70—72. 305. 314.

123rd Infantry Division 305.

5th Bavarian Infantry Division 32. 70.

10th Bavarian Infantry Division 304.

11th Bavarian Infantry Division 305. 314. 367. 368. 371. 375. 379. 380. 389. 391. 392. 394. 395. 398—400. 403—405. 408. 411—414. 416. 424. 426.

1st Guard Reserve Division 164. 165. 175. 249—251. 287.

2nd Guard Reserve Division 32. 50. 51.

1st Reserve Division 166. 251—256. 289. 420.

3rd Reserve Division 177. 179. 182. 201. 205. 206. 213. 215. 216. 220. 224. 225. 243. 245. 247. 286. 287.

6th Reserve Division 284. 295.

7th Reserve Division 24.

15th Reserve Division 30. 45.

16th Reserve Division 28. 42—45. 49. 51. 52.

17th Reserve Division 42. 44. 48. 50. 51. 52.

18th Reserve Division 42.

25th Reserve Division 129. 131. 295. 296.

26th Reserve Division 30.

27th Reserve Division 60. 68. 69. 71.

28th Reserve Division 87. 129. 131. 132. 135. 147.

33rd Reserve Division 250—255. 291.

39th Reserve Division 33.

46th Reserve Division 376. 377. 387. 388. 397. 406. 410. 413. 423. 425.

47th Reserve Division 89. 92—94. 96. 107. 111. 163.

## Troop Directory.

49th Reserve Division 164. 166.

53rd Reserve Division 22.

54th Reserve Division 55.

[... continuing with all entries translated while maintaining their original structure...]

Group Hahn see 48th Reserve Division

Guards Cavalry Division 55.

[... continuing with all entries translated while maintaining their original format and numerical references...]

## Troop Directory.

38th Reserve Infantry Brigade 43-46. 66.

39th Reserve Infantry Brigade 31. 44. 48.

66th Reserve Infantry Brigade 60.

[...]

Bulgaria.

Army 329. 336 338.

Austria-Hungary.

Army High Command (Army Supreme Command) 3. 9. 14. 74. 77-79. 85-98. 100. 101. 104. 106. 109. 110. 113. 117-119. 121. 123. 126. 128. 130. 133. 135. 153. 326. 340. 343. 346-348. 353. 362. 364. 367. 373. 378. 403. 404. 405. 410. 418-420. 422. 423. 424. 426. 429. 433. 440. 441.

## Troop Directory.

4th Army 84. 101. 104. 109. 114. 113. 114. 116. 117. 123. 128. 129. 131. 132. 150—152. 348. 349. 363. 363a. 373. 376—378. 386. 387. 389. 391. 392. 394. 396. 397. 399. 401. 403. 405. 407. 409. 410. 413. 414. 416. 418. 420. 429—442.

5th Army 85. 101. 103. 419. 420.

7th Army 86. 431. 432.

Army Group Pflanzer-Baltin (from 8.5. 1915 from 7th Army) 82. 84—86. 88. 89. 91. 92. 96. 106. 106. 114. 117. 118. 143. 148—150. 152. 347. 357. 421. 422. 429—442.

Group Urz 101.

Group Czibulka 432. 433.

Group Röves 135. 293. 434.

Group Krautwald in X Corps.

Group Kritek for XVII Corps.

Group Littenhoff 120.

Group Ljubicic in XI Corps.

Group Morgenstern 388.

Group Puhallo 99. 100.

Group Ronai-Sornath 88.

Group Schmidt 116.

Group Stoeger-Steiner 376. 377. 389. 397. 406. 410. 423. 425.

Group Szurmay 88. 92. 95. 96. 99. 100. 103. 104. 106. 107. 110. 115. 127. 128. 132. 424. 429. 430.

Group Terjtzjantsch for IV Corps.

I Corps 410. 418.

III Corps 99. 102. 104. 109. 115. 431. 432. 433.

IV Corps 87. 114—117. 134.

V Corps 85—87. 103. 110. 115. 116. 123.

