# Page 456

<header>F. The Operation of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against Vilnius.  
1. The Battles in Lithuania and Courland until the End of August.  
a) The Battles of the Neman Army.  
(Maps 6 and 7, Sketch 26.)</header>  
The July Campaign against Mitau and Schaulen.  
From July onward, the battles of the Neman Army are no longer to be regarded as independent individual actions but as preparations for a future offensive against Vilnius. This was proposed by the Eastern Commander-in-Chief on July 2 in Posen as an effective support for the offensive in Southern Poland and was endorsed later by General von Talfenhayn. The Eastern Commander-in-Chief consistently kept this in view. If this breakthrough operation was to penetrate so deeply into enemy positions that it had full effect, then a significant reconnaissance of Kovno needed to be made on one hand, which would cover the northern flank of the Russian Neman front, while on the other hand, securing the rail lines advancing from the interior of the Reich towards Dünaburg and Riga was necessary. The last task had to be resolved first, where advancing to the lower Düna and blocking this supply line was the most effective way and required the fewest forces in the long run. However, from the beginning of July, the entire strength of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief had to be dedicated to the Narew Operation, so only very modest means were available temporarily. Desires and goals had to adapt to this and have undergone several changes in detail.  
The 10th Army received orders on July 2 to halt the already initiated preparations for the attack on Kovno (receiving the order two days later) and to cover the left flank of the Eastern Army in the current extensive position; the Neman Army, with the 41st Infantry Division ready to engage as new force, was to attack the Russian 5th Army, thereby simultaneously relieving the German 10th Army and distracting the enemy's attention from the Narew Operation.  
<footer>1) Connection to page 130 ff. — 2) Page 271 ff. — 3) Page 277. — 4) Page 280.</footer>

# Page 457

<header>Task and Organization of the Njemen Army.</header>  
The N j e m e n A r m y under General of Infantry O t t o von B e l o w covered the area north of the Njemen from the lower Dubysa to the area south of Libau with about seven infantry divisions and five cavalry divisions at that time in a front width of approximately 250 kilometers. The opposing enemy seemed to have a slight numerical advantage. General von Below wanted to launch the attack, similar to what the Supreme Commander East had ordered in his directive on June 14, using the strong enemy position at Schaulen against the predominantly cavalry-based Russian northern flank, and then swing against the flank and rear of the Schaulen position. Accordingly, he organized his troops while weakening the right wing as follows:  
1. S o u t h g r o u p under Lieutenant General Freiherr von Richthofen (Higher Cavalry Commander 1 with Esebeck Department, 36th Reserve Division, Bredtmann Division, 3rd and Bavarian Cavalry Division) from Njemen to Rakisno Lake south of Schaulen,  
2. C o r p s M o r g e n (General command of the I. Reserve Corps with Brigade Homeyer and 1st Reserve Division) in the positions before Schaulen,  
3. N o r t h g r o u p under General von Lauenstein (General command of the XXXIX. Reserve Corps with 6th and 78th Reserve and 41st Infantry Division) connecting north behind the course of the Windau up to north of Pabrinhe Libau-Dwambergen,  
4. C a v a l r y c o r p s under Lieutenant General E g o n G r a f von S c h m e t t o w (6th and 2nd Cavalry Division) connecting north,  
5. G r o u p of Lieutenant General von P a p p r i t z (Governor of Libau with 8th Cavalry Division and fortress troops) at Hasenpot and east of it.  
The establishment of this formation required considerable marches; the attack could therefore only begin around July 15. Meanwhile, the northern corps, accompanied by the cavalry on the left flank, should initially move in the general direction of Mitau, the left wing of the Pappritz group.  
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1) 1. and ½ XXXIX. R.K., 41. S.D., 6. R.D., Bredtmann Division, Esebeck Department and troops from Libau; 2., 3., 6., and Bav. R. E.  
2) Actually about nine infantry and six cavalry divisions, essentially the same forces as shown from p. 469.  
3) p. 127.  
4) Grenadier Regiment 2 and Replacement Regiment Königsberg along with artillery, etc.  
5) Including 29th Ewd. Brigade and two brigades of the 4th K. D.  
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# Page 458

<header>The Operation of the Commander-in-Chief East against Vilna.</header>  
advance against Windau. Since the troops from Libau were involved in this, the navy was asked for protection of the place against the sea, but also for immediate support through naval forces when advancing against Windau. Due to the expected supply difficulties during the advance, the continuation of the forest railway Memel—Vasjohren was requested to be extended across the border to connect to the Libau—Schaulen railway at the head of the field railway service. (However, six months of construction time was anticipated in Memel, which was not very helpful for the next operations). They had to rely on the Libau—Schaulen line, whose eastern half was still in Russian hands, to a field railway under construction over Tauraggen to Schaulen. The opponent remained calm; it seemed that he was weakening his northern wing in favor of the front in Poland. Northwest of Schaulen, only about two Russian infantry divisions were expected overall, against which German divisions were determined for the attack here. There had long been signs that the Russians would vacate western Courland up to the Aa in the event of a further German attack.)  
Since the attack of Army Group Gallwitz against the Narew was to begin on July 13, the operation in Courland was finally set for July 14 at the request of the Commander-in-Chief East, to achieve the hoped-for diversionary effect. On that day, the northern corps, with the left wing (41st Infantry Division) north of the Maranajewno—Mitau railway, attacked, with three cavalry divisions to the left. On a front about 30 kilometers wide, the crossing over the Windau was forced, with the center and left wing advancing up to 15 kilometers against Russian cavalry and landwehr. Fever reported continuous fires in the north as well as numerous settlement columns, making it appear certain that the enemy wanted to withdraw. On the other hand, on the northern corps' right wing, the 6th Reserve Division made only slight progress against stronger enemy resistance.  
On July 15, the spatial successes on the entire front of the attack, especially on the northern wing, could be expanded. The attempt to cut off parts of the enemy failed just as it had the day before. On July 16, Russian resistance stiffened. In the 6th Reserve Division, only the left wing advanced. The 78th Reserve-  
<footer>1) Notes of General Otto von Below. — Construction began in the second half of July. 2) p. 130. — 3) ibid.</footer>