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1914 to 1918

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The Conduct of War in Autumn 1916 and Winter 1916/17

From the Change in the Supreme Army Command to the Decision to Retreat to the Siegfried Line

With thirty-seven maps and sketches

Published by E. S. Mittler & Sohn

Berlin in the year 1938

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Introduction to the Eleventh Volume.

The volume covers the events from the end of August 1916 to the beginning of February 1917 on all war fronts, and thus the first six months of the overall operations led by Field Marshal von Hindenburg and General Ludendorff. The focus is on the successful execution of the campaign against Romania while simultaneously engaging in heavy defensive battles in the West, but also in the East. Additionally, the measures of the new Supreme Army Command for the expansion of armaments and their role in the decision for unrestricted submarine warfare are described. The volume ends with the order to retreat to the Siegfried Line on the Western Front.

The twelfth volume will cover the events up to the summer of 1917, the thirteenth up to and including the winter of 1917/18. Only this volume will include a retrospective that encompasses the entire period of the one and a half years of operational defense by the third Supreme Army Command.

For the present volume, special thanks are expressed to the War Archive in Vienna and the Historical Section, Committee of Imperial Defence in London, for valuable and willing support, and for the first time to the French Ministère de la Guerre, which also provided materials for the presentation in the most accommodating manner.

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Abbreviations.

A. Abt. ...... = Army Division

Abt. .......... = Division

A. Gr. ........ = Army Group

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

A. O. K. ..... = Army High Command

A. R. .......... = Artillery

bayer. ........ = Bavarian

Brig. .......... = Brigade

Btl. ............ = Battalion

Bttr. ........... = Battery

Div. ............ = Division

Erf. ............ = Replacement

Esk. ............ = Squadron

Feldab. ...... = Field Artillery

Feldmlt. ..... = Field Marshal Lieutenant

(for Genlt.)]

finntl. ........ = Finnish)

F. K. .......... = Field Cannon (7.7 cm)

Fl. .............. = Flyer

Flat. ........... = Anti-Aircraft Cannon

Fußa. ........ = Foot Artillery

G. .............. = Guard

gem. .......... = Mixed

Gen. .......... = General

Gen. Feldm. = General Field Marshal

Gen. Kdo. ... = General Command

Genlt. ........ = Lieutenant General

Genmaj. ..... = Major General

Gen. Ob. ..... = Colonel General

Gen. St. ...... = General Staff

G. K. .......... = Guard Corps

Gr. ............. = Group

Gren. .......... = Grenadier

Haub. ........ = Howitzer

H. Gr. ........ = Army Group

H. K. K. ...... = Higher Cavalry

Commander

honv. ......... = Honved, Hungarian parts

of the Austro-Hungarian Army

I. Br. .......... = Infantry Brigade

I. D. ........... = Infantry Division

Inf. ............ = Infantry

Kan. .......... = Cannon

kaut. .......... = Cautious

Kav. .......... = Cavalry

K. D. .......... = Cavalry Division

Kdr. .......... = Commander

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

k. u. k. ....... = Imperial and Royal

(Troops of the common

Austro-Hungarian Army)

in distinction from t. k.

(imperial - royal - Austrian)

and k. (royal - Hungarian

troops)

Ldst. .......... = Landsturm

Ldw. .......... = Landwehr

l. ............... = Light

l. F. H. ........ = Light Field Howitzer

(10.5 cm)

M. G. .......... = Machine Gun

M. W. ........ = Mortar

Mrs. .......... = Mortar (21 cm)

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

Off. ............ = Officer

österr. ......... = Austrian, designation

for the Austrian (k. k.) parts

of the Austro-Hungarian Army, in

peace "Landwehr", in

war "Rifle" Division,

"Brigade etc. called

ö.-u. .......... = Austro-Hungarian, de-

signation for the parts

of the common (k. u. k.)

Austro-Hungarian Army

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Abbreviations.

Pi. ........ = Pioneer

R. I. Br. ... = Reserve Infantry Brigade

R. D. ........ = Reserve Division

Regt. ........ = Regiment

Res. ........ = Reserve

R. K. ........ = Reserve Corps

Schütz. ........ = Riflemen

selbst. ........ = independent

s. ........ = heavy

s. F. H. ........ = heavy field howitzer (15 cm)

sib. ........ = Siberian

Terr. ........ = Territorial

turf. ........ = Turkestan

ung. ........ = Designation for the Hungarian parts (Honved) of the Austro-Hungarian army

Uss. ........ = Ussuri

verst. ........ = reinforced

z. b. V. ........ = for special use

zsfst. ........ = composed

On maps and sketches, further abbreviations are sometimes used. There, Arabic numerals (depending on their size) mean: armies, divisions, brigades, or regiments – Roman numerals: corps or battalions; everything else is explained in the text.

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VI. The Battles on the Russian Front.

A. The Situation at the End of August.

Map 5, Appendix 1.

I. The Front of the Central Powers.

When Field Marshal von Hindenburg and General Ludendorff took over the Supreme Army Command at the end of August, the following were at the front against Russia:

Subordinated to the Austro-Hungarian Army Command:

Army Group Archduke Karl with the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army (initially composed of only "weak forces") in Transylvania, forming to repel a Romanian incursion), 7th, 3rd Army and German South Army, a total of (excluding 1st Army) 28 infantry divisions, about ten of which were German. The Army Group leader, General of Cavalry Archduke-Heir Karl Franz Josef, was advised by the German Major General von Seeckt as Chief of Staff; the Archduke followed him "willingly in all matters of leadership"(2). The Army Group was required to report to both army commands simultaneously according to a decision made on July 1.

Subordinated to the German Supreme Army Command:

Front of the Commander-in-Chief East, since September 1 under Field Marshal Prince Leopold of Bavaria, with the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army under Colonel General von Böhm-Ermolli, further the Army Groups Linsingen, Woyrsch (formerly Prince Leopold) and Eichhorn, a total of 82 infantry divisions (22½ of which were Austro-Hungarian). Chief of Staff of the Commander-in-Chief East was his First General Staff Officer, Colonel Hoffmann, who was well acquainted with the conditions.

While in the area north of the Pripet Marshes there had been calm for some time — apart from local skirmishes — south of this area the Russian Brusilov Offensive was by no means concluded. Rather, it was expected that in connection with Romania's entry into the war, the Russians would also intensify their attacks with re-

(1) For more details see p. 197.  
(2) Gen. von Seeckt to O.H.L. on Sept. 8, 1916.

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The Battles on the Russian Front.

would continue with the highest emphasis. These had so far been directed equally against the Austro-Hungarian Army Group Archduke Karl with the aim of breaking into Hungary as well as against the southern wing of the Commander-in-Chief East (including 2nd Army and Army Group Linsingen), which defended the routes to Lemberg and Kowel. In connection with the now expected Romanian offensive, the direction towards Hungary gained increased significance.

Regarding the situation at the time of the transfer of command on the Eastern Front, General Ludendorff wrote after the war¹): "We looked forward to further battles there with a certain calm, even if the tension, especially with Army Group Linsingen, was by no means overcome. Army Group Archduke Karl had not yet gained a foothold. We had to be prepared for further setbacks here. After Romania's declaration of war, the Carpathians gained different significance. The encirclement of our southern wing no longer needed to squeeze between the Dniester and the Moldau, it now had a broad base of operations throughout Romania and could become extremely effective...".

The task for the Eastern Front was clearly outlined: Hold against all enemy attacks with the utmost limitation of forces.

Regarding the details of the situation south of the Pripet, Generaloberst von Conrad on August 26 laid out the following in a memorandum transmitted to Army Group Archduke Karl and the Commander-in-Chief East: He expected that the Russians would direct the main thrust of their attacks against the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army, to break into Transylvania and Hungary over the Carpathians. For this, the Russian 9th Army had nine to ten infantry and four to five cavalry divisions available according to the present reports; another division was supposed to be on the move towards Bukovina. He no longer expected a Russian offensive against the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army. Also north of the Dniester, opposite the German Southern Army, the attack seemed to be prepared, as the Generaloberst suspected, due to the threat to the northern flank of the ever-lengthening Carpathians. However, the enemy was possibly in the process of forming a strike group of six divisions (II., XXII., XXXIII. Corps) north of the Dniester. Against the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, he prepared an attack with eight divisions (5th Siberian, 17th, 7th, and 6th Corps) on both sides of the Tarnopol—Buczacz and Lemberg railway, while the attack at Brody seemed to have come to a halt. In the area

¹) "Memories", p. 193 f.

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Generaloberst von Conrad of the Linsingen Army Group anticipated attacks at two locations: In the direction of Wladimir-Wolynsk by the XXXX, IV Siberian, and VIII Corps, this attack seemed imminent; in the direction of Kowel between the railways of Rowno and Sarny by at least eight infantry and two cavalry divisions of the "Guard Army" as well as over the lower Stochod by the Russian 3rd Army, which, reinforced by three to four corps from the front north of the Pripjet, was expected to comprise a total of 15 to 17 infantry and four cavalry divisions.

General von Seeckt reported on August 27 that this memorandum essentially agreed with the views of the army group; in any case, the enemy would strive to gain possession of the Carpathian passes. The best defense against an attack on the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army, the General saw in the own advance of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army; the army group was still considering whether the forces would suffice for this; they intended to initially assign the Hungarian 39th Infantry Division from the Southern Army to the 7th Army. The Southern Army would be reinforced from the army group reserves in case of emergency. For sudden occurrences, three Russian divisions were ready near the railways. The expansion of the route in question for their deployment from Kalusz via Stryj—Marmaros Sziget to Körösmezö or Borsa would be operated by Austro-Hungarian and German railway troops.

2. Plans and Measures of the Russians.

In accordance with the views of the French military leadership, the Tsar, with General Alexeyev as Chief of General Staff at his side, intended to continue the offensive between Pripjet and the Carpathians with all emphasis upon Romania's entry into the war. Accordingly, he had committed himself through the military convention with Romania on August 17 to "operate with the utmost vigor on the entire Austrian front" from that day on, and "particularly vigorously" in Bukovina, where the Russian troops — as was added with strong mitigation — were to "at least maintain their positions and their previous numerical strength." A line running westward over Dorna Watra was determined as the boundary between the Russian and Romanian armies. Two infantry and one cavalry-

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The Battles on the Russian Front.

Divisions were to be sent to the Dobrudscha and placed under Romanian command\*). From August 25, the fleet in the Black Sea was to protect the Romanian coasts.

At this time, the Russian army was already significantly weakened by the repeated attacks against the area from Kowel—Lemberg and southwards. It was organized after some shifts at the end of August into:

Army Group of the Northern Front under General Russki, who had resumed command for General Kuropatkin\*\*) since August 5, defending from Finland over Riga to Lake Narocz, with:

2nd Army under General Gorbatowski 4 Inf.-, 1 Cav. Div.

12. - - - Radko Dmitriew 16½ - 4½

5. - - - Dragomirow 9½ - 4 -

1. - - - Litwinow 6 - 1 -

36 Inf.-, 10 Cav. Div.

Army Group of the Western Front under General Ewcrt continuing southwards with:

10th Army under General Radkewitsch 14 Inf.-, 1 Cav. Div.

4. - - - Ragosa 8 - 1 -

2. - - - Smirnow 9½ - 4 -

since August 12 also:

3rd Army under General Loesch 15 - 5 -

Special Army under General Gurko (since August 28, previously General Besobrasow) 10 - 3 -

56½ Inf.-, 14 Cav. Div.

With the last two mentioned, armies transferred from the Southwestern Front, which had previously led the attack against Kowel, the Western Front now extended beyond the area of the Rokitno Swamps to the south.

Army Group of the Southwestern Front under General Brussilow continuing to the Romanian border, previously attacking in Eastern Galicia and from Bukovina against the Carpathians, with:

1) See details on p. 191 and 193, note.  
2) Additionally, there were  
in transport to the Dobrudscha: two Inf.-, one Cav. Div.;  
on the front to Turkey the "Caucasus Front" under Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolaevich with 17½ Inf.-, 7 Cav. Div.;  
in France two "Special Inf. Brigades", one of which was still in transport;  
on the Salonika Front also two "Special Inf. Brigades".  
3) Vol. X, p. 429.

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Structure of the Russian Army.

8th Army under General Kaledin ...... 12 Inf., 3 Cav. Div.

11. - - - Sacharow ................. 13 1/2 - 3 - -

7. - - - Schtscherbatschew .......... 13 - 3 - -

9. - - - Letschizki .................. 11 1/2 - 5 - -

50 Inf., 14 Cav. Div.

All efforts should continue to focus on the attack between

Rokitno Swamps and Carpathians.

An operation prepared by the Northern Front on the Baltic coast

against Tuckum with simultaneous landing at Roijen was abandoned,

the entire front north of the swamps was declared a secondary front.

The Western Front was to resume the attack against Kowel with the 3rd and Special Army (together

25 infantry divisions).

At the Southwestern Front, north of the Carpathians, in the general

direction of Lemberg, they were to attack: the 8th Army south past Wladimir-

Wolynsk, the 7th with the left wing on Halicz; the 11th was to join

the advance. The 9th Army was to attack in immediate connection

with the Romanian army over the Carpathians, having given up its northern wing with five and a half divisions

during the reorganization of the front, it was to receive two divisions from the Northern Front along with

heavy artillery as a replacement.

The start of the offensive was set for the 28th on the Western Front, and the

29th of August on the Southwestern Front, so that it had to coincide with the

opening of the war by the Romanians. However, the initiated

troop movements were not completed in time, so the

Southwestern Front did not start until the 31st of August, and the Western Front postponed the

attack to the 6th of September.

B. The End of the Brusilov Offensive.

I. The Battles of the Army Group Archduke Karl ¹).

Maps 4, 5, 6 and Appendix 7.

a) Measures of the Army Group and the Events at the

Austro-Hungarian 7th Army.

In the Carpathians, the battles never came to a complete standstill throughout August.

Towards the end of the month, the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army under Colonel General Baron von Pflanzer-Baltin held with

¹) The battles of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army and the German 9th Army are described within the framework  
of the Romanian campaign.

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The Battles on the Russian Front: Brusilov Offensive.

Colonel Ritter von Zeynel, as Chief of the General Staff, commanded a mountain front approximately 160 kilometers long, stretching from Dorna Watra on the Romanian border generally northwest over the Magura rising to 1556 meters, the Jablonica and Pantyr Passes, both in Austro-Hungarian hands, to Bystrzyca Solotwinska west of Zielona. Here, the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army joined. Generaloberst von Pflanzer-Baltin had over seven infantry divisions and three cavalry divisions, including German troops of the 1st and 200th Infantry Divisions as well as the 2nd Cyclist Brigade, and newly arrived, the 117th Infantry Division, heavily weakened after several weeks of deployment at the Somme. The front was divided into Austro-Hungarian XI Corps, German Carpathian Corps, Austro-Hungarian I Corps1).

By the end of August, the situation2) had somewhat eased following the attack successes of the Carpathian Corps under Lieutenant General von Conta. The least secure seemed to be at the Jablonica Pass, where the Russians had taken the Kukul rising to 1540 meters and the western forelying border ridge on August 19. By deploying the 117th Infantry Division behind this section to Körösmezo, the worst concern was initially alleviated. As the enemy simultaneously reinforced in front of the right army wing, countermeasures were also necessary there. The idea of relieving the army through an offensive by the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army had to be abandoned when, on August 27, General von Falkenhayn reported that the 10th Bavarian Infantry Division, held in reserve behind this army, was intended for Romania and was only to be deployed with Army Group Archduke Karl in urgent emergencies, and furthermore, that "the assignment of further German troops for the foreseeable future given the situation in the West and with Army Group Hindenburg is impossible." The army group was to "limit itself to holding its positions by all means and keep its reserves ready for possible use on other fronts."

After Romania's declaration of war (August 27), the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army left Army Group Archduke Karl and was assigned to

1) Organization: Austro-Hungarian XI Corps (Hungarian 11th and Austro-Hungarian 8th R. D., Brig. Papp, 215th F. Br., Hungarian 40th I. G. D.), German Carpathian Corps (1st and 200th I. S. D.), Austro-Hungarian I Corps (German 117th I. S. D., Hungarian 202nd S. Br. and Austro-Hungarian 34th G. D.), Austro-Hungarian 3rd R. D. with Det. Frater (one and a half Rtle.), German 2nd Cyclist Br. (three Cyclist Abt. and three M. Btlgtn. on motor vehicles); the army had a total of eight batteries of German heavy artillery.  
2) Vol. X, C. 554.

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Austro-Hungarian 7th Army: Uninterrupted Battles.

Directly subordinated to the Austro-Hungarian army command; the Hungarian 39th Infantry Division, previously designated for deployment with the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army, was assigned to this army. The right wing of the 7th Army at Dorna Watra was bent back southwestward along the Romanian border by deploying the Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division. Behind this wing, the Hungarian 5th Cavalry Division and the 10th Bavarian Infantry Division were brought up by the 3rd Army, although the deployment of the latter with the 1st Army remained intended.

Meanwhile, in the last days of August, the enemy pushed the front on both sides of the Bystrzyca Nadworniańska Valley back towards the Pantyr Pass, so that the German cyclist brigade, which had just been released as an army reserve, had to be brought there. South of the Jablonica Pass, the 117th Infantry Division under Major General Seydel recaptured the ridge west of Kukul and the mountain itself in a storm on August 30.