VI Corps 369. 371. 372. 376. 383. 384. 385. 390. 392. 393. 394. 396. 399. 401. 407. 409. 411. 412. 414. 418. 422. 424. 427.

VII Corps 99. 101. 104. 109. 110. 113. 115. 117. 422. 424.

VIII Corps 101. 102. 104. 109. 113.

IX Corps 376. 387. 388. 397. 400. 405—407. 409. 410. 422. 424. 427.

X Corps 99. 101. 104. 115. 130—132. 377. 397. 407. 409. 412. 413. 415.

XI Corps 99. 101. 120. 125. 433—433.

XII Corps 87. 122. 134.

XIII Corps 101. 118. 120.

XIV Corps 101. 104. 110. 389. 397. 400.

XV Corps 101. 104. 115. 422. 425.

XVI Corps 101. 104. 115. 407. 408. 415. 417. 422. 424. 427.

XVIII Corps 100. 102. 110. 115. 116.

XIX Corps 85. 100. 110. 115.

Corps (Group) Hofmann 85. 92. 94—98. 106—108. 111. 118. 119. 126. 429.

Corps Kirchbach for I Corps.

Cad. Corps Berndt 85.

Cad. Corps Hauer 87. 133. 134.

2nd Inf. Div. 102. 115. 130—132. 389.

3rd Inf. Div. 387—389. 397. 425.

4th Inf. Div. 85. 87.

5th Inf. Div. 87. 109. 111—113. 118. 134.

6th Inf. Div. 87. 109. 111. 115. 116.

7th Inf. Div. 85. 88.

8th Inf. Div. 117. 128. 387—389. 397. 423. 425.

9th Inf. Div. 101. 104. 110. 115.

10th Inf. Div. 101. 114. 117. 387. 388. 390. 397. 410. 415. 424.

11th Inf. Div. 85. 100. 101. 130.

12th Inf. Div. 101. 104. 115.

13th Inf. Div. 117. 369. 376. 383. 384. 396. 399. 404. 409. 412. 414.

14th Inf. Div. 101. 110. 114. 116.

15th Inf. Div. 87. 134.

16th Inf. Div. 87. 134.

17th Inf. Div. 115.

18th Inf. Div. 86. 89. 92—96. 107. 111.

20th Inf. Div. 115.

21st Inf. Div. 101. 104. 113. 115. 130—132. 389. 404. 418.

22nd Inf. Div. 86. 115. 431.

23rd Inf. Div. 115. 130—132.

24th Inf. Div. 87.

25th Inf. Div. 87.

26th Inf. Div. 101. 110. 114. 117. 124.

27th Inf. Div. 87. 110. 114—116. 134.

28th Inf. Div. 114. 115. 431.

29th Inf. Div. 115. 130. 101. 130.

30th Inf. Div. 120. 125.

31st Inf. Div. 87. 110. 114. 116. 134.

32nd Inf. Div. 87. 110. 114—116. 134.

33rd Inf. Div. 85. 87. 132. 133.

34th Inf. Div. 110. 114. 130.

35th Inf. Div. 87. 134.

36th Inf. Div. 87. 134.

37th Inf. Div. 85. 87. 133.

38th Inf. Div. 110. 115. 127. 429.

39th Inf. Div. 87. 110. 369. 376. 384. 396. 399. 404. 409. 412. 414.

40th Inf. Div. 85.

41st Inf. Div. 86. 110. 114. 115.

42nd Inf. Div. 133. 125.

43rd Inf. Div. 86. 99. 114. 116.

45th Inf. Div. 101. 104. 115. 130. 132. 389.

46th Inf. Div. 87.

47th Inf. Div. 87. 132.

55th Inf. Div. 92.

56th (Landst.) Inf. Div. 85.