When on August 31 strong Russian attacks against the Southern Army¹) and the right wing of the Commander-in-Chief East²) began, new attacks were launched against the Austro-Hungarian XI Corps and the Carpathian Corps at the 7th Army. The entire 10th Bavarian Infantry Division, for which the German Supreme Army Command had also reserved the right of disposal, was forwarded to Bełzcerzce. To get his own reserves into hand and to prevent impending encirclement, General von Conta, with the approval of the army commander, withdrew the 200th Infantry Division, which was standing in an advancing arc, on September 1 into the position up to eight kilometers back on the ridge on both sides of the Ludowa. Meanwhile, the 1st Infantry Division under Major General Paschen had to fend off heavy attacks. At the same time, the situation on the right wing of the army intensified. North of Jabłoncy, the enemy had broken into the position. Riflemen of the Hungarian 5th Cavalry Division and the foremost battalion of the 10th Bavarian Infantry Division were hastily drawn there. Also on the flank of the Austro-Hungarian XI Corps near and southwest of Dorna Watra, the enemy became more active. The only connecting road leading through the Godowenen Bystritz Valley to the right wing of the army seemed threatened, so that General von Seeckt reported to the Supreme Army Command on September 2, considering the release of further parts of the 10th Bavarian Division necessary. The Supreme Army Command was with the advancing of two

¹) p. 363 ff.   
²) p. 370 ff.   
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The Battles on the Russian Front: Brusilov Offensive.

further battalions agreed to go there. But parts of the division also had to be sent behind the front at the Jablonica Pass, as despite the deployment of the last local reserves, the allied troops fighting north of the pass could only hold their ground with difficulty. The newly assumed command of the XXV Reserve Corps, Lieutenant General Surén, was to take over leadership in this threatened section. A German Landsturm regiment, standing ready behind the equally attacked Southern Army, was assigned to the 7th Army. The army group was justifiably concerned about further developments on their front, as all reserves were exhausted and the Russian attacks seemed to continue.

From the evening of September 4, heavy attacks by three Russian divisions began against the Carpathian Corps. At the 200th Infantry Division, the enemy broke through with multiple superiority east of the Smotrec into the weakly occupied lines of their three Jäger regiments despite the bravest resistance, and the battle-tested 1st Infantry Division also found itself in a serious situation in the area of Kruhla Ricerka. Generaloberst von Pflanzer had meanwhile sent a Hungarian infantry regiment for reinforcement, and the Supreme Army Command approved the immediate deployment of the still available parts of the 10th Bavarian Infantry Division via Marmaros Sziget.

In the war diary of the army group, it is stated on September 6: "The events of the last few days make it increasingly clear that the Russians are determined to do everything with strong forces to cross the Carpathians. A further reinforcement of the 7th Army, despite the deployment of the 10th Bavarian Infantry Division, is therefore urgently desired." The situation appeared even more threatening due to the advance of the Romanians into the upper Maros Valley; this had to affect the right flank and the rear connections of the army group, unless the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army succeeded in stopping it. On the right wing of the army at the Austro-Hungarian XI Corps, there was fierce fighting. The Carpathian Corps had to endure further heavy battles. Southeast of Baba Ludowa, four Russian mass attacks failed on September 6; on September 7, the enemy succeeded in breaking through with a Honved regiment deployed on the left flank of the 1st Infantry Division and expanding the breach the following day; a German battery was lost. A regiment and artillery of the 10th Bavarian Infantry Division arriving at Borsa on the 8th came just in time to close the gap in the middle of the Carpathian Corps and stop the breach.

\*) p. 218.

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Assessment of the Situation by General von Seeckt.

to prevent the Russians from advancing into the White Theiss Valley and their advance against the Borsa—Kirlibaba road. General von Conta was forced to withdraw the 1st Infantry Division by September 9, abandoning the Magura and the Kruhula Ricerta to a position up to five kilometers back.

Meanwhile, on September 8, in response to a repeatedly made demand by the German Supreme Army Command, Colonel General Freiherr von Pflanzer-Baltin was relieved of command over the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army; his successor was General of Cavalry Freiherr von Kirchbach (Lauterbach1). In view of the fierce attacks by the Russian divisions against the heavily battered 1st Infantry Division and the Hungarian 40th Division on the right, General von Seeckt reported to the Supreme Army Command on September 9 that further Russian advances against the indispensable Kirlibaba—Borsa road must be prevented at all costs, as a breakthrough would separate the two main parts of the army. The position held by the 200th Infantry Division "with outstanding activity" on both sides of the Ludowa seemed to him little threatened, especially since the already mentioned German Landsturm Regiment had arrived there. Four battalions and the bulk of the artillery of the 10th Bavarian Infantry Division were to be deployed with the 1st Infantry Division, which, unaccustomed to mountain warfare, had lost 1700 men, including 1100 missing2) in the heavy fighting of the last ten days. While "the enemy's strength seems to be running out" in front of the extreme right wing of the army — a support was offered by a Bavarian regiment standing there — General von Seeckt also considered the situation on the left wing of the army serious. Although a minor success had been achieved in recent days by the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Cavalry Division through a counterattack by the German Cyclist Brigade, he expected the enemy to attempt to seize the Tartar Pass from both sides, for which he could deploy a total of five divisions. It was necessary to hold the current position, as further back positions were unfavorable in every direction despite shortening the lines. The 7th Army, however, had no more free regiments, so General von Kirchbach requested two divisions. The army group could not provide them. In the Carpathian defense, the numerical balance of forces could not be the only basis: "The attacker can at individual

1) Previously Commanding General of the Austro-Hungarian I Corps.  
2) The total losses of the 1st I.D. in September amounted to 3100 men, almost half of whom were missing.

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To concentrate slightly superior forces at points along the long front, which the defender cannot quickly counter with corresponding forces, because distance and the lack of quickly exploitable connections hinder him, and he must not expose other positions too much. The current almost universal ability of the mountains to accommodate infantry facilitates envelopment for the attacker and makes road and pass blockades not yet appear sufficient."

The Austro-Hungarian military command refused to send troops in view of the forces required against Romania and demanded that the army group, after stabilizing the situation at the Southern Army, where Russian attacks had collapsed on September 8, and given the enemy's weakness, should support the Carpathian front with its own resources from the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army. Thus, it was forced on September 11 to bring up the Austro-Hungarian 30th Infantry Division from the 3rd Army to deploy it between the Sürén Corps and the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Cavalry Division. The German supreme military command considered sending the 214th Infantry Division from the west, but had to refrain from doing so the next day due to the situation there. Consequently, on September 14, the army group decided to also move the Austro-Hungarian 59th Infantry Division from the 3rd to the 7th Army, where the Austro-Hungarian I Corps command was also deployed between the Austro-Hungarian XI and Carpathian Corps during these days.

By mid-September, the 7th Army, now consisting of nine German and Austro-Hungarian infantry and four cavalry divisions, faced a total of ten Russian infantry and about three cavalry divisions, with a mixed Romanian-Russian detachment of about eight battalions and a Romanian cavalry division on its southern flank. On September 16, the enemy resumed his attacks with increased pressure along the entire front. In particular, he attempted to break through north of Kirlibaba with the Hungarian 40th Infantry Division by bringing in another division, while simultaneously attacking the heights of the 200th Infantry Division on both sides of the Ludowa with masses. Both positions suffered territorial losses.

1) G. 367. — 2) 117, Austro-Hungarian 34th J. D. and ½ Hungarian 202. S. 3tr. — 3) G. 66.

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Austro-Hungarian 7th Army: Heavy Defensive Battles.

The right wing of the Surén Corps lost the Smotrec, rising to 1896 meters, on the evening of September 18. But also on the right wing of the army, combat activity increased; Russian and Romanian units advanced against the flank bent back southwest of Dorna Watra. The army was in a difficult situation as it no longer had significant reserves.

North of Kirlibaba, reinforcement of the brave Hungarian 40th Infantry Division became urgent, which had suffered considerable losses in the steadfast defense, especially at the 1661-meter-high mountain block of Capul (five kilometers south of Magura). Two German battalions and artillery were deployed with it. But the 200th Infantry Division was also in a serious situation. On September 19, General von Conta had to point out that they had been fighting against superior Russian forces for weeks: "The advantageous troop is fully up to their mass attacks, but due to exhaustion and overexertion, it can no longer hold out, as the Russians, with their constantly fresh reserves, give them no time to rest." The reserves were constantly on counterattacks, and he had no more for the 200th Infantry Division; their long lines were untenable under these circumstances in the long run. The 1st Infantry Division also had only limited combat strength. General von Conta requested the supply of reserves and labor to expand the Carpathian ridge, which must be held as a permanent position for the winter, for sustainable defense.

On the same day, General Ludendorff learned from Major General von Seeckt's morning report about the condition of the 200th Infantry Division. He asked Generaloberst von Conrad, who wanted to deploy the Hungarian 202nd Infantry Brigade at Kirlibaba, to assign it to the 200th Infantry Division, as he considered the situation there more serious. Generaloberst von Conrad, however, believed he could not do without the brigade's deployment to the right wing, as the Russians had already approached within four kilometers of the road in the valley of the Golden Bistritz, but he agreed to the request upon repetition by Field Marshal von Hindenburg to assign the regiment of the 10th Bavarian Infantry Division, located with the Austro-Hungarian XI Corps, to the Carpathian Corps as soon as the Austro-Hungarian 59th Infantry Division had arrived there.

On September 20, new enemy attacks began, only at Kulfal and Jablonica Pass it remained quiet. While the Austro-Hungarian XI Corps

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While defending against Romanian-Russian attacks at the Kelemen Mountains north of Dorna Watra, the enemy advanced southeast of Kirlibaba into the valley of the Golden Bistritz. At the Ludowa Front, he finally broke through in several places during the sixth attack conducted in dense masses. Although the heroic defenders of the 200th Division under Major General Boeß managed to repel him once with hand grenades and bayonets, the western summit of Baba Ludowa was lost for good the following day. The front now ran three kilometers further back. A setback also occurred on the left flank of the army, in the area of the Pantyr Pass, and the front had to be withdrawn to the pass height. The army group was forced to send, in addition to the already arrived Austro-Hungarian 30th, the Austro-Hungarian 12th Infantry Division, intended for the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army, coming from the Southern Army. A German Landsturm regiment coming from the Southern Army was also designated to reinforce the 200th Infantry Division.

Meanwhile, business activity, hindered by rain, snow, and fog, gradually subsided along the entire line. The attacker seemed to tire after the extremely costly battles of the last few days. After the Austro-Hungarian 59th Infantry Division arrived at Kirlibaba on September 23, General von Seeckt considered the situation there improved. Although the enemy launched new fierce offensives against the Austro-Hungarian troops of the Austro-Hungarian Corps and especially further north against the 200th Infantry Division in the following days, he achieved no significant successes. September 25 was "the hardest day of fighting so far" for the Jäger regiments of the 200th Division; the assault by about three enemy divisions "with numerous heavy artillery" failed to break through their over 34-kilometer-long front. On the 29th, they captured 500 prisoners in a counterattack. Then peace returned here¹). In view of the new heavy losses of the division (3500 men since August 28), it was high time that the Carpathian Corps finally received further German reinforcements, including the cyclist brigade and further parts of the 10th Bavarian Infantry Division, which was now almost entirely united here.

¹) War Diary of the 200th I. D. and communication from their then General Staff Officer, now General of Infantry Boeß from May 1937. He writes: "The successful counterattack was viewed by the troops, stretched to the limits of human capability, with special and justified pride."

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Austro-Hungarian 7th Army: Temporary Lull in the Fighting.

Meanwhile, the left wing of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army had retreated before superior enemies to the area west of Parajd-Palota on September 20th\*); its left wing was thus folded back to the right opposite the right of the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army. The bent-back flank of the latter army leaned against the Kelemen Mountains, which rise in its eastern part to more than 2100 meters (Petrosul). The Austro-Hungarian XI Corps was attacked here and at Dorna Watra in the last days of September; stronger Romanian forces sought to break into the gap between the two Austro-Hungarian armies in the Maros Valley, so General von Kirchbach had to shift his flank further southwest. General von Seeckt feared, as he reported to the Supreme Command on September 20th\*), that if the 1st Army continued to retreat, the 7th would be maneuvered out of its far-advanced position; forces to extend their front were not available. Since the army commands could not provide anything at the moment, Generaloberst von Conrad ordered on October 1st to gather as many forces as the conditions at the front allowed with the 7th Army, to actively intervene in the battle of the 1st Army.

At the beginning of October, calm returned to the Carpathian front, not even at Kirlibaba did the enemy continue his attacks. He seemed exhausted after the weeks of fighting, and the weather had become unfavorable and foggy, with snow lying on the heights above 1300 meters.

On October 6th, the Supreme Command addressed Generaloberst von Conrad: It seemed that the fighting in the Carpathians would soon come to a "necessary standstill" and it would then be possible to withdraw forces. The sooner this happened, the more it would benefit the offensive in Transylvania. General Ludendorff requested information on when a division — preferably the 117th or 10th Bavarian — could be withdrawn. Generaloberst von Conrad had already planned the 10th Bavarian Infantry Division for transport. However, the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army reported in agreement with the army group that almost all Russian forces were still positioned in front of the front as before; continuation of their attacks seemed imminent at that point. The division could thus be withdrawn, but only after the front at Kirlibaba had also been locally improved. This was planned for October 14th. Therefore, transport was not expected before the 19th. At the same time

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the army group aimed to strengthen the 7th Army with artillery, as the

"completely reliable news" had arrived that the Russian 9th Army

had orders to "operate with the Romanian troops over the area of

Kirlibaba—Dorna Watra". Further front expansion

was also intended by the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army at Ludwova and Smotrec.

On October 8, the ridge southwest of Baba Ludwova

was recaptured by a surprise attack by the 200th Infantry Division.

East of Kirlibaba, on October 14, the Austro-Hungarian 59th Infantry Division

under Major General Kroupa carried out the planned attack, which, in addition to

capturing two kilometers of terrain, was maintained through

counterattacks by two Russian divisions in the following days after

varied battles. Meanwhile, the

10th Bavarian Infantry Division under Lieutenant General Riedhuber

recaptured the 1726-meter-high peak of Coman on October 15, and on the same day

the 200th Infantry Division recaptured Smotrec. Then the

fighting finally subsided. At the front of the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army, apart from

minor local operations, calm initially set in. On October 20,

the bulk of the 10th Bavarian Infantry Division was withdrawn.

Meanwhile, changes had occurred in the structure of the

entire front. On September 30, the Supreme

Command, in view of the Russian attacks against the Southern Army,

proposed to place the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, while reporting calm at the Austro-Hungarian Army,

in connection with a new command structure on the front in Transylvania,

under the command of the Eastern Commander; the eastern front north of the Dniester would thereby

gain significantly in stability. On October 5, the German Southern

Army was then separated from the army group Archduke Karl, merged with the Austro-Hungarian

2nd Army into the army group Böhm-Ermolli, and placed under the

"Army Front Prince Leopold" (Eastern Commander).

From October 12, the 9th and the Austro-Hungarian 1st, 7th, and 3rd Armies

were to form the army front Archduke Karl. In view of the

approaching winter, the Eastern Commander also proposed to place the

Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army under his command, so that on the eastern front up to the

Carpathians the necessary unity of command would be ensured.

Archduke Karl shared this view, as the 3rd Army no longer directly connected with his three

other armies, and Generaloberst

1) p. 370 and 378.   
2) p. 235.   
3) This designation has not been maintained.

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Redefinition of the German and Austro-Hungarian Command Areas.

Conrad agreed. On October 20, the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army also joined the Böhm-Ermolli Army Group. Due to seniority reasons, the leaders of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army, Generaloberst Kövess von Kövessháza, and the 7th Army, General von Kirchbach, were changed. The High Command of the Army Front Archduke Karl was moved on the 24th to Klausenburg, thus closer to its main combat front now directed against Romania. At this time, General von Seeckt assessed the situation in front of the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army as such that the newly assigned Russian 8th Army, which had taken over the sector from Kirlibaba to Bystrzyca Nadworniańska, had a defensive mission, while the Russian 9th Army, together with the Romanian Northern Army, could become offensive, and indeed "the more energetically, the further south," as they could "lead the thrust into Transylvania against the flank and rear of the German 9th Army." Its southern wing was to connect with the Romanian Northern Army in the area of the Tölgyes Pass. Archduke Karl therefore recommended active behavior to his armies to identify and bind enemy forces. The demarcation between the Austro-Hungarian 1st and 7th Armies was newly regulated. After the Austro-Hungarian XI Corps temporarily transferred from the 7th to the 1st Army on October 7, thereby taking responsibility for the area almost devoid of troops between the valleys of the Maros and the Golden Bistritz, the Kelener Mountains were now determined as the boundary; the Austro-Hungarian XI Corps returned to the 7th Army, connecting north of Palota to the left wing of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army).

On October 27, General Ludendorff wrote to General von Seeckt that he no longer expected an attack by the Russians in the Carpathians. Generaloberst von Conrad shared this view.

In the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army, the 2nd Cyclist Brigade was replaced by Austrian Landsturm, and at the beginning of November, despite the concerns of the army commander, the rest of the 10th Bavarian Infantry Division was also withdrawn. While the rest of the army's front mostly remained calm, combat activity at the Austro-Hungarian XI Corps, in connection with the battles of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army, repeatedly flared up due to mutual local offensive operations. Bavarian and Hungarian battalions captured 538 Russians east of Dorna Watra on October 27, in addition to gaining ground.

After a four-week pause, the enemy launched another attack from November 28 as part of a broad relief offensive for the Romanian front, almost along the entire front of the 7th Army, and achieved

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north of Jakobeny, at Kirlibaba and north of the Prislop Saddle, successes. He threatened again to lay his hand on the Borsa—Kirlibaba road. The High Command of the Army Front diverted a regiment from the 49th Reserve Division, which was encircling the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army, to that location. On November 30, the enemy achieved another success against the left wing of the army, where he dangerously approached the Jablonica Pass: "Only to use Gináz halfway, with rifle shots from our men") it was possible to prevent the strong forces, which had advanced over a kilometer wide, from further advancing. Chief of Staff Baron von Richthofen, who had taken command from General Cserén a few days earlier, requested help as he had no more reserves. The army and army group were unable to assist. However, the importance of this mountain crossing prompted the Supreme War Command to agree to the deployment of another regiment of the 49th Reserve Division there.

In further heavy attacks, especially again in the area on both sides of the Ludowa, the enemy was mostly repelled and suffered extraordinarily high losses in some places; minor breaches were soon compensated. From November 28 to December 1, the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army lost more than 4000 men, half of them missing. The enemy's losses, on the other hand, are estimated to be "after very cautious estimation" 11,000 men; more than 1200 prisoners were taken.

On December 1, the 1st Infantry Division recaptured the lost high position north of the Prislop Saddle in a counterattack and took over 1000 prisoners. By December 5, the enemy was also driven out of the breach south of the Jablonica Pass. At Kirlibaba and north of Jakobeny, the situation had somewhat improved in the meantime. When the fighting temporarily subsided, the army front ordered the evacuation of the 49th Reserve Division to the 1st Army on December 8, which, however, could only be carried out gradually due to the tense situation at Jakobeny. The Russians had advanced so far here and had a narrow view into the Bistritz Valley, making traffic there extremely difficult. A counterattack failed due to a lack of forces. From December 21, the Hungarian 51st Infantry Division was expected as reinforcement. In the meantime, however, the

1) War Diary of the Army Front. — 2) Changes in the composition of the Army Front and its High Command. pp. 284 and 290.

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Austro-Hungarian 7th Army: End of the Russian Attacks.

The enemy ceased his attacks after unsuccessful advances, which he undertook with two divisions from the 18th to the 20th of December east of Jablonny.

h) Events with the Austro-Hungarian 3rd and the German Southern Army

End of August and in September.

The Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army, under Generaloberst von Kövess with Generalmajor Konopicki as Chief of Staff, had been positioned since mid-August in a position about 90 kilometers wide behind the Bistrzyca Solotwinska. The right wing connected approximately at the source of this river to the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army. Of the total seven divisions, two were German — the 119th Infantry and 48th Reserve Division under the Commanding General of the XXIV Reserve Corps, General of Infantry von Gerok — deployed on the left wing with the task of maintaining the connection to the front of the Southern Army beginning north of the Dniester. Behind the army, after the transfer of the 10th Bavarian Infantry and Hungarian 5th Cavalry Division, the German 105th and 199th Infantry Divisions remained.

The German Southern Army, under General of Infantry Count von Bothmer with Lieutenant Colonel Ritter von Hemmer as Chief of Staff, had been withdrawn north to the line Dniester north of Jezupol—Zamarlow—Brzezany, which remained behind the front, and had been set up for defense using positions from the battles of 1915. The northern wing had a connection north of Zborow to the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army of the Commander-in-Chief East. By the end of August, the Southern Army had about 10½ divisions, including the 1st Reserve Division and since August 20th the Turkish XV Corps. Approximately the same number of Russian divisions was assumed opposite.

1) Organization of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army: Austro-Hungarian VIII Corps (Austro-Hungarian 59th, Hungarian 42nd Infantry Division, Austro-Hungarian 6th Reserve Division), Group of Field Marshal von Hadfy (Austro-Hungarian 5th and Austrian 21st Infantry Division), Group of General of Infantry von Gerok (General Command of the XXIV Reserve Corps with 119th Infantry Division and 48th Reserve Division); also in reserve Austro-Hungarian 30th Schützen Division.  
2) Page 353.  
3) Page 6, Column 552.  
4) Organization of the Southern Army from the right wing: Austro-Hungarian XIII Corps (2nd Reserve Division, 15th and ½ 36th Infantry Schützen Division), Austro-Hungarian VI Corps (12th Infantry Schützen Division), German 1st Reserve Division, Turkish XV Corps (20th, 19th Infantry Division), Corps of Field Marshal Hofmann (Austro-Hungarian 54th, 55th Schützen Division), Austro-Hungarian IX Corps (19th Infantry Division, 41st Schützen Division). The Hungarian 39th Infantry Schützen Division of the VI Corps was transferred to the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army on August 20th. By the end of August, the Southern Army had about 10½ divisions. The army had a total of 16 batteries of German heavy artillery.  
5) Actual strength for infantry, two cavalry divisions.

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The Battles on the Russian Front: Brusilov Offensive.

On August 27, General von Seeckt reported to the Supreme Army Command that renewed concentration of enemy forces was observed on both flanks of the Southern Army. On the 30th, the war diary of the Southern Army recorded: "Increased artillery activity of the enemy and the presence of stronger reserves on the northern flank of the army suggest the possibility of an imminent enemy attack there as well as on the southern flank." On August 31, the army was seriously attacked on both flanks simultaneously.

The attack in the north also hit the right flank of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army¹). In this approximately eight-kilometer-wide combat section, the German 197th Infantry Division of the group of General of Infantry von Eben repelled the assault smoothly. On the adjacent flank of the Southern Army, however, the Russians broke through on both sides of the Bobrow—Aloczow railway into a width of about four kilometers right up to the third line; the highest elevation of the section, the Zlota Gora, was lost but was recaptured by hunter companies of the 197th Infantry Division. Further south, on this day, countermeasures could not yet be effective, costing six guns in addition to significant losses in personnel. On the following day, September 1, the weak Austrian line between the road and railway was further pushed back by renewed Russian attacks, so that the 197th Infantry Division saw its right flank seriously threatened. However, the intervention of a German troop unit — strength about a brigade under Lieutenant General Mellior — set up by General von Eben for a counterattack, wrested a considerable portion of its terrain gain from the attacker and closed the already existing gap. At the same time, the 197th Infantry Division under Major General Wilhelm, which had to extend its right flank south to the Zlota Gora, repelled repeated strong attacks.

To secure the Zlota Gora in the hands of German troops, the border to the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army was moved south beyond the Bobrow—Aloczow railway. Renewed Russian attacks on September 2 failed despite mass deployment, apart from a temporary breakthrough on the Zlota Gora, at the already re-established front. Similarly, on September 3, several strong enemy attack waves mostly collapsed in the defensive fire of the 197th Infantry Division.

¹) Organization of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army: Group of Gen. of Inf. von Eben (Gen. Kdo. 1st Austro-Hungarian R. with 197th I. D. and 2nd Austro-Hungarian IV Corps with 13th and 23rd I. D.), Group of Gen. of Cav. Tersztyánszky (Gen. Kdo. 3rd Austro-Hungarian Corps (3rd Austro-Hungarian I. D., 25th Austro-Hungarian Br.), Austro-Hungarian XVIII Corps (German 2nd R. D., Austro-Hungarian 106th Austro-Hungarian I. D., Austro-Hungarian 1st Austro-Hungarian S. D.); a total of nine Austro-Hungarian infantry divisions in the army.

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Southern Army: Heavy Defensive Battles.

It was no different for further, already weaker advances at various points of the Eben group on the evening of the 5th and the morning of the 6th of September. Thus, the enemy initially ceased his attacks at this point, but activity remained brisk.

Much heavier than the Russian assault in the north was the one in the south. Here, on August 31, the Russians attacked the Austro-Hungarian XIII and VI Corps and the northern adjoining 1st Reserve Division over a width of 20 kilometers with five divisions¹). The positions of the two Austro-Hungarian corps were breached, so it was not possible to restore the situation. General Count von Bothmer had to decide to withdraw the troops about four kilometers. The German 105th Infantry Division, which was exhausted behind the front, was made available by the army group and inserted between the two very depleted Austro-Hungarian corps. Since only the extreme northern wing of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army was attacked and the situation here seemed secure, the army group brought the 199th Infantry Division from there to Halicz the following day and provided a mixed detachment from it to support the right wing and hold the important Magja height, which dominates the Dniester Valley south of Halicz, for the Southern Army. General of Infantry von Gerok, previously with the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army, took command of this wing up to and including the 1st Reserve Division.

The position retaken by the Gerok group was only weakly fortified; its garrison, which consisted predominantly of German troops, was thin to the "extremely permissible extent." On the morning of September 1, the Russians attacked the southern section, especially the Magja height, in vain, and on the 2nd, the center of the army, the Austro-Hungarian Hofmann Corps, whose front southwest of Brzezany was penetrated on the 3rd. "The successes of the Russians in recent times" — as stated in the war diary of the army group on September 4 — "are primarily attributable to their very strong and well-shooting artillery, which has weakened and shaken the defender to such an extent that he often did not even accept the infantry attack."

General von Seeckt hoped that the line north of the Carpathians could be held. However, he emphasized that a guarantee for repelling Russian attacks could not be assumed given the current condition of part of the troops; the infantry's operational strength of all three

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The divisions of the Austro-Hungarian VI and XIII Corps together numbered only slightly over 5000 men, so that both corps combined were not yet equal to half a Russian division.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Army Command had brought in further reinforcements. On September 2, from the Linsingen Army Group, although it was itself heavily attacked¹), the Leib-Hussar Brigade was unloaded behind the northern flank of the Southern Army, followed by the infantry in approximately brigade strength. The 3rd Guard Infantry Division, rolling from the west to Transylvania, was diverted to Halicz.

By September 5, the old position at Brzezany was retaken through the intervention of a hastily brought-in regiment of the 199th Infantry Division. However, in the Gerok Group, the enemy succeeded on this day in once again pressing the front in a width of ten kilometers with five divisions. In view of the heavy losses of the 1st Reserve and 105th Infantry Division, the latter of which apparently had not yet regained its full combat value after the events of early August²), Count Bothmer, in agreement with the Army Group, decided to withdraw the Gerok Group around the right flank of the Turkish XV Corps by up to 15 kilometers on the night of September 6 to prevent the danger of an operational breakthrough.

The position now ran, bending back from the mouth of the Gnila-Lipa behind the Narajowka section, and from Sniesolniki in a northeasterly direction at the railway front point Potutory south of Brzezany back to the old position. The Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army, where it had remained calm, had to bend its left flank accordingly, deployed the 119th Infantry Division here, and kept its reserves (Austro-Hungarian 30th Infantry Division, about 6000 men) behind this flank. The new position of the Southern Army was somewhat shorter than the previous one but without any development. The High Command judged in the war diary: "Whether a longer resistance can be offered in it will entirely depend on how much time remains for the development of the position and whether the Gerok Group, which has only slightly more than one and a half divisions (1st Reserve and half of the 199th Infantry Division) of reliable infantry, can still be supplied with fresh forces for the occupation of its over 20-kilometer-wide front."

¹) See p. 372 f.  
²) Vol. X, pp. 550 and 554.

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Southern Army: Evasion from Superior Attack.

The rearguards left behind by Group Gerok in the intermediate terrain had to retreat before the sharply advancing enemy, estimated at eight to nine divisions from the Dniester to north of Zawalow, to the main position by the evening of September 6. The 3rd Guard Infantry Division, which had meanwhile arrived, was to relieve the heavily worn 105th Infantry Division.

Along with new attacks threatening the Carpathian Front, the Russian concentration of forces also indicated the continuation of attacks with the aim of breaking through between the Austro-Hungarian 3rd and Southern Army. The Supreme Army Command also transferred the 208th Infantry Division, intended for Transylvania, to the Southern Army and instructed that the newly formed 105th Infantry Division be moved from September 6 in exchange with the 105th Infantry Division behind the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army. Field Marshal von Hindenburg instructed General von Seeckt to inform the German senior leaders: The Kaiser expects the Southern and 3rd Army to hold their positions. The German reserves should be positioned as close as possible behind the business front, otherwise they would arrive too late! The German Chief of Staff addressed Generaloberst von Conrad with the request to influence the Army Group Archduke Karl in the same way; any operation south of the Carpathians was excluded if the front north of it was not secure. The supply of the allied empires would also require the possession of the oil sources in Galicia west of the current position near Drohobycz.

Even before he had advanced into storm positions, the enemy attacked with particular intensity on the Dniester from September 7 to 9, apparently with the aim of taking Halicz and breaking through north of the river to Bursztyn. The attacks, which extended northward over a width of 40 kilometers to the Turkish XV Corps, completely collapsed under extraordinarily high losses, which were estimated at "approximately 25,000 men." 13,000 men, 11 machine guns remained in the hands of the defenders, with parts of the 3rd Guard Infantry Division already participating since September 8. The success was attributed by General Count Bothmer to "the excellent effect of the significantly reinforced German artillery" and the tenacious bravery of the German-Turkish In-

1) p. 354 f.  
2) In addition to the newly deployed entire artillery of the 3rd G.I.D., the artillery of the 105th I.D. was still in position.

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The Battles on the Russian Front: Brusilov Offensive.

attributed to infantry. Besides the 208th, which had meanwhile arrived behind the right army

wing, the 216th Infantry Division was in prospect as a reserve for the

army group, which, however, was not to begin unloading until September 10 at the earliest.

At the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army, there seemed to be no immediate danger. On

September 9, General von Seeckt pointed out in a report to the Supreme

Army Command the mutually weak forces in this section of the front;

also, the terrain with its multiple successive sections seemed to him

unsuitable for an "offensive of greater scale," although surprises had to be expected everywhere.

The serious situation with the neighboring armies then led to the decision to transfer the Austro-Hungarian

30th Infantry Division to the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army, and the 119th Infantry Division to the

Southern Army, which was to give up the remnants of the divisions of the Austro-Hungarian XIII Corps

that had been shattered in the recent battles.

In front of the Southern Army's front, the enemy, according to aerial

observations and prisoner statements, brought in further reinforcements,

again against the extreme northern wing, so that continuation of the attacks was

expected here. General Count Bothmer faced them with confidence and suggested

offensive action with the existing six German divisions (including the 105th Infantry

Division) against the northern wing of the enemy strike group, which the army group

rejected in consideration of the overall situation.

The following days led to the impression that the enemy's strength

in front of the right wing and the center of the army had initially weakened, but

that he was preparing to continue the attack against the left wing and the right

of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army. The VII Siberian Corps was identified near Tarnopol.

General Ludendorff recommended moving the parts of the 216th Infantry Division that had

arrived so far behind the Austro-Hungarian IX Corps, to which the Germans no longer had full

confidence due to its numerous Romanian troops. However, by September 14,

the distribution of forces on the enemy side made an attack against the

center of the Southern Army — 1st Reserve Division, Turkish XV Corps, and

southern wing of the Austro-Hungarian Hofmann Corps — likely. The Russian

XXXIII, perhaps also the VII Siberian Corps, had apparently been moved there.

Thus, by the morning of September 15, the army group moved the 208th and 216th Infantry Divisions1)

behind those sections.

1) A regiment had been held back at the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army.

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Southern Army: Eventful Battles.

Then, however, enemy attack preparations were also detected further south.

The Russian attack that began on September 16 hit the left flank of the 3rd Guards Infantry Division, the 1st Reserve Division, and the Turkish XV Corps. At Switelniki, the enemy broke through with strong forces over the Narajowka section; the 1st Reserve Division was pushed back on both sides of the village to the heights, and the Turkish 20th Division lost about two kilometers of ground east of the river. Deployed reserves managed to prevent further enemy advances. In the north, the Turkish 19th Division bravely held its ground, recapturing some lost trenches together with Austro-Hungarian troops in bayonet combat.

Russian diversionary attacks on the same day against the left flank of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army were already stifled by defensive fire, stronger ones against the right flank of the 2nd Army failed on this and the following day due to the defense of Group Eben.

On September 17, the left flank of the 3rd Guards Infantry Division, the 1st Reserve, and the 208th Infantry Division from Group Gerok of the Southern Army launched a counterattack. The heights on both sides of Switelniki and the village itself were largely recaptured. However, a new breakthrough along the railway on the right flank of the Turkish corps was completely offset in fierce combat with the support of the newly arrived 216th Infantry Division. Russian counterattacks, especially against the 1st Reserve Division, were unsuccessful. 3000 prisoners were captured by Group Gerok alone.

In eventful battles, only slight progress was made by the Germans on the Narajowka until September 19, but it was not possible to completely drive the enemy back from the west bank. However, as General Count Bothmer reported to the Supreme War Command on September 23¹), this was important for the continued defense of the current front. He had to temporarily halt the attacks here but was determined to resume them after reorganizing the units, consolidating the current positions, and compensating for the losses. The enemy was still "heavily concentrated" between Narajowka and Zlota Lipa; aircraft observed troop landings west of Tarnopol.

Meanwhile, changes had occurred in the organization of the Southern Army: A new German general command had been established on the right flank, the 1st Reserve Division was to be exchanged for the 36th, and the 208th Infantry Division was to be transferred soon; smaller parts

¹) p. 23.

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The Battles on the Russian Front: Brusilov Offensive.

were previously excluded with regard to the battles in neighboring sections.