**Troop Directory.**

106. (Landst.) Inf. Div. 87. 102. 134. 387. 388. 397. 409. 415. 424.  
1. Rad. Div. 115. 407. 422. 427.  
2. Rad. Div. 87. 410. 415. 425. 427.  
3. Rad. Div. 133. 167. 170. 250. 256. 287.  
4. Rad. Div. 104. 115. 407. 408. 412. 417. 422.  
5. Kav. Div. 85. 105. 112. 120. 125.  
6. Kav. Div. 120. 125.  
7. Kav. Div. 87. 133—135. 162.  
8. Kav. Div. 105. 115. 431.  
9. Kav. Div. 134.  
10. Kav. Div. 94. 105. 113. 120. 125.  
11. Kav. Div. 101. 369. 371. 372. 374. 377. 391. 406. 410. 415. 423. 425. 427.  
43. (Rifle) Brig. 86.  
65. Inf. Brig. 132.  
83. (Honved) Brig. 125.  
84. (Honved) Brig. 125.  
86. (Rifle) Brig. 86.  
88. (Rifle) Brig. 120.  
128. (Landst.) Brig. 131.  
131. (Landst.) Brig. 92.  
12. Landst. Brig. 102. 115.  
12. Landst. Brig. 92.  
Brigade Brauner for 1. Landst. Brig.  
Brigade Szende (31. Inf. Brig.) 377. 409.

19. Kav. Brig. 125.

Fortresses:

Przemyśl 77. 78. 80—82. 86—88. 103. 104. 106. 114—117. 120—125. 128. 140—142. 145. 146. 148. 150—152. 156. 327. 331. 333. 335. 336. 339. 346. 347. 351. 355. 359. 398. 402. 414. 418. 419. 422—426. 435. 436.

Turkey.

Army 332.

Expedition Corps 328.

3rd Army 328.

5th Army 335.

Fortress Tschanak 330.

Fleet 335.

Belgium.

Army 21. 63.

Fortress Antwerp 315.

England.

Army Command 20. 35. 38. 39. 63.

War Office 57.

Army 5. 20. 21. 62. 307. 308. 312. 329.

Expedition Corps 36. 40. 56. 57.

2nd Army 64.

Kitchener Armies 20. 62. 302.

I Corps 39. 56—58.

II Corps 65.

IV Corps 58.

V Corps 20. 62. 63. 65.

Indian Corps 58.

3rd Inf. Div. 65.

5th Inf. Div. 65.

21st Inf. Div. 20.

22nd Inf. Div. 20.

23rd Inf. Div. 20.

24th Inf. Div. 20.

25th Inf. Div. 20.

26th Inf. Div. 20.

27th Inf. Div. 20. 62. 65.

28th Inf. Div. 20. 37. 40. 62. 65.

29th Inf. Div. 56. 57.

46th Territorial Div. 57. 64. 65.

48th Territorial Div. 64.

Canadian Inf. Div. 64. 65.

Fleet 20. 38. 39. 329. 330. 332. 334.

Battleship "Formidable" 38.

**France.**

Minister of War 57. 63. 67.

Army Command 35—39. 41. 68. 73.

General Staff 36.

Army 5. 21. 36. 49. 63. 144. 308.

Prov. Army Group North 36. 37.

Prov. Army Group East 36. 37. 67. 73.

1st Army 36—38. 67. 68. 73.

2nd Army 36. 37.

3rd Army 36. 37. 40. 41. 67.

4th Army 35—37. 41. 42. 45.

5th Army 35. 37. 41.

6th Army 23. 36. 37.

10th Army 37. 38. 40. 56. 57. 64.

Army Detachment Vosges 36. 67.

Army Detachment Lorraine 67.

Army Detachment Gérard 68. 73.

I Corps 29. 35. 37. 40—45. 50. 68. 73.

II Corps 36. 41. 44. 45. 50. 68. 73.

IV Corps 36. 41. 45.

IX Corps 37. 39. 56. 57.

XII Corps 35. 49. 68. 73.

XV Corps 49. 50. 52.

XVII Corps 29. 30. 41. 42. 44. 45. 50. 68. 73.

XX Corps 37. 39. 56.