After heavy Russian artillery fire had already been located on the section of the Turkish corps on September 23, a Russian attack began on the 24th, but it failed against the stubborn defense of the Turkish infantry. The day before, attacks on the southern flank of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army had been repelled by the German 197th and 195th Infantry Divisions. South of Manajno, an Austro-Hungarian regiment, which had retaken the lost position after night fighting, mainly against overwhelming troops, made 400 prisoners. On September 25, renewed strong attacks at this location failed. The army group continued to assess the situation as the center of the southern army "with significantly reduced combat strengths facing new heavily massed attacks." Three Russian corps were assumed here. On September 30, the enemy attacked again after seven hours of artillery preparation, involving guns up to 28 cm caliber, with strong forces. While the German XV Corps, after temporarily losing smaller bridgeheads, fully maintained its positions, the attacker at Hofmann's Corps managed to establish himself in the front line over a width of about two kilometers. In the following two days, he expanded the breach despite the use of parts of the army reserve; the commanding height of Lysionia (399 meters), three kilometers southwest of Brzezany, was lost but recaptured by newly arrived parts of the 36th Reserve Division in a counterattack. The recapture of the remaining terrain had to be postponed for a few days due to the ammunition situation. Meanwhile, on October 24, the German southern army left the association of the army group Archduke Karl and transferred to the Commander-in-Chief East.

2. The Battles at the Commander-in-Chief East.

Maps 5, 6 and Appendix 7.

In the command area of the Commander-in-Chief East, it was alongside the southern flank of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, which, together with the northern flank of the

1) Depression of the southern army on September 23: Group Fuchs (Gen. Rdo. d. K. X. R. with 119th and 195th G. and 195th I. Rgt.), Group Berndt (Gen. Rdo. d. XXIV. R. with 3rd, 9th, 208th and 216th Austro-Hungarian I. D.), available until the 30th for transport, leads XV Corps (20th, 19th Did.), Austro-Hungarian Corps Hofmann (55th, 54th Austro-Hungarian I. D.), IX Corps (38th, 119th I. D., 32nd Austro-Hungarian I. D.) in reserve: 1/4 49th R. D. Leib- and 1/4 49th R. D. Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army took over, the Austro-Hungarian 12th and 7th Army were assigned (C. 358).

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O.B. East: Army Group Linsingen.

had to defend the German Southern Army against new Russian breakthrough attempts1), almost exclusively the Army Group Linsingen2), against which the Russian assault was directed. The target of the attack seemed here, as before, initially the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army and particularly the Litzmann Group, where the enemy apparently wanted to break through to Wladimir-Wolynsk again. Whether he had given up his attacks against the Bernhardi Army Group with Kowel as the breakthrough target was not yet clear.

On the extended front north of the Army Group Linsingen to the Gulf of Riga, there was temporary calm. However, there was uncertainty about the Russian intentions in the far north, in the section north of Mitau. Generaloberst von Eichhorn expected an attack there by at least twelve Russian divisions and many heavy batteries; reserves were prepared.

Before the new Russian attacks against the Army Group Linsingen began, Lieutenant General Clausius of the Bernhardi Group, after a failed attempt on August 23, again launched a counterattack on the 28th to repel the Russians at Toboly from the western

1) See more on page 364.  
2) Structure of the Army Group Linsingen from the right flank:  
Army Group of Gen. of Cav. v. d. Marwitz (Gen. Kdo. of VI. A. K.): Corps of Genlt. Dieffenbach (1/2 Austro-Hungarian 46th S. D.), Austrian 92nd Inf. Brig. Austro-Hungarian 48th I. D., further distributed in the corps section German 22nd I. D.), Corps of Gen. of Cav. Eugen von Falkenhayn (Gen. Kdo. of XXII. R. K. with Austro-Hungarian 7th I. D. and German 43rd R. D.).  
Austro-Hungarian 4th Army: Gen. Ob. von Tersztyánszky: Army Group of Gen. of Inf. Litzmann (Gen. Kdo. of XXXX. R. R.) with Group of Genlt. Beßmann (Austro-Hungarian 3rd I. D., Rad. Group of Field Marshal Freiherr von Leonhardt with Austro-Hungarian 7th, 10th, 1/2 Austro-Hungarian 9th R. D., German 2nd (S. R.) D.), Corps of Field Marshal Saurma (Austro-Hungarian 11th and Hungarian 70th I. D.), Austro-Hungarian X. Corps (German 10th and Austro-Hungarian 2nd and Hungarian 37th S. D.); Group of Gen. of Inf. Freiherr von Lüttwitz (Gen. Kdo. of X. A. K. with Austro-Hungarian 121st S. D., Austro-Hungarian 29th S. D.) In Reserve: 3 German and 1 Austrian Inf. Rgt.  
Army Group of Gen. of Cav. von Bernhardi: Div. of Genmaj. Rusche and 107th S. D., Austro-Hungarian II. Corps (Hungarian 41st and Austro-Hungarian 4th I. D.), Corps of Austro-Hungarian Gen. of Inf. Fath; Group of Genlt. Kneussl (Polish Legion, Austro-Hungarian 26th and German 1st I. D.); distributed in the section 11th Bavarian I. D., in Group of Genlt. Clausius (Austro-Hungarian 53rd S. D., Div. Clausius), Rad. Corps of Gen. of Rad. Freiherr von Sauer (1st Ldw. D., 3rd and Austro-Hungarian Bavarian R. D.); in Reserve: distributed behind the Army Group 2 (Ldw. D.), 2/8 Austro-Hungarian 6th I. D., 1 Rgt. of the 10th Ldw. D.  
Strength of the artillery: 130 medium and heavy guns (21 F. H., 5 1/2 M. F., 2 10 cm-Ran. Batteries, as well as 1 f 12cm and 1 f 15cm Ran. Battery, also 4 heavy captured batteries).

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The Battles on the Russian Front: Brusilov Offensive.

To drive away from the Stochod bank. Despite the provision of 21 battalions,

17 batteries of heavy and light field howitzers and mortars, as well as

24 cannon batteries, success was lacking. The newly deployed Russian

65th Division offered stubborn resistance. Our own losses amounted to

more than 800 men. The artillery preparation — according to the army

group — was sufficient, but the inappropriate use of the infantry,

which advanced with weak forces on a common front, but held back the main forces

as reserves, led to failure1). Considering the

strong Russian concentration of forces in front of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, General

von Linsingen had to refrain from attempting the attack again.

The enemy seemed to form a shock group in front of the Litzmann group of the Austro-Hungarian

4th Army. Three German regiments were positioned behind the section;

at Kowel, the Commander-in-Chief East kept a

reserve of five battalions ready to load, parts of which he moved behind the Bernhardi group on

August 30.

On August 31, the Russian attack, well prepared by artillery and mine

throwers, began in a width of about 15 kilometers from Korytnica to

north of Szelwow. The enemy — troops of the Russian

VIII, IV Siberian, and XXXX Corps — managed to break through seriously only in two places,

particularly at Korytnica, where initially the

Austro-Hungarian Cavalry Corps Leonhardi and then the northern adjoining wing

of the Austro-Hungarian 11th Infantry Division gave way, as well as the Hungarian 70th Infantry

Division south of Szelwow; the "most unpleasantly noticeable"

Austro-Hungarian artillery "made itself again most unpleasantly noticeable" is recorded in the war diary of the army group.

The German 10th Landwehr Division, adjoining north of Szelwow, under Lieutenant General von Stoecken, managed to withstand all

attacks. At the particularly heavily attacked front of the

Szurmay Corps, the breakthrough was prevented by the German battalions distributed among the troops

of this corps and the reserves deployed by General Litzmann, maintaining the position everywhere until the morning of

September 1. At the southern breach point,

the enemy, who had reached Swiniuchy, could only be pushed back to the western shore of

Korytnica by a counterattack ordered by General Böttmann. By the evening of September 1,

the situation was stabilized enough that the Litzmann group, as well as the

army group command, could calmly face further attacks.

They lasted until September 3, without the Russians achieving any significant

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O.B. East: Defensive Battles of Army Group Linsingen.

To achieve successes. The breach at Korytnica, however, remained about three kilometers wide and one kilometer deep. The losses of the Russians were heavy, including 1100 prisoners. However, the defenders also suffered significant losses; the German battalions inserted into the Austro-Hungarian front and thrown into battle as reserves suffered considerably in defense and counterattacks.

The Commander-in-Chief East had allocated the majority of his reserves to the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army and Army Group Linsingen, leaving him with only a few battalions at his disposal. To create new reserves, he could only withdraw individual regiments. Despite considerable previous allocations, he withdrew two more regiments from Army Group Gronau and Army Group Woyrsch to Brest Litowsk, one from the front at Mitau to Grodno. There, the attack expected by Colonel General von Eichhorn had not yet occurred, but reserves had to be kept ready due to the strong Russian troop concentration. Greater concern was caused by the situation on the extreme southern flank, which was affected by the breach on the northern flank of the Southern Army. At the request of the Supreme Army Command, which pointed out the very serious situation of the Southern Army on the night of September 3, he withdrew five battalions and three batteries from his limited reserves behind the right flank of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army.

The situation remained tense for Army Group Linsingen. Against their Army Group Bernhardi, the enemy continued their approach work vigorously. On September 4, aircraft detected the transport of forces on the railway leading from Sarny. Colonel General von Linsingen expected an attack at this location. The Supreme Army Command then issued a new demand to immediately withdraw the necessary units, especially infantry, from the front to form three new divisions (216th to 218th). For this, Army Group Eichhorn had to provide four, Army Group Woyrsch, Army Group Linsingen, and 38 regiments. Additionally, by September 6, the 89th Infantry Division of Army Group Woyrsch and the Hungarian 37th Infantry Division of Army Group Linsingen were to be transferred to Transylvania. In the future, regiments or even battalions would have to suffice to avert urgent danger at their own front or to restore the situation.

1) In total, since the end of August, the following were to be transferred: Gen. Rdds. of I., XXV. and XXXIX. R.K. (as a replacement, the newly formed Gen. R.K. d. B. 3. R. 53 was assigned), furthermore 89. S. D., Hungarian 37. S. D., Staff of the 3. R. D., Leid-huf. B.

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The Battles on the Russian Front: Brusilov Offensive.

Since the enemy in front of Army Group Eichhorn, apart from the uncertainty at Mitau, remained calm and relatively "thin," heavy artillery as well as infantry was moved behind Army Group Linsingen. A relief was the conviction gained from aerial reports of September 7 that the enemy was withdrawing troops from Riga. The rest of the 115th Infantry Division could be assigned to Army Group Linsingen, and the withdrawal of the 76th Reserve Division was considered. On the other hand, due to pressure from the Supreme Army Command, the formation of the 216th Infantry Division had to be accelerated to replace the exhausted 105th Infantry Division of Army Group Archduke Karl.

Only thanks to the good work of the intelligence service, particularly the deciphering of Russian radio messages, aerial observations, and prisoner statements, was the command on the Eastern Front mostly able to recognize the enemy's intentions in time to take countermeasures. The reports received by the morning of September 9 indicated the relocation of the general commands of the Russian Guards and the XXXIV Corps to the area just west and northwest of Luck. Aircraft confirmed the advance of enemy columns on Torczyn and southward. Attacks further north, against the Hauer Cavalry Corps, apparently only served to conceal these measures. The Eastern Commander-in-Chief expected an attack by the mentioned three corps against the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army. On the southern flank of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, General von Eben anticipated the continuation of the attacks. Therefore, when the replacement of the Russian I Guards Corps by the XXV Corps was reliably established during the day, Prince Leopold ordered additional forces to be brought up behind the threatened section without delay. There were a total of three regiments, while another regiment and artillery of the Gronau Army Detachment were prepared on the railway near Iwanowo (40 kilometers west of Pinsk). Additionally, Army Group Linsingen was to withdraw the 75th Reserve Division from the front and lead it to Kowel if possible.

The attacks against the Hauer Cavalry Corps continued until September 11. The primarily affected Bavarian Cavalry Division under Lieutenant General von Hellnigrath bravely defended all its positions. A gas attack by the Russians on the night of September 11 against the right wing of the X Army Corps north of Zaturce caused no significant damage.

1) G. 367. 2) G. 368.

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O. B. East: Defensive Preparations with Limited Means.

On the night of September 12, General Ludendorff, pointing out the transport of strong Russian forces from Riga to the south, requested the release of the 76th Reserve Division in addition to the 216th Infantry Division, which was to be replaced at the Dünna Front by the 105th Infantry Division, as well as heavy artillery soon thereafter. He also requested the acceleration of the formation of the 218th Infantry Division.

In the effort to make more troops available, Prince Leopold believed he could withdraw parts from the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, as it had remained unexpectedly quiet there in recent days. Orders had already been given when on September 16, strong Russian attacks resumed here\*) as well as with the Linsingen Army Group.

Within the Linsingen Army Group, differences had gradually developed between the leader of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, Generaloberst von Tersztyánszky, and General Litzmann, which made further proper cooperation impossible. However, since General Litzmann's personality had an unmistakably favorable influence on the Austro-Hungarian troops, Generaloberst von Linsingen had him exchanged with General von der Marwitz on September 15. The following morning, the Russian attack began against his new sector, about 20 kilometers wide, from Pustomyty to south of Zaturce. The enemy deployed four corps (I and II Guards as well as XXXX Corps, parts of the VIII Corps, and the 20th Division), all core troops of the Russian army, in dense waves to storm, which at times attacked the positions more than six times. It hit the Bödmann Group, the Szurmay Corps, and the southern flank of the Austro-Hungarian X Corps, but broke down against the well-prepared defense of the defenders. Combat Squadron 2 successfully attacked the Luck railway station as well as artillery positions and reserves of the enemy. As the enemy stormed, the infantry had already expended its ammunition in some places, so they repelled the assault with hand grenades. Where the Russian infantry penetrated, it was partly repelled without the use of reserves. Alongside German troops, especially the 108th Infantry and 10th Landwehr Divisions, the Austro-Hungarians also fully shared in the success. With minimal own losses¹), the enemy's were "enormous," before the

¹) See p. 369.  
²) Total loss of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army around 2900 men, including about 600 missing; of these, 900 men were German troops, including 22 missing.

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The Battles on the Russian Front: Brusilov Offensive.

Group Marwitz had "according to cautious estimates" over 12,000 dead Russians1).

On the evening of September 16, the Commander-in-Chief East reported to the Supreme Army Command that he viewed the situation with the Army Group Linsingen as well as on the southern flank with the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army as "quite confident." When the following day the Army Group Archduke Karl requested support to lead them against the heavily attacking Southern Army, he made available the parts prepared at Lemberg (a regiment with artillery) of the 49th Reserve Division2).

After the heavy losses of September 16, the enemy did not continue his attacks on the following two days, apart from weaker attempts at attack by the 10th Landwehr Division, which were already stifled by artillery fire. There were reports that he had withdrawn the IV Siberian Corps deployed in the Lucz area behind the front.

Meanwhile, with the Army Group Bernhardi, an attack group composed of Prussian, Bavarian, and Austro-Hungarian troops under General Clausius on September 18 captured a Russian bridgehead advanced over the Stochod at Zarecze. The enemy lost more than 2,500 prisoners and 17 machine guns.

On September 19, the Russians resumed their breakthrough attempts against Group Marwitz, which they prepared with strong artillery fire, increased to drumfire. In the Pustomyty-Szelwow section, they were repulsed with heavy losses; in the other sections, their troops were evidently not brought to attack under the effective defensive fire, not even when Russian artillery covered their own trenches with fire. Using the darkness, the enemy began coordinated attacks against almost the entire front of Group Marwitz from 4 a.m. the following day. He deployed masses of infantry; fierce fighting ensued. According to prisoner statements, under the eyes of the Tsar, who was himself at the front3), the breakthrough to Wladimir-Wolynsk and thus the fall of Kowel was forced. Prisoners, a total of 760, were from two regiments each of all Guard Divisions, the 15th Division (VIII Corps), and the 2nd and 4th Rifle Divisions (XXXX Corps). Breaches on both sides of

1) War Diary of Army Group Linsingen.  
2) An additional regiment was located with the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army (Group Eben) and Army Group Linsingen.  
3) Whether this information was accurate could not be determined.

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O. B. East: Failure of Russian Breakthrough Attempts at Army Group Linsingen.

Szelwow was soon completely balanced out by counterattacks. However, due to its great superiority, the enemy finally managed to break into the position at the northern flank of the group Bockmann, which consisted partly of Landwehr troops, at Korytnica; it was sealed off by German battalions that had meanwhile traveled there. A counterattack undertaken the following day at first light encountered a new, strong attack by the enemy and broke through. The Commander-in-Chief East, as well as the army group, assigned all available reserves, a total of eight battalions, to the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army. In addition, the Commander-in-Chief East held back a regiment of the 217th Infantry Division, which was just rolling to Serbia, and brought back a regiment of the 49th Reserve Division, which had just been transferred to the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army. Generaloberst von Linsingen considered the recapture of Korytnica "absolutely necessary," but initially did not have the forces for it. The Russians continued their attacks here, albeit unsuccessfully, until September 22nd1).

The reserves for the defensive battles as well as for allocations to the Supreme Army Command had recently been taken mainly from the Eichhorn Army Group by the Commander-in-Chief East. However, since September 17th, the accumulation of forces behind the enemy front in the Smorgon—Wiszniew-See section (Russian XX, XXXVI, and XXIV Corps) suggested offensive intentions; the I Siberian Corps was also identified at Smorgon. On the other hand, the Commander-in-Chief East increasingly came to the conclusion that "no sustained attacks are to be expected in the foreseeable future" at the Woyrsch Army Group. Seven heavy batteries moved from there to the Linsingen Army Group on September 21st, as the enemy was evidently preparing new attacks against the Marwitz Group. He relieved his exhausted divisions of the first line and brought in additional forces: The General Commands XXVI and XXV Corps were identified west of Luck on September 23rd. Aircraft observed lively transport movements over Rach to the west until the 25th. The Commander-in-Chief East came to the conviction that the enemy was uniting "new, very strong forces" here, and ordered that all parts of the 218th Infantry Division, after completion of deployment, be immediately transported from the Eichhorn and Woyrsch Army Groups to his disposal at Wladimir-Wolynsk. The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army also found the enemy on September 25th, having already unsuccessfully attacked the southern flank two days earlier.

1) See p. 387.

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The Battles on the Russian Front: Brusilov Offensive.

To achieve success1). On the following day, Russian troop movements

from there to the northern wing of the army were observed. —

Meanwhile, preparations for the recapture of Koritnica were completed

with the Linsingen Army Group. The army group had been reinforced with

14 "heavy batteries2), so that a total of about 65 heavy and light batteries

could prepare the attack; four infantry regiments were held in reserve

behind the section. On September 26, the combat squadron again attacked

support positions, battery positions, and troop camps of the enemy. After

five hours of artillery preparation, the assault began on September 27. The

German assault troops under Generals von Rundel and von Kleist struck

into enemy preparations, but after fierce fighting achieved full success. The

terrain gained beyond the former front line was held against heavy counter-

attacks lasting until the next morning. 3000 prisoners, 44 machine guns,

and two guns remained in German hands.

The expectation that the Russians would now attack the northern wing

of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army was confirmed as early as September 30.

The Commander-in-Chief East sent four battalions and two batteries there.

Although he also considered a "repetition of the attacks against the southern

wing of this army "not unlikely," he was aware that "the northern wing of

the southern army, unsupported by reserves, whose defense was a precondition

for holding the positions of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, had to be

assisted first and foremost. Against this, the enemy advanced on both sides

of the Brody—Olczow road and the Brody—Lemberg railway line. South of

the road, he succeeded in the afternoon in pushing the Austro-Hungarian

27th Infantry Division out of their positions over a width of three kilometers;

reserves absorbed the blow. Otherwise, the enemy was repelled except for a

small, soon balanced breach at the railway line. The counterattack by four

German and two Austro-Hungarian battalions under Lieutenant General

Meixner led to the recapture of the lost position section as early as October 1.

2000 men and 13 machine guns were captured. Thus, the fighting at the

Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army initially subsided again.

With the Linsingen Army Group, the Russian artillery raged since the

night of October 1 with an intensity not previously seen on the Eastern Front

against the front of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army. All pre-

1) p. 370.  
2) 10 s. F.-H.- and 4 Msr. Batteries.

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Oct. 23: Successful Defense at 5th and 2nd Army and Army Group Linsingen.

Preparations for defense were made, with the artillery reinforced by some heavy batteries. The Russian attacks on October 2, conducted with the utmost disregard for human life, were again directed against the blood-soaked front section of the Marwitz army group and extended northward to the right flank of the German X Army Corps. Against the Bœdmann group and the southern flank of the Szurmay Corps, the freshly replenished two Guard Corps stormed no less than 17 times, but the attacks of the Russian XXXIV and X Corps as well as the Russian XXV against the Austro-Hungarian division were hardly less intense. According to prisoners, the aim was to break through to Wladimir-Wolynsk at all costs on that day. However, the attacks failed with unusually bloody losses. Where the enemy infantry reached the completely leveled trenches at certain points, they were soon repelled in a counterattack, and the enemy sought to advance again through artillery fire on their own trenches. In total, troops from eleven Russian divisions were identified. The continuation of the attacks on the following two days was equally unsuccessful, although it was hoped to inflict significant losses on the defenders. On October 5, the enemy ceased their efforts. On this day, the war diary of Army Group Linsingen calculated the strength ratio on their front as follows:

Russians: in the front 30 infantry, four to five cavalry divisions, in reserve six to eight infantry, five cavalry divisions, totaling about 500,000 men.

German troops: 15 infantry divisions, 13½ separate regiments, 1½ cavalry divisions, about 140,800 men;

Austro-Hungarian troops: 13½ infantry divisions, four cavalry divisions, about 95,100 men;

a total of 500,000 Russians against 236,000 allied men.

The Supreme Army Command had already informed the Eastern Commander-in-Chief on September 26 that it was important to secure new reserves at the beginning of October after repelling the impending Russian attack.

1) On the night of October 2 to 3, Lieutenant von Koßel of Field Flying Detachment 62, who had positioned himself behind the Russian front, disrupted the railway line Rowno—Brody by demolition, where lively train traffic had been observed in both directions.  
2) According to prisoner statements, in these sections there were 28½ infantry and 4½ cavalry divisions in the Russian front, with 5 infantry and 5½ cavalry divisions in reserve.

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The Battles on the Russian Front: Brusilov Offensive.

She urged the acceleration of the previously ordered exchange of the 36th against the exhausted 1st Reserve Division of the Southern Army; immediately thereafter, the 208th Infantry Division was to be made ready, then, after other assignments, the X Army Corps was to be exchanged for a corps from the west. The Commander-in-Chief East, however, considered the transfer of individual regiments only possible when "the Russian offensive had been repelled or the tactical situation allowed it." He could initially only offer a few cavalry brigades.

Meanwhile, on October 5, the Southern Army was combined with the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army into the army group of Generaloberst von Böhm-Ermolli, who retained command over this army, and was subordinated to the Commander-in-Chief East1). The Austro-Hungarian IX Corps moved from the Southern Army to the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army to consolidate command on and around the Tarnopol—Alcazow road and railway. Around the same time (October 3), changes also occurred on the northern flank of the Commander-in-Chief East: As General of Infantry Otto von Below went to the Balkans2), General of Infantry von Fabeck, and when he soon fell ill, General of Infantry von Mudra became Commander-in-Chief of the 8th Army. General of Infantry Freiherr von Scheffer-Boyadel took over the former 12th Army as "Army Detachment Scheffer."

Even though in these days the enemy again advanced against the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, and soon after with strong forces against the center of the Southern Army, and the fighting at the Linsingen Army Group had not yet ceased, the Commander-in-Chief East considered the worst crises to be overcome. In a memorandum dated October 4, intended as a basis for the presentation to the Kaiser, who was staying with the Linsingen Army Group in Kowel on the evening of October 5, he outlined the development of operations since the end of July and expressed his view of the current situation as follows: Decisive Russian attacks against the Eichhorn and Woyrsch army groups were not to be expected for the time being, as they would require extensive, time-consuming regroupings of enemy forces. Attempts to break through at the Linsingen Army Group and the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army might not yet be completely abandoned, but it was expected that after the recent enormous losses of the enemy, a longer pause would soon occur. Renewed probing of the front by the enemy for weak spots was anticipated.

1) p. 360; previous events at the Southern Army p. 363 ff.  
2) p. 340.

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O. B. East: Confident View of the Situation.

On the side of the Central Powers, a significant defensive success was achieved, although their own losses were not insignificant. The constant attacks of the Russians, whose considerable numerical superiority allowed them to strike at widely separated points of the long front with strong masses or to simultaneously attempt breakthroughs at several points, repeatedly made it necessary to rapidly deploy reserves that had barely been taken in hand, thereby mixing the units in a highly undesirable manner. The commander-in-chief hoped that the now likely pause in fighting and the soon-to-be-expected impassability of the Russian early winter would finally provide the opportunity to obtain significant reserves at a central location and to carry out the always closely monitored order of the units. The reserves would then be ready to counter any renewed mass attack against their own front or to intervene at other decisive points.

General Ludendorff urged that the 49th Reserve Division be united at Lemberg as soon as possible; it was important to free up forces to "make the offensive in Transylvania truly decisive." On October 6, the commander-in-chief East consequently withdrew the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division from the front of the Bernhardi group, which the enemy had weakened.

On October 8, the Russians again attacked the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army¹) of the Linsingen Army Group, again unsuccessfully. The most heavily hit 20th Infantry Division repelled all attacks from two Russian divisions, and by October 10, calm had returned. Within the army group, the view gained ground that major attacks were no longer to be expected. But on October 12, General von der Marwitz suggested that a new attack was indeed imminent. The commander-in-chief East had meanwhile transferred six Austro-Hungarian battalions from the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army and the Litzmann Group to the Isonzo front, as it was necessary to "counter the impending loss of Trieste as quickly as possible"; on October 14, he had five Austro-Hungarian heavy batteries follow.

¹) The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army was now organized according to various reports into: 2nd and 3rd Austro-Hungarian Infantry Divisions with Group Tscherman (108th and 115th Infantry Divisions, including 2nd Cavalry Brigade), Szurmay Corps (section of General von Rundel, Austro-Hungarian 11th Infantry Division, 10th Austro-Hungarian Division, ½/75th Reserve Division), Austro-Hungarian X Corps (frequent 13th and Austro-Hungarian 2nd Infantry Divisions), Bgrft. X A. R. (General Schmidt von Knobelsdorf) with 20th, 19th, 121st Infantry Divisions, 5th and 9th Austro-Hungarian Infantry Divisions.  
Particularly in the Marwitz Army Group, German troops were still distributed among the Austro-Hungarian troops.

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The Battles on the Russian Front: Brusilov Offensive.

On the same 14th of October, the attacks expected by General von der

Marwitz against the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army actually began. They

hit the Beckmann Group, the right wing of the Gourmay Corps, the

Austro-Hungarian 2nd Infantry Division standing on the left wing of the Marwitz Group,

and again the German 20th Infantry Division. The intensity

of the attacks, especially in the Jaturce—Zubilin section, where the latter division

repelled the Russian infantry storming perhaps ten times during the night of October 16 and throughout the day,

showed that the enemy was serious about these attacks; this was also evidenced by the noticeable increase

in their air forces. The particularly systematic deployment for reconnaissance

and combat led to the assumption that these were French air

units). However, Combat Squadron 2 was just about to be transferred

to the west. In three days of fighting, the enemy suffered a new heavy defeat from October 14 to 16.

North of the attack section, however, on October 18 at dawn,

troops of the 19th Infantry Division launched an attack after gas releases,

took the Russian position on both sides of Julianowka over a width of about two

kilometers, and cleared the western Stochod bank.

Meanwhile, the enemy at the Southern Army had once again

gathered strength. But their attacks on October 15 against the

Gerok Corps with strong forces on both sides of

Switelniki were repelled everywhere by the 3rd Guard Infantry Division under Major General von Ditfurth and the right wing of the

49th Reserve Division, which had meanwhile been deployed here. The attacks attempted against the rest

of the corps front did not go beyond initial attempts in the artillery's defensive fire. When on October 16,

Russian attacks undertaken with reinforced artillery support before the obstacles

of the 3rd Guard Infantry and 49th Reserve Division once again collapsed,

two regiments of the 3rd Guard Division pursued the retreating

enemy, took the forward Russian trenches southwest of

Switelniki, captured about 2000 prisoners, and repelled all counterattacks in the position advanced about one kilometer to the east. In the

following days, carefully prepared assaults followed at the Fuchs Corps and especially at the Gerok Corps, to drive the enemy from the western

Narajowka bank. Troops of the 199th and

3rd Guard Infantry as well as the 49th Reserve Division were involved. They were successful.

On October 22, the last Russian resistance nest on the western bank fell.

A total of 5000 men were captured; the total losses

\*) Confirmation is not available.

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O. B. East: Waning of the Battles at Army Group Böhm-Ermolli.

The Russians from October 15 to 21 were estimated by the High Command of the Southern Army at at least 35,000 men.

Meanwhile, on October 20, the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army also joined the High Command East and was assigned to Army Group Böhm-Ermolli. Thus, a demand that had repeatedly arisen since June of the year, but had not been fulfilled for various reasons, was put into practice: Unity of command was ensured on the entire Eastern Front north of the Carpathians. Only then was it possible to manage with the few reserves without time-consuming negotiations, as required by the needs of the long front that arose here and there.

While combat activity at Army Group Linsingen only temporarily subsided, noticeable calm set in before Army Group Böhm-Ermolli. By October 28, reports indicated that the Russian II Corps, previously in front of the Southern Army, had been located in the Moldau and that an assault group formed from the southern wing of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army had been disbanded again. Thus, the High Command East, as reported by the Supreme Army Command on the 28th, expected at the front of Army Group Böhm-Ermolli, "at most only with enemy advances of a demonstrative nature."

At Army Group Linsingen, the troop concentration in front of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army continued. Business activity soon resumed and occasionally extended to the army groups Litzmann and Bernhardi. On the evening of October 25, the enemy unsuccessfully advanced against the Jatucze-Zubilno section in front of the 20th Infantry Division and then tried to wear it down in the following days with drumfire of the greatest strength. An attack on the morning of the 27th against the left wing of the Austro-Hungarian X Corps was repelled, another broke down the following day in front of the Austrian 13th Infantry Division already in the barrage. On October 29, a Russian mass assault succeeded in a width of one and a half kilometers against the Bedmann group west of Pustomyty, partially reaching the wire obstacles, as well as in the evening on the northern wing of the Szurmay Corps near Szelwow.

Also in front of the center of Army Group Woyrsch, the enemy was more active. From October 25 to 27, he launched gas attacks against the 4th Landwehr and 201st Infantry Division, which, however, had almost no effect. The subsequent battles lasted into November.

1) See p. 360; previous events at the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army p. 363 ff.

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The Battles on the Russian Front: Brusilov Offensive.

All in all, the recent battles showed a decisive decline in Russian offensive power. Reports from prisoners about disobedience, even mutiny in divisions in the attack area west of Luck, including those of the two Guard Corps, increased. By October 30, the Supreme Command had reports that troops from the previous Russian front had gradually been moved to the new Cavalry Divisions South, in strength of eight to ten corps. At the same time, the period of "disorganization" began to become noticeable. Thus, it was possible for the Commander-in-Chief East, due to the high consumption of forces in the West and the needs of the Romanian campaign, to give up his best divisions or exchange them for exhausted or newly formed ones. However, it was first attempted to improve one's own position through smaller operations where necessary.

Thus, on October 30, troops of the 49th Reserve Division of the Gerok Corps (Southern Army) attacked the important heights west of Borowrt Krasnolesie and captured the enemy position in a two-day battle over 1200 meters wide and 400 meters deep. The fight for trench sections lasted a few more days here. The Turkish XV Corps successfully carried out an operation south of Miezhizczow.

At the Linsingen Army Group, an attack by the X Army Corps at Witoniez on November 1 was fully successful. Troops of the 121st and 19th Infantry Divisions, in a fresh assault on the western Stochod bank, captured the commanding height 192 and the entire Russian bridgehead; 1600 prisoners and 15 machine guns remained in German hands.

On November 9, the Woyrsch Army Group undertook a well-prepared attack to regain positions north of Baranowicze lost in the July battles in the section of the Austro-Hungarian XII Corps. Using flamethrowers, the 5th Reserve and parts of the 201st Infantry Division drove the enemy back four kilometers behind the Strobowa stream and captured over 4400 prisoners, 27 machine guns, and 12 mortars.

As the battles with the Gerok Group dragged on, the Supreme Command on November 4 warned that the general situation demanded that "the goal should not exceed the necessary

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The Last Battles. — Transfer of Troops.

goes beyond and we spare people and ammunition." Furthermore, in agreement with the Commander-in-Chief East, it assessed the situation on the Eastern Front as such that "despite the withdrawal of considerable Russian forces, serious attacks at various points must still be expected." Before the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, they assumed rather too low than too high, still six to seven corps. Apart from the mentioned German operations, calm had set in at the beginning of November across the entire front, even in the most fiercely contested sections of Army Group Linsingen. Only with the Southern Army did local battles continue, where on November 30, the enemy, in an attack against the Turkish XV Corps, suffered once again greater bloody losses.

On November 10, a meeting of the general staffs of the German and Austro-Hungarian armies took place in Pleß, to which the Chief of Staff of the Commander-in-Chief East, Colonel Hoffmann, was also invited. It was mainly about what should happen if the suspected transport of further Russian forces to the south was confirmed. Since October, Army Group Böhm-Ermolli had been considering an attack in the direction over Tarnopol. The possibility of thereby supporting operations on the Romanian front and at the same time wresting Austrian territory conquered by the Russians seemed to grow in the same measure as the enemy weakened north of the Carpathians. However, these plans had to be temporarily set aside in favor of the question of which troops, including Austro-Hungarian, the Commander-in-Chief East could still give up without exchange and which divisions were suitable for exchange to the west. The result was that in the course of November, four more divisions were exchanged for those from the west. The impression that further transports were also taking place on the enemy side allowed, at the beginning of December, the transfer of five more divisions against only two worn-out ones from the west. Repeated noticeable increase in enemy artillery fire as well as probing by stronger Russian hunting commands and individual companies apparently aimed only at unsettling and complicating the numerous ongoing replacements.

By mid-December, the Commander-in-Chief East was of the opinion that Russian attack intentions were nowhere present at the time, except in the area of Mitau, where, based on repeated prisoner statements, such a possibility still had to be reckoned with. When General Ludendorff at this time launched an attack to bind Russian forces

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The Battles on the Russian Front: Brusilov Offensive.