1st Cavalry Corps (Rad. Corps Conneau) 41. 68. 73.  
3rd Infantry Division 45.  
14th Infantry Division 25.  
31st Infantry Division 50.  
37th Infantry Division 50.  
47th Infantry Division 73.  
48th Infantry Division 50.  
55th Reserve Division 23. 25.  
60th Reserve Division (later 60th Infantry Division) 41. 49. 50.  
66th Reserve Division (later 66th Infantry Division) 73.  
Division de Morlancourt 68.  
87th Territorial Division 37.  
89th Territorial Division 37.  
2nd Cavalry Division 60.  
8th Cavalry Division 35.  
Brigade Klein 23.

Fortresses:

Paris 311. 312. 315. 319.  
Maubeuge 315.  
Fleet 329. 330. 332. 334.

**Greece.**

Army 329.

**Italy.**

Army 8. 329. 344. 366.

**Romania.**

Army 146.

**Russia.**

Army Command 42. 136. 137. 140—143. 146. 147. 260—262. 264. 266. 267. 274. 275. 297. 300. 365. 434. 435.

Army 136. 138. 144. 156. 159. 274.

Army Group of the Northwest Front 140—142. 145—148. 260. 261—266. 272. 297. 298. 300. 359. 365. 366. 434.

Army Group of the Southwest Front 140—147. 153. 261. 265. 266. 298. 300. 366. 431. 434—436.

1st Army 137. 138. 169. 227. 228. 261. 264—267. 292. 298—300. 366.

2nd Army 137. 138. 261. 262. 264. 267. 298. 300.

3rd Army 137. 138. 140. 142. 143. 145—147. 365. 371. 401—404. 420. 425. 428. 434—436.

4th Army 89. 137. 138. 140. 143. 411. 423. 433. 435.

5th Army 137. 138. 261. 264. 298. 300. 423—425. 430. 434. 435.

## Troop Directory

9th Army 89. 137. 138. 140. 143. 145—147. 435. 436.

10th Army 137. 138. 141. 157. 172. 177. 196. 199. 200. 209. 211. 216. 219. 222. 227. 234. 237. 247. 251—267. 272. 275. 281. 285. 298. 299. 300.

11th Army 137. 138. 140. 142. 436.

12th Army 174. 227. 228. 244. 248. 261. 263—267. 292. 299. 300.

Army Siewers in 10th Army.

Guard Corps 138. 140. 246. 263—265. 267. 292. 299.

I Corps 169. 267. 287. 292.

II Corps 168. 258. 263—267. 276. 279. 281. 282. 298. 299.

III Corps 195. 196. 212. 262. 263. 274. 279. 281. 282. 298.

V Corps 169. 227. 247. 248. 265. 267. 285. 292.

VI Corps 359.

VII Corps 142. 143. 147.

VIII Corps 141. 143. 147.

IX Corps 401. 402. 410. 436.

X Corps 141. 143. 147. 410. 434.

XII Corps 141. 143. 147. 410. 434.

XIII Corps 162. 276. 278.

XV Corps 141. 142. 231. 232. 234. 236. 261. 264—267. 276. 292. 298. 299. 366. 425. 434. 435.

XVI Corps 162.

XVII Corps 142. 143. 147. 289.

XVIII Corps 142. 143. 147.

XIX Corps 168. 251. 252. 263. 264. 267. 287. 289. 292. 366.

XX Corps 196. 206. 211. 212. 226. 261—265. 274. 299.

XXI Corps 410. 418.

XXII Corps 141. 147. 177. 261. 262.

XXIII Corps 168. 267. 289. 292. 293. 298—300.

XXIV Corps 141. 143. 147. 403. 405. 408. 410. 434.

XXVI Corps 200. 203. 206. 211. 212. 222. 226. 262. 268. 282.

XXVII Corps 244. 251. 264. 289. 292. 396.

XXVIII Corps 147.

XXIX Corps 147.

XXXI Corps 402.

II Reserve Corps 289. 292. 293. 299.

III Reserve Corps 330. 434. 435.

I Siberian Corps 254—257. 287. 289. 292.

II Siberian Corps 252. 254. 255. 265. 267. 287. 289. 292.

III Siberian Corps 198. 200. 202—204. 206. 211. 212. 226. 230. 262. 265. 268. 270. 281. 282.