In the direction of Kolomea, the Commander-in-Chief East proposed a much more far-reaching operation<sup>1</sup>). However, this was not carried out for the time being, as after the conclusion of the Romanian campaign, the West demanded all strength.

3. The Operations of the Russians until the End of 1916<sup>2</sup>).

Maps 5 and 6.

The original intention of the Russian High Command, that besides the offensive of the Southwestern Front, the southern wing of the Western Front should also resume the attack and advance on Kowel, had already been abandoned. General Ewret had declared this attack hopeless in the very first days of September, after initially requesting its postponement, and instead wanted to attack far in the north, at Wilna, where the enemy was said to be weakened. Under these circumstances, the High Command took the two Guard Corps stationed close to the southern wing from him on September 3. They returned to the Southwestern Front, which now received a slightly more northern target for its 8th Army, Wladimir-Wolynsk. The start of a new general attack by the Southwestern Front was set for September 16. An attempt to perhaps still achieve the cooperation of the southern wing of the Western Front (3rd and Special Army) met with renewed rejection from General Ewret; he had meanwhile suffered a setback on September 9, when he, without the knowledge of the High Command, conducted a partial attack with two corps at Stochod northeast of Kowel, at Rudka-Czerwiszcze.

Meanwhile, the defeat of the Romanians in the Dobrudja, where Tutrakan had fallen on September 6<sup>3</sup>), prompted King Ferdinand to approach the Tsar on September 8 for more effective support. The Tsar replied that the impending Russian main attack in Galicia represented the most effective assistance currently possible. However, he was also concerned about German attacks in this area and was therefore prepared to send another division (11.5) to the Dobrudja. The fact that the Romanians had to evacuate Silistria on September 9 and the French were also urging did not change his decision. When General Joffre urgently requested strong support for the Dobrudja on September 15, the attack in Galicia was imminent.

<sup>1</sup> See more on p. 489 f.  
<sup>2</sup> Connection to p. 351; see also pp. 50, 258, 271, 296 f.  
<sup>3</sup> p. 204.

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Attacks to Relieve Romania.

The offensive now conducted solely by the Southwestern Front began as planned on September 16, but only brought initial successes. In the main thrust direction, towards Wladimir-Wolynsk, where the 8th Army suffered unusually high losses, the attack had to be halted on the 21st, and by the 11th and 7th Army on September 24. Only the 9th Army in the Carpathians showed some significant progress. The military leadership wanted to shift the focus there in the future. On September 23, they returned the Special Army to the Southwestern Front to reinforce the left wing of the 7th and 9th Army. The former was then to attack at Kaluş, the latter at Besztercze and Sächsisch-Regen. However, General Brussilow managed to ensure that instead of reinforcement and attack by the 7th Army, the offensive on Kowel was attempted once more.

Some time had to pass before the plans could be implemented. Meanwhile, General Joffre again urged and primarily demanded a sharp offensive in the Dobrudja against the Bulgarians, but at the same time communicated that decisive cooperation from the Salonika Army could not be expected. General Alexejew countered with the demand that this army be reinforced by the Western powers. His decisions and measures had almost no impact. They only showed how little the assessment of the situation matched the hopes tied to Romania's entry into the war, and how little the new ally could actually be helped.

Inadequate railway connections played a significant role. The transport duration for a corps from the middle of the Russian front to Moldavia or even Dobrudja had to be calculated at a minimum of two weeks. There were four, albeit single-track, continuous lines to Moldavia and the Danube estuary: 1. directly behind the front via Roman to Bacau–Focsani, 2. via Jassi to Sociani–Galatz (single-track up to that point) and further across the Danube to Reni, finally 3. from Bendery directly to the Danube to Reni, finally 4. double-track to Sevastopol and from there by sea in one night to the Danube estuary or to Constanza. In each case, except for the journey to Reni, transshipment was necessary, either from Russian gauge to Central European (Romanian) or to the ship. To what extent these transport possibilities were utilized cannot be determined. Completely inadequate operating conditions of the Romanian routes and their use by supply

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The Battles on the Russian Front: Brusilov Offensive.

and troop movements were especially a heavy obstacle on the Roman—Bacau route. The sea route was used until the moment the Central Powers' troops took possession of the unloading points, without the Turkish fleet or German submarines being able to prevent it.

The defeat of the Romanians at Hermannstadt on September 28 made the situation appear quite serious, although the Romanian Northern Army, albeit with only weak forces, still stood on the mountains west of the upper Maros and Alt valleys. General Alexeyev feared the assembly of a strong enemy strike army in Transylvania, which could push back these Romanian troops and break through over the mountains to the east towards the Danube estuary; in conjunction with the enemy offensive in Dobruja, the Romanians could then be cut off from Russia, opening the way to Bessarabia and southern Russia to the enemy. The Russian Chief of General Staff therefore urged the Romanian military leadership to assemble their main forces in the area north of Hermannstadt. He also recommended, in any case, the construction of a strong defensive position along the line Dorna Watra—Kronstadt—Bucharest—lower Danube. On their own fronts, the intended new attacks by the 7th and 9th Armies had not yet begun. It was again explicitly determined that all major operations north of the Rokitno Swamps should be avoided; the focus should finally be shifted to the southern flank of the entire front to the 9th Army. The attack on Vladimir-Volynsk was also to be stopped, the left wing of the 9th was to be extended from the 8th and Special Army, and the High Command 8 was to be inserted between the 7th and 9th Armies. For the fight against Bulgaria, which General Joffre described as the most important, the North and West Fronts were to send one to two corps into Dobruja. On the other hand, General Alexeyev demanded from the French military leadership) renewed reinforcement of the Salonika Army by troops of the Western Powers, including Italy and Portugal, and suggested that Japan should also be induced to send at least one corps for the war in Europe.

However, the shift of focus to the 9th Army was partly questioned again because General Brusilov still did not consider it right to launch the attack that had just been prepared again

1) Marine Archive: "The War at Sea 1914—18. The Mediterranean Division", p. 286.  
2) French official work, Vol. VIII, 2, Note 456 and 466. — The attempt remained without

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Russian Operations: Shift of Focus to the South.

To focus on Wladimir-Wolynsk and further on Kowel, which had been the primary goal of his operations for more than four months. He eventually managed to gain the approval of the military command for this; for it was clear that any weakening of one's own front and the cessation of the attack at this point would also free up corresponding forces of the enemy, who, thanks to strong railway connections, could bring them back into action at another point sooner than oneself. Only after the execution of the attack by the Special Army, which began on October 16, did General Brussilow want to send more forces south. Nevertheless, after the Romanians were pushed back across the border at Kronstadt on October 8, three and a half corps rolled there alongside the high command of the 8th Army, two of which went to the 9th Army and extended their southern flank to Ol.-Toplicza, one and a half (one of which was initially destined for Moldavia to Piatra) into the Dobrudscha.

When the attack attempted by General Gurko towards Wladimir-Wolynsk by the Special Army again failed with heavy losses, General Brussilow wanted to repeat it on October 23/24. However, he had to finally abandon his intentions, as the military command took away another corps from him. In the southern adjoining armies (11th and 7th), the attacks were stopped around the same time without having achieved significant results, only in the 9th Army were they continued in connection with the battles of the Romanians. By the end of October, the "Brussilow Offensive" was over.

The focus of Russian warfare was now clearly on the Romanian front. The initial goal was Albochy. After the Romanians were pushed back from Transylvania everywhere to the border mountains and in the Dobrudscha beyond the Constanza—Cernavoda railway during October, there was nothing left but to bring them help as much as possible. Above all, more corps had to be freed to fill the gap that had formed between the 9th and the Romanian Northern Army due to the withdrawal of Romanian troops to Wallachia, and to reinforce the Dobrudscha Army. Later, it was hoped to be able to go on the offensive at both points. On October 26, the Supreme War Council (Conseil de Defence) in Paris expressed its view that the Romanian war

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October. It is Russia's cause¹). Its armies were supposed to hold back the enemy everywhere, in order to then carry out the attack against Bulgaria together with the Army of Saloniki. Romania's army was placed under the orders of the Russian Army Command; the French military plenipotentiary in Bucharest had to make clear to the Romanians the necessity of this measure²).

Thus, from the end of October, there existed a unified Russian-Romanian front from Riga to the Danube mouth under the Tsar as Supreme Commander. It was structured as follows:

Northern Front (with 6th, 12th, 5th and 1st Army) . . . . . 29½

Western Front (with 10th, 4th, 2nd and 3rd Army) . . . . . 32½

Southwestern Front with

Special Army . . . . . . . . . . 23

11th Army . . . . . . . . . . . . . 12½

7th Army . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 15

8th Army . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 10

9th Army . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 13

Total 73½

Romanian Army under King Ferdinand with

23½ largely severely shaken divisions . .

Russian Danube (formerly Dobruja, later

new 6th) Army . . . . . . . . . . . . 7

Total without the Romanian troops 142½

Infantry divisions.

November. The relief attack of the 9th Army, initially scheduled for November 7th, had to be postponed as the necessary forces did not arrive in time. During repeated exchanges of views with General Joffre, General Alexeyev saw the assembly of one strong Russian army each on the flanks of the Romanians as the next task. Accordingly, it was planned to send additional forces to the Danube Army, and furthermore to form a new army (later the new 4th Army) between this and the 9th Army. The Russian Army Command still entertained the idea of attacking through the Eastern Carpathians into Transylvania after the assembly of sufficient forces, in order to bring the offensive of the Central Powers in Wallachia to a halt. The

¹) Previous position of the Russian Supreme Command on the operations of the Romanians, p. 258.  
²) French official work, Vol. IV, 3, p. 51 f.

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Unified Russian-Romanian Front.

The necessary troop movements took a lot of time. Finally,

the attack, in which the 8th Army, now formed to the right of the 9th,

was also to participate, was set for November 28; the fact that

in the meantime, on November 23, the Mackensen Army Group crossed the

Danube south of Bucharest made it more urgent than ever. In doing so,

the Russian military leadership saw the best solution in the gradual withdrawal

of the Romanians, in order to at least preserve the fighting strength of their army. In

this sense, General Beljajew, who was sent to Bucharest as a military envoy

and was previously the head of the deputy general staff, tried to

act, but understandably could not prevail against the

Romanian leadership, which did not want to surrender the capital and lower Wallachia

to the enemy without a fight and was supported in this by the French military envoy,

General Berthelot. The French urged

helping the Romanians at Bucharest. Thus, the attack of the Russian

8th and 9th Armies actually began on November 28.

During these days, there was a change in military leadership. For

the seriously ill General Alexeyev, General

Gurko, previously commander-in-chief of the Special Army, took over

the duties of chief of staff on November 23. However, the decision on all

important issues remained with General Alexeyev, with whom constant

communication was maintained. The 4th Army, forming just north of Focsani,

and on December 1, the Danube Army

were subordinated to General Brusilov. On the other hand, the intended

and urgently needed direct influence on the leadership

of the Romanian army could not be achieved, as under King Ferdinand

it accepted the fight far ahead of the Russian front at Bucharest.

When, after December 3, the Romanians had to evacuate their capital

and retreat to the northeast, while the attack of the Russian

8th and 9th Armies brought only minor local successes, it became increasingly

disruptive that a unified command of the Russian and Romanian

operations had not yet been achieved; General Brusilov complained that

he was not informed about King Ferdinand's wishes. Thus,

by order of the Tsar on December 7, a new army group "South" was formed from the remnants of the Romanian

army, the 4th and the Danube (future 6th) Army, under King Ferdinand of Romania as

commander-in-chief with General Sakharov as chief of staff1).

In view of the slow arrival

of all reinforcements and the successes of the Central Powers, the Russian military leadership

was left with only defense and retreat to manage for the time being.

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The Battles on the Russian Front: Brusilov Offensive.

The unfortunate military conduct of Romania had forced the Russian command to gradually send the 9th Army, including 15 corps with 35 infantry divisions and 13 cavalry divisions, about a quarter of their total forces, to the section from the Romanian northern border to the Black Sea. Romania's entry into the war had extended the Russian front by more than 400 kilometers and burdened it with new dangers. The disappointment was great. The spirit of the Romanian soldiers was not very satisfactory; there was the impression that many considered the continuation of the fight useless and also feared that Russia might never give back the Moldavia, where its troops now stood.

4. Final Considerations on the Brusilov Offensive.

The Russians had not achieved their goal of finally breaking Austria-Hungary's resistance, despite Romania's military aid. Since the end of August, they had made only very slight progress. Their overall territorial gain was spatially significant but operationally negligible. More significant was that their five-month assaults had brought them a total of 450,000 prisoners and numerous other war spoils. This meant an extremely worrying attrition of the Austro-Hungarian army, whose losses primarily (about 90% in prisoners) were borne. In addition, and in connection with this, was the immobilization of numerous German divisions urgently needed elsewhere. With this result, Russia had not only achieved what was within its power but also made a decisive contribution to the overall war effort of the Entente in the summer and autumn of 1916. It had not shied away from losses. They had swollen to an enormous height; exact figures are missing, estimates are around 1,200,000 men. This extraordinarily high number, even for Russian standards, is explained primarily by the ruthless use of infantry masses, generally driven forward with exemplary bravery, but occasionally also by extreme means of coercion, repeatedly charging against the positions of the Central Powers to compensate for what was lacking in artillery strength.

1) See p. 396. 2) Connection to Vol. X, p. 564 ff. 3) A. Brusilov: "My Memories", p. 190 ff.

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Concluding Observations.

The defense against these assaults, given the heavy simultaneous burden on all other theaters of war, will always represent a glorious chapter of joint German-Austro-Hungarian warfare. In unconditional willingness to help, the German Supreme Army Command supplied the Austro-Hungarian front sections with forces that could only just be made available. This has not only been gratefully acknowledged by the ally, but he has also — especially since Field Marshal von Hindenburg and General Ludendorff took over overall command — willingly complied with all measures deemed necessary by the Germans for defense. This often meant selfless renunciation for the army of the Danube monarchy and its leaders, which they bore for the good of the common cause, but which certainly was not easy for them. For all those measures and interventions emanating from the German side — justified as they were by the circumstances — nevertheless brought an influence on the Austro-Hungarian armed forces that extended far beyond the operational level into the realm of small tactics, indeed into the training and internal structure of the army¹). As an example, it may be mentioned that at the focal points of the fighting, individual German battalions were often inserted as supports for the defense into the Austro-Hungarian front or held ready for counterattack just behind it, without the local Austro-Hungarian commander having direct disposal rights over them, as this remained expressly with the German command posts. Such regulation was certainly not exemplary, but under the given circumstances, it was hardly avoidable. That there were occasional frictions when mixing troops and overlapping command authorities was inevitable. It had to be accepted in order to secure success in the face of the common danger by mobilizing all forces.

Trusting in the measures taken, the unconditional will to resist to the utmost of all German sub-commanders and their troops, the new Supreme Army Command has been able to watch the heavy defensive battles with increasing confidence and even withdraw parts from the already so sparsely manned Eastern Front for urgent needs elsewhere. The new Commander-in-Chief East has, in doing so, always keeping the big picture in mind, responded in an exemplary manner. Nevertheless, no significant territorial loss has occurred under him. Timely recognition of the danger, appropriate use of the few reserves, and incomparable

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The Battles on the Russian Front.

The sacrifice of German troops has prevented it. Such resistance has

certainly demanded high sacrifices; the total German losses amounted to about

250,000 men1). However, the German officer, leadership, and troops could

be proud of what they achieved side by side, especially with the German-

speaking and Hungarian troops of the Dual Monarchy in the

defense against the Brusilov Offensive.

C. The Events at the Beginning of the Year 1917.

Maps 4, 5, 6.

At the turn of the year 1916/17, between the Danube estuary and

the Carpathians, the offensive operations of the Mackensen Army Group and the

adjacent right wing of the Archduke Josef Army Front (Group

Gero2)) against Russians and Romanians had not yet been completed everywhere3).

Further north, on the Carpathian ridge at the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army,

less so at the 7th Army, but also at the Linsingen Army Group

of the Supreme Commander East, almost complete calm had already set in for some time;

they had begun to create permanent positions where they were still

missing. From the Rokitno Swamps to the Baltic Sea, the front was firmly established in the

lines taken more than a year ago. The battles in Romania

had significantly weakened the Russian overall army. There were no signs of

larger undertakings.

The Supreme Command wanted to switch to pure defense on the entire Eastern Front

and therefore withdraw forces from all sections,

at the Mackensen Army Group, as soon as "a defensible

permanent and corresponding strategic defensive position in

East Wallachia" was established. It had informed the Austro-Hungarian Army

Command on December 30, 1916, that at the Archduke Josef Army Front,

a number of German divisions would have to be gradually replaced and withdrawn by

Austro-Hungarian forces, partly taken from the front of the Supreme Commander East.

I. Mackensen Army Group and Archduke Josef Army Front.

The Mackensen Army Group4) was ordered on January 10

to establish the line reached at the Putna as a permanent position,

following the barrier of the lower Danube and the

lower Sereth.

1) Medical report on the German army in the World War 1914—1918, Vol. III,  
G. 142, (cf. C. 407, note). — Compilation of Austro-Hungarian loss  
figures not known. — 2) Meanwhile settled there (E. 260). — 3) E. 320 ff.  
4) Connection to C. 328.