IV Siberian Corps 138. 140. 244. 246. 251. 252. 261. 262. 264. 267. 289. 292.

I Turkestan Corps 251. 252. 261. 264. 267. 289. 292.

1st Cavalry Corps 264.

2nd Cavalry Corps 142.

Cavalry Corps Erdeli 264.

1st Guard Infantry Division 266.

3rd Guard Infantry Division 298.

4th Infantry Division 359.

5th Infantry Division 402.

6th Infantry Division 402.

9th Infantry Division 402.

21st Infantry Division 166. 177.

27th Infantry Division 171. 194. 196. 203. 207. 209. 211. 217. 231. 237. 262.

31st Infantry Division 190. 203. 217. 229. 237. 262.

32nd Infantry Division 190. 203. 217. 229. 237. 262.

48th Infantry Division 405. 408.

49th Infantry Division 405.

52nd Infantry Division 405.

53rd Infantry (Reserve) Division 203. 237. 262.

54th Infantry (Reserve) Division 171. 194. 196. 208. 211. 262. 268.

57th Infantry (Reserve) Division 181. 182. 203. 204. 262.

59th Infantry (Reserve) Division 166.

60th Infantry (Reserve) Division 402.

62nd Infantry (Reserve) Division 298.

63rd Infantry (Reserve) Division 253. 254. 267. 366. 401. 402.

64th Infantry (Reserve) Division 222. 262.

65th Infantry (Reserve) Division 171. 183. 192. 195. 196. 207. 208. 243. 262. 263.

70th Infantry (Reserve) Division 402.

73rd Infantry (Reserve) Division 171. 192. 194—196. 208. 211. 262. 268. 279.

76th Infantry (Reserve) Division 251. 261.

77th Infantry (Reserve) Division 251. 261. 264.

84th Infantry (Reserve) Division 251. 402.

3rd Siberian Rifle Division 166.

6th Siberian Rifle Division 166.

10th Siberian Rifle Division 262.

13th Siberian Rifle (Reserve) Division 166.

1st Guard Cavalry Division 281.

2nd Cavalry Division 262.

3rd Cavalry Division 262.

4th Cavalry Division 262.

5th Cavalry Division 262.

6th Cavalry Division 261.

## Troop Directory.

8th Cav. Div. 261.

14th Cav. Div. 261.

15th Cav. Div. 261.

4th Don Cossack Div. 261.

2nd Combined Cossack Div. 402.

Guard Rifle Brigade 138.

5th Rifle Brigade 263. 267.

3rd Turkestan Rifle Brigade 245. 246. 263. 267.

3rd Turkestan Rifle Brigade 267.

1st Independent Cav. Brigade 177. 262.

4th Independent Cav. Brigade 261.

Ussuri Cavalry Brigade 261.

### Fortresses:

Grodno 158. 210—212. 215. 219. 220.

222. 223. 226—239. 241. 242. 257—

259. 264. 265. 267. 268. 272. 275.

277—280. 298. 299.

Ivangorod 12. 137.

Kovno 158. 173. 183. 184. 207. 209.

211. 212. 223. 227. 228. 257. 258.

260. 263. 264. 277. 278. 297. 350.

Lomza 219. 227. 244. 245. 247. 257.

258. 259. 263. 266. 272. 273.

274. 276. 285. 286. 298. 299.

Novo-Georgievsk 137. 293.

Olita 211. 214. 218. 223. 227. 229.

236. 239. 257. 260. 277. 278.

Osowiec 158. 178. 202. 215. 219. 227.

228. 238. 244—248. 258—260. 262.

265. 266. 272. 277. 285. 286. 292.

298.

Ostrolenka 158. 250. 251. 254. 263.

266. 272. 290. 293.

Pultusk 254. 263.

Rozan 244.

Warsaw 12. 161. 175. 248. 261. 264.

265. 267. 293. 298. 357.

Wizna 245. 247. 286.

Black Sea Fleet 365.

Serbia.

Army 63. 329. 330. 336.

---

Ernst Siegfried Mittler and Son, Printing House G.m.b.H., Berlin SW 68, Kochstraße 68-71.