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Army Group Mackensen: Expansion of Permanent Positions.

build. After the bridgehead of Nanesti was taken on January 19, the mobile warfare had also come to an end here. However, the expansion of the positions encountered great difficulties. The 9th Army reported: "With the beginning of trench warfare, the harsh Romanian winter suddenly came with severe frost and snowfall. The accommodation was very poor, on the right wing of the Kraewel Corps (General Command 54) it was almost completely lacking. In connection with this, the aftereffects of the great exertions of the past months showed, morale sank, the health condition worsened. In particular, 3000 cases of frostbite are to be lamented, including a number of fatalities, and a large number of illnesses that required amputations." The Turks in particular suffered from the cold. In the lowland fronts from the Danube to north of Focsani, the land offered no building materials. The villages consisted of mud huts. There was no forest. The supply on the extraordinarily bad roads was difficult. Thus, the expansion of the positions and accommodations in this front section was particularly delayed. It was better from Focsani to the left wing of the army group. Here, the vineyards could provide obstacle stakes; the wine cellars were expanded into protective shelters. By the end of January, work had already begun on the construction of a second line of defense.

In general, the harassment by enemy artillery was low. The snowstorm prevailing in the last days of January severely hindered business activity. But the expansion of the positions also came to a standstill, as all forces were needed to keep the trenches free of snow.

At the beginning of February, milder weather with snowdrifts favored increased activity of enemy reconnaissance units, which also advanced over the ice of the Sereth. On February 10, the army group considered an imminent enemy offensive against the 9th Army possible, before they had completed the expansion of their position and the onset of thawing weather would hinder enemy troop movements and supply. They took care to provide reserves by withdrawing forces from the front. Aerial reconnaissance and raiding parties, however, revealed no changes in the enemy that would indicate imminent attacks. The removal of troops was significantly delayed by unfavorable rail conditions and ice drift on the Danube, which brought shipping to a complete standstill at the end of January. After the withdrawal of a total of about five infantry and three cavalry divisions

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The Battles on the Russian Front.

At the end of February, the Mackensen Army Group still had troops with a strength of 15 infantry divisions, eight of which were German.

On the enemy side, the heavily shaken Romanian units had been almost entirely replaced and withdrawn by Russian troops as early as the beginning of January. The Mackensen Army Group could thus assume that only Russians were in front of their line. They anticipated three enemy infantry divisions in front of the Bulgarian 3rd Army and 13 in front of the rest of the front, along with four to five cavalry divisions. They did not expect any attacks for the time being.

A little later than the Mackensen Army Group, the Gerok Group of the Archduke Josef Army Front came to rest. They had to give up two German divisions. In view of the strong opposing enemy forces relative to their own front line, Field Marshal von Conrad requested that at least one of the two divisions remain with the army front. However, it was only after repeated insistence that the Supreme Military Command decided to comply with this request until the significantly reduced troop strengths of the Austro-Hungarian units had recovered; in February, the division could move west.

From the Romanian troops still facing them in the Carpathians, the commander of the 3rd Division, Colonel Culcaba, who was friendly to the Germans, reported to the troops of General von Gerok in the Casin Valley on February 6. He hoped — as he stated — that many Romanians would follow his example and wanted to form free corps against the Russians, who would never give up this area again after the withdrawal of Romanian troops from Moldova. However, his expectations were not fulfilled; his example found no imitation. However, the replacement of Romanian forces by Russian ones continued in the Casin Valley. On February 28, individual advances began against the entire front of the Gerok Group, but they had no success.

On the high mountain front of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army, due to winter snowstorms and cold, the further north one went, the less possibility there was for large-scale battles. Here, too, a German division was relieved.

On the southern flank of the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army¹) in the forested Carpathians, Russian attacks in January and February still led to varied battles. As early as January 3, the Russians had succeeded north of Jacobeni in advancing over a width and depth of several kilometers

¹) Continuation on p. 363.

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to break into the positions of the Austro-Hungarian XI Corps. On January 27, two Russian divisions pushed the Austro-Hungarian front back to the valley of the Golden Bistritz along the railway from Kimpolung. The following day, they were able to gain more ground further south. Generaloberst von Kövess was forced to move parts of the German 1st Infantry Division, belonging to the Carpathian Corps, south into the threatened section to regain ground from which the enemy controlled the valley road of the Golden Bistritz. On February 12 and 13, parts of the German 1st and 117th Infantry Divisions, together with Austro-Hungarian troops, were able to recapture the positions on the railway after strong artillery preparation. Over 1200 prisoners, machine guns, mortars, and trench guns were captured. On February 27, the same troops wrested further parts of the lost positions from the enemy and took another 1300 prisoners. Russian counterattacks and relief attacks further north and at Kirlibaba, as well as against the section of Lieutenant General von Richthofen at the Tatar Pass, had no effect.

Only then did the grueling battles at the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army end. The grim winter weather in the high mountains continued to take a heavy toll through illnesses, frostbite, and exhaustion, especially since the supply situation was very difficult. Due to limited business roads, they generally had to make do with incomplete expansion of the positions, and yet considerable reserves could not be deployed.

The front of Archduke Josef assessed their situation at the end of February as follows: "At present, there are no indications of the deployment of stronger Russian attack forces against the front. It is also unlikely that the enemy will deploy his available corps for an offensive through the mountains to Hungary, thereby weakening himself east or north of the Carpathians, where he can expect quicker decisive successes."

2. Front of the Commander-in-Chief East.

The front of the Commander-in-Chief East (Army Groups Böhm-Ermolli, Linsingen, Bothrich, and Eichhorn) was characterized by pure trench warfare. The Supreme Army Command was informed on December 30, 1916: "The freezing of most watercourses, lakes, and swamps at Army Group Bothrich and Eichhorn has made it possible in many places to live-

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The Battles on the Russian Front.

led to active business operations. It is merely a trivial skirmish. There are no signs of larger Russian undertakings." However, it was to be assumed that the Russians would continue to use the increased passability of the terrain due to the frost for advances by their raiding commands. On the German side, Field Marshal Prince Leopold of Bavaria at the beginning of the year recognized the good performance of the assault troops trained according to the experiences of the western theater of war in all army groups and emphasized that smaller operations should continue to take place to maintain weapon handling and strengthen confidence in combat superiority over the Russians. Above all, it was important to continuously monitor the organization and condition of the Russian army by capturing prisoners.

Thus, in January and February, the army groups Böhm-Ermolli, Linsingen, and Woyrsch only engaged in minor skirmishes. In contrast, the Eichhorn army group experienced increased combat activity, especially from the Russian side, around the turn of the year. However, Generaloberst von Eichhorn did not expect larger enemy attacks.

At the front of Army Detachment D (formerly Scholtz), on the evening of January 3, companies of the 78th Reserve Division unexpectedly crossed the ice of the Dvina to capture the island of Glaudon, occupied by the Russians, at the mouth; on January 5, it was lost again under Russian counterattack. On January 2 and 4, the Russians unsuccessfully advanced at Lake Mjadziol and Lake Drisviaty, south of Illurt, west of Jacobstadt, and near Dünhof. On January 5, they engaged in lively artillery activity, particularly between Lake Wiszniew and Lake Narocz and near Postawy, without gaining ground in subsequent advances. This increased combat activity was related to larger Russian attacks that were developing on the northern flank of the army group at the Aa.

The Winter Battle at the Aa.

Sketches 23 and 24.

At the lower Dvina, the German 8th Army, since January 2 under General of Artillery von Scholtz1), with Major General von Sauberzweig as Chief of Staff.

The Russian bridgehead extending westward to Tukum from Riga deeply penetrated the northern flank of the German positions

1) Gen. v. Mudra had become D.B. of Army Detachment A.

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and thus posed an operational threat. If the enemy broke through here and even managed to take the important railway junction of Mitau, he could destabilize the entire German Düna front beyond Jakobstadt. Extensive swamp areas in front of the German front on both sides of the Aa excluded such an attack during most of the year. Therefore, only weak troops, essentially consisting of Landwehr and Landsturm, were deployed here as Group Mitau under Lieutenant General von Pappritz (General Command z. b. V. 60, Chief of the General Staff Colonel Nebbel), totaling 48 battalions and 316 partly unlimbered older guns (of which 115 were medium and heavy). The opposing enemy, parts of the Russian 12th Army under General Radko Dimitriew, was — as far as was known — not strong; it largely consisted of newly formed Latvian volunteer troops¹).

In the confusing forest and swamp area, the foremost German position consisted of fortification groups on high sand dunes, between which support points and blockhouse lines set on the ground in the lowlands established the connection with flanked obstacles. A few kilometers further back ran a still little-developed second position. Since the end of December, the frost had made all watercourses and swamps passable, thus depriving the position of its protection. General von Pappritz had requested reserves, but they were not given to him, as no reinforcement was apparent on the enemy side either, given the overall situation. On December 31, the situation back there was — "Enemy purely defensive, shows increased entrenchment activity, has withdrawn the moderately combat-effective VI Siberian Corps from the front." According to prisoner statements, it was assumed that the corps was to be transferred to Romania, while the XXXXIII Corps, consisting of Landwehr, had taken its place.

Defense Against the Russian Attack.

On the Russian side, the commander-in-chief of the northern front, General Ruzski, had already decided in mid-December to exploit the frost weather for an attack on Mitau. He knew that only weak German second-order troops were stationed there in widely extended positions. For the attack, the 12th Army under General Radko Dimitriew was inconspicuously brought with 184 battalions and 886 guns, while only 66 German battalions with 568 guns faced them,

¹) Since autumn 1915, special Latvian battalions had been formed from Russian prisoners in their home area, which had grown to four brigades by January 1917.

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of which, however, 300 were medium and heavy, assumed1). The attack was

initially intended to collapse the German position projecting on both banks

of the Aa through encirclement and then to pave the way on both sides

of the river as well as along the railway from Riga to Mitau. On January 2, 1917,

General Radko Dmitrijew ordered the start for January 5. After a short but

powerful artillery preparation, a composite division was to break through

immediately west of the Aa, and east of the river the VI Siberian Corps

along with two Latvian brigades, with a group of the II Siberian Corps of

considerable divisional strength standing ready at the railway near Nai.

The enemy was to be tied down by smaller operations on the flanks of the

attack area.

Thus, on January 5 at 5 a.m., the Russian attack began, as surprising

for the German command as for their troops. Heavy snowstorms favored it.

According to the first reports, the Commander-in-Chief East reported to the

Supreme Army Command: "East of the Aa and east of Tukums shortly before

dawn several Russian partial attacks, most of which have been repelled."

Only gradually was the extent of the battle recognized.

In the 30-kilometer-wide attacked area between the railway and the

western Tirul swamp, only 16 battalions were available from the Mitau group.

After short artillery strikes, mass attacks by the Russian infantry began,

apparently targeting Mitau. In most places, the enemy was bloodily repelled.

However, in greater width, he had broken through the first position at Mangali.

Reserves threw themselves against him. They were pushed back to the second

position in a hard fight at Stangal. In the Mangaler break, the enemy broke

through the German blockhouse line and penetrated some batteries in the

dune terrain east of Kalnzem. West of the Aa, the Russian attacks on both

sides of the Tirul swamp had no success.

Meanwhile, parts of the army reserve provided by General von Scholz

advanced over Zirul through high snowdrifts and deep frozen swamp holes.

They regained Mangali and took over the adjacent positions from the enemy.

The crisis was overcome. Only the situation at the Mangaler break was not

yet fully clarified. Here, the counterattack was to be carried out on January 6.

However, it was delayed due to numerous frictions caused by difficul-

1) Above all, the number of medium and heavy guns was greatly exaggerated.   
The actual strength of the entire German army, which far exceeded the front   
of the Russian 12th to the southwest, was 99 battalions, 567 guns, of which only   
275 were medium and heavy.

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D. 23. East: Winter Battle at the Aa, Russian Attack.

rugged terrain until shortly before nightfall and made little progress. West of the Aa, the enemy had meanwhile attacked again in vain. Further attacks were expected. General von Eichhorn had nine battalions and artillery brought in, but their transport was delayed by snow drifts.

In the early morning of January 7, new Russian attacks collapsed on the Riga—Mitau railway, while during the night the enemy had penetrated several batteries in the dunes west of the Mangalzer Break, 32 guns had fallen into his hands. By swinging north, he also wanted to take on the still-standing battalions. Only at the forest edges of the western Aa bank did the disordered remnants of the German position garrison regroup for new resistance. Parts of the 2nd Infantry Division, temporarily made available by the Supreme Army Command and intended for transport to the west, restored the artillery assembly point southwest of the Mangalzer Break to the Aa. But the position front, which protruded far north of the river, was abandoned in the afternoon under enemy pressure and withdrawn to the same level as on the east bank.

To relieve the Mitau group, its command area was limited on January 8 to the attack section between the Mitau—Riga road and the Tirul swamp west of the Aa. The Supreme Army Command completely freed the 2nd Infantry Division. It was to be deployed on both sides of the Aa to quickly establish a truly defensible front here. Against this, the Russians attacked in vain in the early morning of January 9 near and east of Kaltzem.

Thus, the defensive battle at the Aa came to an end. For several days and nights, German troops, mostly of second and third order, had withstood continuous fighting in biting cold, in deep snow, only passable swamp land due to frost, without any accommodation and with only inadequately feasible supplies, absorbing the significantly superior assault. Instead of the desired operational breakthrough to Mitau, the enemy only managed a bulge in the front. German losses amounted to 3,500 men, while the Russians were estimated at 23,000 men.

The German Counterattack.

On January 9, a Russian order was brought in, in which General Radko Dimitrijew said: "The victory is indeed great, but not yet

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completely. "The matter must be brought to an end!" General von Scholz decided to preempt the enemy. He hoped to break through the Russian front west of Lake Babit to the Gulf of Riga and thereby significantly shorten the course of his own front. The Commander-in-Chief East also believed that the enemy must be made aware that any blows from him would be immediately met with hard counterblows. To carry this out, the Supreme Army Command released the 1st Reserve Division, which had already been designated for the West. However, since it had to be relieved at the Dvina front by the advancing 2nd Bavarian Landwehr Division, it could not be expected until January 19. General von Pappritz deployed the division based on the attack directive of the 8th Army immediately west of the Aa, to advance together with the 2nd Infantry Division on both sides of the river beyond the old positions up to the line Plugge—Aßlern. The enemy seemed to have the VI Siberian Corps, eight Latvian regiments, and probably the 38th Division west of the railway to Riga up to the Aa, and west of the Aa to the coast of the XXXXIII Corps. The attacking troops of the Mitau group consisted of 62 battalions in total, largely worn out by the previous battles and not yet assembled. Of these, 39 battalions were deployed in the actual attack area on both sides of the Aa. They thus had a strong numerical superiority ahead of them.

On January 23, at dawn, the German artillery fire from 352 guns, including 133 medium and heavy ones, began. The effect in the attack terrain, which was covered with dense forest over long stretches, was not sufficient. The 2nd Infantry Division under Major General Reifer initially had success only on its outer flanks; the center advanced only in the afternoon hours when the flank attack from the Aa became noticeable. It succeeded in regaining parts of the old German blockhouse position in the Mangaler Bruch. The 1st Reserve Division under Lieutenant General von Malachowski, west of the Aa, also gained ground only slowly; in heavy fighting that continued into the night, it reached the same level as the 2nd Infantry Division near Parup. On January 24, the attack against the Dune area at Mangaler Bruch also continued.

1) Regarding the leadership of the attack, Gen. von Pappritz and A.O.K. 8 had differing views. The former wanted to deploy both divisions east of the Aa (communication from the current Genlt. a.D. Nebel from Aug. 1937).

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O.B. East: Winter Battle at the Aa, German Counterattack.

The main attack set up barely unfolded under overwhelming Russian machine gun fire. Enemy counterattacks were repelled by the German lines embedded in deep snow. West of the Aa, the 1st Reserve Division made progress; further advances east to the river were denied.

Already in the afternoon, the Army High Command 8 reported that the attack consumed more forces than expected and was not advancing quickly; the deployment of the Russian XXVII Corps was to be expected. This would completely shift the balance of forces. Continuing the attack to the set goal was highly desirable and tactically and morally so significant that it justified the deployment of additional forces. A new combat-ready division was necessary. General von Eichhorn had already allocated all forces that could be freed up to the attack step. The Commander-in-Chief East was also unable to meet the new troop demand, and the Supreme Army Command rejected further reinforcements. General von Scholz now wanted at least to retake the old German positions. The original attack objective should, as Major General von Sauberzweig emphasized in a consultation with Colonel Hoffmann, be pursued later. The recapture of the German positions was also considered necessary by the latter to prevent the Russians from thinking they could take over German positions unpunished.

However, the continuation of the German attack on January 25 was preempted by the enemy. From 5 a.m. onwards, they attacked vigorously but unsuccessfully, particularly the flank of the 2nd Infantry Division at the Mangalzer Break. Only then could the German attack begin; by evening, it reached only the old second position between the Mangalzer Break and the Aa. West of the Aa, the 1st Reserve Division reached the same level. In the last three days, these two divisions had suffered 2000 men in bloody losses; the losses due to frost damage were again very high. However, the enemy had already left 2000 prisoners and 20 machine guns in German hands.

On January 26, the 2nd Infantry Division was to attack the eastern Aa bank, which, with its somewhat more open terrain, offered better effectiveness for the combined artillery of both divisions. However, strong enemy artillery fire kept the already severely weakened troops down. Individual advances were unsuccessful. The enemy had reinforced with the XXVII Corps.

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After again only minor local successes on January 27, a new attack on January 30 between the Mangaler Break and the Aa initially made good progress. However, heavy counterattacks then hit the right flank of the 2nd Infantry Division and pushed it back to its starting positions. At 17 degrees cold, the German infantry clung to snow-covered dune heights and frost-stiffened swamp trenches for defense, excellently supported by aircraft, despite 40 degrees cold in the higher air layers.

General von Scholtz ordered the attack to be resumed on February 1 after thorough preparation. But even before that, the Russians launched new mass assaults east of the Aa on January 31. At midnight, they penetrated the German lines west of the Mangaler Break. The last three days of fighting again cost the German troops about 4000 men. The cold rose to 28 degrees; especially the wounded suffered severely. The army command reported: "Continuation of the attack on the Aa requires new preparations and will not take place before February 3."

The Commander-in-Chief East still held the goal of regaining the former German first position. However, the Supreme Army Command already had reservations about continuing the attack; on February 1, General Ludendorff asked to consider whether the expenditure of men and ammunition might still lead to cessation. The command of the 8th Army no longer considered maintaining the old first position absolutely necessary. When General Ludendorff, in view of the losses, again asked on the night of February 2 whether the continuation of the attack was absolutely necessary, whether it could not be finally stopped, the Commander-in-Chief East reported that the 8th Army intended to gain only a viable permanent position.

On February 3, the 2nd Infantry Division was to attack again. But at over 30 degrees cold, precise artillery and mortar fire was not feasible. Parts of the assault position had to be cleared under their own fire. Thus, it only resulted in an unsuccessful partial advance.

The German counterattack on the Aa, perhaps begun with exaggerated hopes, ended without significant success. Two German divisions, intended for the battle in the West, were withdrawn and significantly weakened. On February 4, the transport of the 2nd Infantry Division to the West began.

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D.3. East: End of the Winter Battle on the Aa.

The remaining forces reorganized the front for defense. More than the combat activity of the vastly superior enemy, the winter weather in March had worn down the troops, although, based on the experiences of the first defensive battles, everything possible had been done to protect them. They had also defied the hardships of the Russian winter in an incomparable manner. The solidity of the Eastern Front had also proven unshakeable in this section of the front, temporarily particularly endangered by the frost period.

D. The Outcome of the War Year 1916 in the East¹).

With the cessation of the Brusilov Offensive, one of the most severe crises of the Eastern War was overcome. The further immediate support of the collapsing Romanian army by Russia already bore a defensive character. The Russian attack at Mitau, which followed in January 1917, had only local objectives. In terms of the number of fighters deployed, as well as space and time, the major Russian spring and summer offensives of 1916 belong to the most formidable undertakings of the war. Initially conceived and prepared as a decisive operation against the German part of the Eastern Front, they ended as a campaign against Austria-Hungary. After the first attack, undertaken in March to relieve the French attacked at Verdun, was stifled in German defensive fire and in the swamp of the snowmelt at Lake Narocz, Italy's distress in Tyrol led to a new relief attack at the beginning of June, a month before the time for the planned start of the major offensive had come. This attack, directed against the Austro-Hungarian part of the front, was initially supposed to represent only a side operation. Instead, unexpectedly large successes and a lack of confidence in the success of a further postponed main attack north of the Rokitno Swamps soon led to a gradual shift and finally to the deliberate relocation of the focus of operations to the front south of the swamps. Against Austria-Hungary, the persistent will to attack and the confidence in victory of General Brusilov drove the Russian troops forward again and again for five full months, initially with good success, since the support of the front by hastily arriving German divisions without operationally significant further results.

¹) Cf. p. 392 ff.

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The Battles on the Russian Front.

In attack and counterattack, the strength of friend and foe was exhausted, and even Romania's intervention with more than half a million fresh soldiers was ultimately not enough to get the Russian offensive going again.

German, Austro-Hungarian, and two Turkish divisions participated in the defensive success of the Central Powers. It was achieved with extremely limited means against overwhelming odds. They lived completely hand to mouth. They were forced to throw individual regiments into battle, where the enemy operated with divisions. On the other hand, the enemy was relatively weak in artillery and ammunition and sought to compensate for such a deficiency through ruthless mass deployment of infantry.

The German officer had a severe test to endure, for even in the sections under Austro-Hungarian command, the main burden of the battle often lay on the German troops. They were the ones repeatedly called to assist at threatened points and had to hold out in the most fiercely contested places. Above all, in reliance on the efficiency of their German troops, even the middle command maintained full confidence through the most severe crises. For among the Austro-Hungarian units, there were many very capable fighters, but also numerous ones of such low combat value that they repeatedly required support. Early on, however, the German Supreme Army Command took measures to strengthen the morale of these troops through training behind the front, and in many places, improvement had already been achieved through understanding cooperation. In general, however, direct influence on the allied troops was still difficult, and attempts in this direction understandably also led to various disagreements. Mostly, they had to limit themselves to inserting German divisions, occasionally even individual regiments, and a corresponding number of German command authorities as supports into the Austro-Hungarian front. All these measures, which General Ludendorff had already begun in July of the previous year with the expanded command in the East, have since been continued in an ever-increasing manner.

The leadership north of the Carpathians was gradually entirely placed in the hands of the new Commander-in-Chief East. It was, as before, well informed about the enemy's intentions through its own intelligence service and supported by regularly scheduled reconnaissance flights. Only in this way was it possible for them to provide reserves behind the threatened sections even before the attacks began. Beyond that, however, they were

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The Result of the War Year 1916.

Prince Leopold of Bavaria and Colonel Hoffmann, keeping the overall situation in mind,

were always striving, despite limited own resources, to make available to the Supreme Army

Command any regiment at the front that could be spared for more urgent tasks on other

battlefields. In this regard, the cooperation can be described as particularly exemplary.

The battles of the year 1916 against Russia are to be regarded in their entirety as a major

and decisive defensive victory for the Central Powers in the East. The loss of territory in

Galicia and Volhynia had to be accepted. More serious was the considerable loss of

experienced fighters. By February 1917, excluding the battles against Romania and in

Macedonia, it amounted to about 350,000 men for Germany1), approximately 1,000,000

men for Austria-Hungary, and perhaps 200,000 men for Turkey. Against 500,000 prisoners,

of which not yet 30,000 were Germans, and also about 700 guns had fallen into enemy hands.

In contrast, the Russian army is likely to have lost against 1,500,000 men in this one war

year, of which more than 100,000 were prisoners, but only a negligibly small number of guns.

As a conclusion to the Eastern battles of the year 1916, a front line emerged in connection

with the Romanian campaign, which, despite all Russian territorial gains in the Brusilov

Offensive, ran almost straight from the Black Sea to the Dniester. The enemy still had a

very considerable superiority in manpower, and it was quite expected that by spring,

strengthened in combat power, they would be ready for new massive assaults.

1) This number is calculated according to the "Sanitary Report on the German Army   
in the World War 1914—1918", 3b. III, p. 140 ff., including the reports collected by the   
General Quartermaster from the armies. In some cases, the report provides higher numbers   
than the army reports. In Vol. 3. B. 2c in Vol. X, p. 66, the numbers given based on the   
army reports are to be increased to: about 225,000 (previously 140,000) total losses from   
January to December 1916 (previously 95,000) in the Brusilov Offensive alone. The   
difference of around 50,000 men is explained by the only partially complete capture of the   
army reports. The figures from the sanitary report are considered more accurate.

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Index of the Most Essential Literature.

The lists of previous volumes also apply to the present volume.

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Appendix 7.

Transfer of Divisions on the Eastern Front from the end of August

to the end of December 1916

(including the reserves of the German Supreme Army Command and the

Austro-Hungarian Army Command).

Army Group (later Army Front) Archduke Karl

(later Archduke Josef)

(concerning later added 9th and Austro-Hungarian 1st Army see Appendix 6).

Austro-Hungarian 7th Army.

Departures to: Arrivals from:

End of Aug. Austro-Hungarian 5th R. D. Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army

Beginning of Sept. 10th Bavarian I. D. Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army

Gen. Command XXV. Hgr. Boroević

M. R. Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army

Mid-Sept. Austro-Hungarian 30th I. D. Southern Army

End of Sept. Austro-Hungarian 12th I. D. Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army

Austro-Hungarian 59th I. D.

Beginning of Oct. Austro-Hungarian XI Corps with Austro-Hungarian 1st Army Austro-Hungarian XI Corps with Austro-Hungarian 1st Army

subordinate units subordinate units

10th Bavarian I. D. Austro-Hungarian 1st Army Austro-Hungarian 6th R. D. Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army

Beginning of Nov. 2nd Inf. Radf. Br. 9th Army Major part of the 49th R. D. D. B. East

End of Nov. Austro-Hungarian 10th R. D. (only Austro-Hungarian 1st Army

Cavalry Regiment)

Hungarian 51st I. D. 9th Army

End of Dec. 49th R. D. Austro-Hungarian 1st Army

Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army.

(joined on Oct. 20th to Hgr. Böhm-Ermolli and thus under the D. B. East).

Departures to: Arrivals from:

End of Aug. 10th Bavarian I. D. Austro-Hungarian 7th Army Gen. Command X. R. R. from the West

Hungarian 5th R. D. Austro-Hungarian 7th Army

105th I. D. Southern Army

105th I. D. Southern Army

Beginning of Sept. Gen. Command XXIV. Southern Army

M. R. Southern Army

199th I. D. Southern Army Austro-Hungarian 36th I. D.¹) Southern Army

Gen. Command X. R. R. Austro-Hungarian 2nd R. D. Southern Army

119th I. D. Austro-Hungarian 7th Army

30th I. D. Austro-Hungarian 7th Army

End of Sept. Austro-Hungarian 59th I. D. Austro-Hungarian 7th Army

Austro-Hungarian 59th I. D. Austro-Hungarian 7th Army

¹) Newly formed from remnants of the Austro-Hungarian XIII Corps and the Austro-Hungarian 72nd I. Br.

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Appendix 7. Change of Divisions on the Eastern Front.

Southern Army.

(joined on October 5th to the Army Group Böhm-Ermolli and thus under the O.B. East.)

Departures to: Arrivals from:

End of Aug. Hungarian 39th I.D. Austro-Hungarian 1st Army 105th I.D. Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army

Beginning of Sept. Gen. Command XXIV. Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army

R.R. Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army

119th I.D. Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army

Mid-Sept. 105th I.D. Group Eichhorn 3rd G.D. from the West

(8th Army) from the homeland

(newly formed)

208th S.D. Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army

Austro-Hungarian 36th S.D.1) Austro-Hungarian 1st Army 216th I.D. (newly formed)

Austro-Hungarian 2nd R.D. Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army Gen. Command X.R.R. Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army

119th I.D. Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army

End of Sept. Austro-Hungarian 12th S.D. Austro-Hungarian 7th Army 36th R.D. Group Eichhorn

End of Sept. to 1st R.D. Group Eichhorn (8th Army)

Beginning of Oct. (8th Army)

Commander-in-Chief East.

Army Group Böhm-Ermolli.

Departures to: Arrivals from:

Beginning of Oct. Southern Army with Archduke

attached units Karl

Mid-Oct. 208th S.D. (from the Southern to the 49th R.D. (to the Southern O.B. East Reserve

Army) West Army) Archduke

6 Austro-Hungarian Btn.e.2) Italian Front Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army with Karl

attached units

End of Oct. Austro-Hungarian 14th S.D. (from the Italian Front Gen. Command XXVII. from the West

Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army) R.R. (to the Southern

199th I.D. (from the Southern Army)

Army) 53rd R.D. (to the Southern from the West

216th I.D. (from the Southern Army)

Army) 9th Army

Beginning of Nov. Austro-Hungarian 1st Ldst. Br. (from the Italian Front

Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army)

Gen. Command XXIV. Archduke

R.R. (from the Southern Karl

Army) (Gr. Genot)

Mid-Nov.

1) Remnants of the Austro-Hungarian XIII Corps.  
2) Partly from Group Linsingen, Group Litzmann.

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Commander-in-Chief East.

Departures to: Arrivals from:

End of Nov. 3rd G. I. D. (from the South Army) to the West

49th R. D. (from the South Army) Austro-Hungarian 7th Army (Parts to Austro-Hungarian 1st Army)

Beginning of Dec. 2nd R. D. (22nd and 25th K. Br.) Austro-Hungarian 9th Army

225th S. D. (newly formed) Austro-Hungarian 1st Army

Army Group Linsingen.

Departures to: Arrivals from:

Beginning of Sept. Hungarian 37th I. D. (from the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army) Austro-Hungarian 1st Army

End of Sept. 115th I. D. (to Austro-Hungarian 4th Army) Army Group Eichhorn (8th Army)

218th I. D. (newly formed)

Beginning of Oct. 11th Bavarian I. D. (from Gr. Bernhardi) 9th Army

Mid Oct. Hungarian 70th I. D. (from the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army) to Hungary behind the front

Austro-Hungarian 10th R. D. Austro-Hungarian 1st Army

75th R. D. South Army

Beginning of Nov. 43rd R. D. (from Gr. Litzmann) to the West 215th I. D. from the West

19th I. D. (from the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army) to the West

115th I. D. (from the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army) 9th Army

Mid Nov. Gen. Rdo. X. A. K. to the West 15th I. D. (to Austro-Hungarian 4th Army) from the West

and 20th I. D. (from the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army) Gen. Rdo. VIII. A. K. and 16th I. D. (to Austro-Hungarian 4th Army) from the West

Gen. Rdo. XXXX. R. K. Austro-Hungarian 1st Army

End of Nov. Austro-Hungarian 7th R. D. to Romania

218th S. D. Gr. Gerok

Beginning of Dec. Hungarian 41st S. D. (from Gr. Bernhardi) Italian Front

Mid Dec. 121st I. D. (from the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army) Army Group Eichhorn (10th Army)

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Appendix 7. Transfer of Divisions on the Eastern Front.

Army Group Woyrsch.

Departures | to: | Arrivals | from:

End of Aug. | 49th R. D. | to B. East Reserve |

Beginning of Sept. | 89th I. D. (from 12th Army) | Austro-Hungarian 1st Army |

Gen. Command XXV. R. K. (from 12th Army) | Austro-Hungarian 7th Army |

End of Sept. | 217th I. D. (newly formed) | Army Group Mackensen |

Army Group Eichhorn.

Departures | to: | Arrivals | from:

End of Aug. | Gen. Command I. R. K. | Austro-Hungarian 1st Army |

Gen. Command XXXIX. R. K. | Austro-Hungarian 1st Army |

Staff 3rd R. D. | Austro-Hungarian 1st Army | Southern Army

216th I. D. (newly formed) | Southern Army |

Mid-Sept. | 76th R. D. (from 8th Army) | 9th Army |

End of Sept. | 115th I. D. (from 8th Army) | Army Group Linsingen (Austro-Hungarian 4th Army) |

End of Sept. to Beginning of Oct. | 36th R. D. (from 8th Army) | Southern Army |

Beginning of Oct. | 6th R. D. (3rd, 5th, 8th R. Br.) | 9th Army |

Mid-Oct. | 41st I. D. (from 8th Army) | 9th Army |

109th I. D. (from 8th Army) | 9th Army |

Beginning of Nov. | 224th I. D. (from 10th Army) | Army Group Linsingen |

Mid-Nov. | Austro-Hungarian 24th I. D. (from 10th Army) | 9th Army |

Beginning of Dec. | 37th I. D. (from A. A. Scholtz) | to the West |

79th R. D. (from 10th Army) | to the West |

End of Dec. | 80th R. D. (from 10th Army) | to the West |

Arrivals | from:

105th I. D. (to 8th Army) | Southern Army

1st R. D. (to 8th Army) | Southern Army

202nd I. D. (to 8th Army) | from the Homeland (newly formed)

203rd I. D. (to 8th Army) | from the Homeland (newly formed)

224th I. D. (to 10th Army) | from the Homeland (newly formed)

205th I. D. (to 10th Army) | from the Homeland (newly formed)

5th Replacement Div. (to A. A. Scholtz) | from the West

226th I. D. (newly formed) |

12th I. D. (to A. A. Scholtz) | from the West

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In: The World War 1914–1918. Eleventh Volume. Timeline of the Course of the War from Late August 1916 to March 1917. Appendix 8.

Military-political events in the West

Great Britain. Italy on the march

Events on the battlefields

Russian Front

Turkish Fronts

Military-political events in the East

Up to and including October

1916

August

Italy

Romanian Front

Macedonian Front

Continuation of the Battle of the Somme

September

14th–19th Losses at the Taboren

2nd Order to cease the offensive

7th English attack at Ginchy

14th VIII Isonzo Battle

October

Continuation of the battle

18th Opening of the 8th Isonzo Battle with pursuit

31st IX Isonzo Battle

November

15th–16th Interruption of the offensive in Chamblin

1st/2nd Fort Raux evacuated

December

12th England: Resignation of Asquith, Lloyd George becomes Prime Minister

15th Opening of the French major offensive at Verdun

19th Resignation of Bethmann in Strang

1917

January

3rd Interruption of the offensive in Romania

15th–19th Gen. Arzberger at the Western Front

February

1st Start of unrestricted submarine warfare

13th Start of the breakthrough into the Siegfried Line

March

9th France: Resignation of Briand, Ribot becomes Prime Minister

13th Start of the breakthrough into the Siegfried Line

21st Death of Emperor Franz Josef, successor Karl

31st Emperor Karl takes over the Austrian government

12th Peace offer from the Central Powers to Germany

Russia: Revolution in Kronstadt